



Praying the Mass Anew *The New Translation of The Roman Missal and Our Actual Participation at Mass*

Easter 2011: Celebrating Jesus Christ's Resurrection Anew at Mass.

“**T**his is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.” Today, we sing “Alleluia” in praise of Jesus Christ, risen from the dead. We proclaim that our Risen Savior has won the victory over sin and death through his sacrifice on Calvary and his resurrection, and that the Lord offers to all of us a share in his new life. These are among the mysteries of faith that we participate in through the offering of the Holy Mass today, and the renewal of our baptismal promises that we will make. Yet, these saving mysteries of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are celebrated beyond today.

While Easter Sunday itself directly places us within the mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection, *his saving sacrifice of love is celebrated at each and every Mass ever offered*. The Mass is far more than simply the meal that Jesus ate with his disciples before he died. Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist as the way by which all generations until the end of time would be able to enter into his sacrifice on Calvary, partaking fully in the victory over sin and death. Every time the Mass is offered, these mysteries of redemption are made present as the one true sacrifice of Christ. The saving sacrifice is “re-presented” in the sacramental way that

Jesus instituted at the Last Supper, through bread and wine that are offered to the Father. Through our partaking of this offering of Jesus to the Father, we receive not bread and wine, but the Body and Blood of Christ, risen from the dead, that his risen life might truly be in us. Hence, Easter is celebrated not only once a year, but at every offering of the Mass.

Today, as we celebrate Easter, it is important to inform everyone that we are being invited today to prepare to pray the Mass anew. On the most basic level, hopefully all of us know more fully through today's Easter celebration the great gift that the Mass truly is for us – (that we are privileged to receive) the gift of salvation. In the coming months, we are being afforded a beautiful opportunity for this gift that we receive today to grow, as together we learn new words by which we will begin to pray the Mass when Advent arrives on November 27 of this year. Let me explain further.

Several years ago, in the year 2000, the Church issued its latest version of the book from which the Mass is prayed, called the *Roman Missal*. For multiple years since this version was given, work has been done to translate the original texts (written in Latin) into the various languages used throughout the world. A

year ago, the new English translation was given official approval for use in Masses offered for the entire English speaking world. Today, we are in the midst of a process to prepare for the full implementation of these English prayer texts for Mass. On November 27, when we begin the season of Advent, we will begin praying the Mass anew in this updated English translation.

In the meantime, all are invited now to learn to pray the Mass anew. Bulletin inserts such as this one have already been placed in your parish's weekly bulletin for multiple weeks to begin such preparation. These inserts will continue through the remaining weekends of this spring, and during the weekends of next fall. These inserts give an overview and explanation of how we can pray the Mass more fully, while

showing us the new versions of the prayers that we will begin using later this year. In addition, all of the bulletin inserts can be downloaded through the Diocese of Duluth website, www.dioceseduluth.org, under the title "Praying the Mass Anew: Roman Missal Resources." Next fall, weekly attention will be given to each of the prayers that we may learn the new versions well so as to pray them well.

Through learning to pray the Mass anew, may we all grow in deeper understanding of our words of worshiping God at each and every offering of the Holy Mass. May we be opened wider to encountering Jesus and his saving sacrifice. May we always rejoice in this celebration of Easter, made present and offered anew at every Holy Mass.

Questions of the Week:

➤ ***What's a Roman Missal and why do we need it? Doesn't the priest decide what happens at Mass?***

The *Roman Missal* is the title of the book that contains all of the prayers and ritual instructions necessary for offering the Mass. (Note the spelling – we are not speaking of a "missile.") The word "missal" derives from the Latin word "missa," meaning "mass." It belongs to the Holy Father and the bishops of the Church to oversee and put forth the prayers and rituals by which the sacraments of the Church are celebrated. For the Mass, the *Roman Missal* serves this purpose.

Jesus Christ himself offered the first Mass at the Last Supper. His act of taking bread and wine and changing them into his own Body and Blood are at the very core of the Mass. Other elements, such as reading from the Bible during Mass, are also present in the early history of the Church. The Church, rooted as she is in Tradition, is guided through the centuries by the Holy Spirit and entrusted with preserving and handing on the sacraments and the rituals by which they are celebrated. In this way, all Catholics throughout the world truly celebrate the Mass in union with one another, and more properly, in keeping with what Jesus himself established. (Accordingly, priests are to follow what has been handed on to them by the Church.)

➤ ***What value does changing everything have? Shouldn't the Church be trying to meet people where they are?***

The changes in the prayers that are coming are *not for the sake of change*. The changes that are taking place at this time, while they will require all of us (especially priests) to learn new versions of prayers, are meant to more clearly express the original Latin words and to lead us to more fully entering into the mystery of the Mass. All of us will be invited to pray the Mass more fervently by learning this new English version, challenging as that may be. The new translation has the capacity to lead us to a greater understanding of the Mass itself and toward more fully living the Catholic the faith.