



New
Translation of
the Prayers
of the Mass
scheduled for
use on
November
27, 2011

New Translation of the Mass Prayers Coming

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! The celebration of the birth of Jesus reminds us of the dramatic transformation that his coming 2010 years ago brought to the world. Then, no less than now, Jesus' coming announced hope and peace to a world filled with struggle, tension and brokenness. That message of hope and peace still resounds throughout the world calling us to be renewed and to believe that the goodness and love of God will triumph over the bitterness and hate that can so easily capture our hearts and minds.

The renewal that Christmas announces takes many shapes and forms. One of the ways that we are invited to be renewed in the coming New Year is through a deeper understanding of the celebration of Mass. In August of 2010, Rome approved



Christmas 2010

a new translation of the Roman Missal which contains all the prayers we pray at Mass. In Advent of next year, (November 27, 2011) we will begin using this new translation. In this coming year, from January to November, we will prepare for these changes. More importantly we will renew our understanding and deepen our appreciation of the Mass.

You might wonder why it was necessary to change the prayers of the Mass. We have been using these prayers since the Second Vatican Council allowed the Mass to be celebrated in English in the 1960's. The answer is grounded in the renewal of the celebration of the Mass that was called for by the Vatican Council as well as the long tradition that supports our celebration of the Mass today.

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, Mass was celebrated in Latin. For centuries the prayers had been prayed in Latin. The bishops who gathered for the Vatican Council in 1962 wanted to make the Mass more accessible to people throughout the world so that all of us could enter into the celebration more fully, more consciously and more actively. The ritual or structure of the Mass was changed but, more notably, we were allowed to use English (or whatever language people spoke) to pray the Mass. Since the Church had never before translated the Latin prayers of the Mass into another language, there were no clear guidelines given for engaging this task. It was always understood that after praying the Mass in English for some years, the translation would be reviewed. About eight years ago the bishops of the English speaking countries began working on a new translation. They were aided by new translation guidelines. The fruit of their labor is the new translation of the Roman Missal that we will begin using on the first Sunday of Advent, 2011.

In creating this new translation, the bishops of the English speaking world wanted to more accurately translate the original Latin prayers. These prayers are rich with theology and scriptural references. They reflect the best of our faith practice and beliefs. The desire of those who worked on this project was to capture anew the richness of our tradition while at the same time creating a text that was understood in the English language. It will take us many years as we pray these prayers, to discover the richness of the theology and meaning they contain. It will take some time before the new words we will begin praying just before Christmas next year, will be as familiar and comfortable as the prayers we have used for almost fifty years. However in time, as the new prayers of the Mass become familiar, their richness of the new translation will enhance our prayer and celebration.



Christmas 2010

It is important to note the Mass structure, that is the ritual will not change. What we have done for the past fifty years, we will continue to do. What will change are the texts of the Mass prayers for the people and the priest. Some of the prayers the congregation prays together will be substantially changed, like the Gloria and the Creed. Others will have minor changes of a word or two; and some prayers will remain the same. The prayers the priest prays with and for the people as well as the prayers he prays quietly will change.

Throughout the course of this coming year there will be many opportunities to reflect on and explore the meaning of the Mass. There will be items to read in the bulletin and opportunities for small group reflection and discussion. Priests will give homilies on the meaning and purpose of various aspects of the Mass. As we move closer to the time we begin using this new translation, the changes in the Mass prayers will be explained in parish gatherings, through the bulletin and in the priests' homilies. It is possible now to look at the new translation of the parts of the Mass the people pray by going to the United States Catholic Conference of Bishop's website (<http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal>) and following the links.

As we spend this next year renewing our celebration of the Mass and preparing for the new translation of the prayers of the Mass, we take the hope and the peace of the Christmas season with us. We pray this renewal of our Mass will deepen our relationship with the Lord and his Church, rekindle our hope in his ever renewing presence, and truly bring about a renewal in our broken and fragile world.

Have a blessed and holy Christmas season and New Year.

Glory to God

Implementation Task Force Members
Father Michel Mulloy, Rector Cathedral, Rapid City
Father Timothy Hoag, Pastor, St. Joseph, Spearfish
Sr. Eleanor Solon, OSB, St Martin Monastery, Rapid City
Kathryn (Katie) Severns, Music Director, Cathedral, Rapid City
Veronica Valandra, Director of the Office of Native Concerns
Lonnie Arthur, St. John's Custer
Patrick Fahey, St. Joseph, Spearfish