

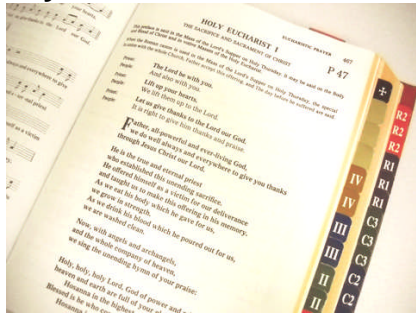
Changes in the Mass - The Peoples Responses Part I

Overview

You likely have heard that the mass was “changing” but do not know enough about it. In reality the mass itself has not changed. What is different will be in some of the words we say and what we hear. This discussion uses the 4-page document published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. You can find the original and other related documents in their web site www.usccb.org. This introductory issue begins a multiple part series.

What is the history?

Following the council of Vatican II which convened from 1962-1965, several changes came about



with the mass. Celebrating the mass in the vernacular, more participation by the laity and the priest facing the congregation are just a few of the more notable ones. Prior to Vatican II the mass was celebrated using the Latin language. For those of us sitting in the pews we learned to respond in Latin as needed and sometimes used missals with the English translations.

I have an old copy of the Sunday Missal published in English in 1957. I compared the new text we will be using to that older book and found them to be the same. Somehow those translators did it right. The current Roman Missal was translated into English following Vatican II and was released for use with a few subsequent revisions. The one we use as of today were released between 1970 and 1973. It was last revised in 1985. My Sunday Missal was published in 1970 by the Daughters of Saint Paul and is such an example. Also keep in mind that none of these changes will affect

the Spanish translations as they already reflect the Latin correctly.

Why do we need a new translation?

In the translation from Latin to English and other languages, some of the text was “adjusted” to the eyes and ears of this modern generation. In doing so some of the rich Latin text – as we will see - did not quite have the same meaning when translated. This is more prevalent in the English translation and does not affect some other languages such as the Spanish translations. These revisions pertain to the book we now call the “*Sacramentary*” and contains the order of the mass. The new translation will also have a new name and will be called ***The Roman Missal***.

The new translation will use the original Latin text as the basis and are intended to more fully grasp the original meanings. This is the same mass but with newer words – perhaps better stated as being closer to the original words. This should give us a deeper sense of the mass that has been with us for almost 2000 years. If you want to see how old the mass is just read paragraph 1345 of the Catechism. This is an excerpt from a letter written by St. Justin in the year 155 “*explaining what Christians did*” during the mass.

The words of the order of the mass have biblical roots and we can find much of the text in both the Old and New Testaments. The new translations adhere more fully to those roots. You will find that the text may be different than ordinary conversation and the vocabulary may be stronger or broader than you may be accustomed to hearing. It may take a little time for adjustment but you will find that it better expresses the essence of the mass.