

Understanding the Revised Mass Texts Part II

The Liturgy of the Word

- The readings will conclude the same way
- The reader will say, “The Word of the Lord,”
- And you answer, “Thanks be to God.”
- If a deacon is assisting, he goes to the priest and asks for a blessing.
- Today the priest prays that the deacon may “worthily proclaim” the Gospel.
- In the new text he asks that the deacon proclaim it “worthily and well.”
- If the priest proclaims the Gospel, he offers a short prayer and in it he calls the proclamation God’s “holy Gospel” – not just the “Gospel.”

- Several times at Mass the priest say some prayers in a low voice. They are saying these extra prayers to center their minds on the meaning of their actions.
- When the priest greets you he will say, “**The Lord be with you,**”
- Your response will now be “**And with your spirit.**”
- When the Gospel is announced, you still say, “Glory to you, Lord.” And at the conclusion you still say, “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.”

- The priest will then say in a low voice, “Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.” You won’t hear that line either, but God will.
- This new translation will not affect the scripture readings.
- A new translation for these is also under way, but it is a separate project and it does not pertain to the changes you will soon experience.

- Christ is present in his word, as he carries out the mystery of salvation, he sanctifies humanity and offers the Father perfect worship. Moreover, the word of God unceasingly calls to mind and extends the economy of salvation, which achieves its fullest expression in the Liturgy.”
- The word *catholic* means “universal”; the Catholic Church embraces the world. Praying for the world’s needs seems important at a time just before we become “one bread, one body” with that world in Christ.

The Profession of Faith

- The words we say to profess our faith are changing, but our faith is staying the same.
- Translators have learned a lot in the past 40 years, and they are giving us a text that expresses our common faith with more precision.
- For this part of Mass, it is important that we all say the same words; there is one faith!

- St. Paul points out, “I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:1-6).
- This plea for unity helps us understand why we should stand together on common ground and share our most important beliefs.

Current Translation

- **We believe** in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven
and earth,

New Translation

- I believe** in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven
and earth,
- The Creed begins with “I” instead of “We.” The Creed is still the faith of the entire Church, but each of us proclaims it to assert our personal faith together with other believers.

- “I believe” is a literal translation of the Latin word “Credo,” and it is consistent with the translation that has been used in many countries around the world since Vatican II.
- The words, “I believe” occur only once at the very beginning.

- In Latin the word “Credo” appears only once at the beginning, and it supplies that main verb for all the phrases that follow. This aims to unify all the aspect of our faith. We do not just believe separately in the parts of the Creed. We believe in our faith as a whole.
- The word “And” unites the parts of the Creed. The initial words “I believe” govern each place where “And” appears.
- It is to your benefit to say the words “I believe” together with the priest, because the first two words are your only chance to claim your belief as your own.

**Of all that is seen
and unseen.**

**of all things visible
and invisible.**

- The choice of these words over “seen and unseen” makes this line a little more precise. Some things that are visible by nature are actually unseen at certain times and places. Your relatives who live across the country are visible, but unseen to you.
- We believe God is the maker not only of things we cannot see for whatever reason, but also of things that are in fact invisible – for example, the saints and angels who occupy a place in our belief and worship

We believe in one Lord,
Jesus Christ,
the only
Son of God.

And in one Lord,
Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten
Son of God.

- **“Only Begotten.”** Replaces the word “only,” and they translate the Latin more fully. Only Begotten reaffirms our faith that Jesus did not merely materialize as the Son of God, but He was intentionally begotten; his presence has always been part of the divine plan.

**Eternally begotten
of the Father**

**born of the Father
before all ages.**

- **“Born of the Father before all ages”** is more precise. Jesus dwelled with the Father before time began.

God from God,
Light from Light,
true God from true God.
begotten, not made,
one in Being
with the Father.

God from God,
Light from Light,
True God from true God,
begotten, not made,
Consubstantial
with the Father.

- **“Consubstantial”** replaces the expression “one in Being,” and it describes the relationship between Jesus and the Father. In the current translation “one in Being” was thought to be more comprehensible and closer to the original Greek of the Creed. However, the revised translation chooses a word that lies closer to the Latin equivalent, “*consubstantialis*.”

- The question of how Jesus relates to the Father has immense importance.

The early Church councils forged a vocabulary that carefully articulates orthodox faith, and they chose this word to express the dogma of Jesus' divinity. The Latin word means "having the same substance,"

- "Consubstantial" is an unusual word, but it describes a very unusual thing – the nature of Jesus Christ. He is not like anything or anyone else.

Through him all things
were made.

For us men and
for our salvation
he came down
from heaven:

**by the power of the
Holy Spirit he was born
of the Virgin Mary
and became man.**

Through him all things
were made.

For us men and
for our salvation
he came down
from heaven,

**and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate
of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.**

- **“Incarnate.”** This word – another one we don’t use very often- replaces “born” in the current translation. It means something like “given flesh.” It professes our belief that the Word became flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
- Our current translation could be misunderstood to state that the Word became flesh when Jesus was born.

That is not our faith. Jesus was not simply born by the power of the Holy Spirit; he was conceived that way.

- The new translation makes it clearer that Jesus did not become a human when he was born; he was incarnate in the womb, and in that event “became man.”

For our sake
he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate;
**he suffered, died,
and was buried.**
**On the third day
he rose again**

For our sake
he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate,
**he suffered death
and was buried,
and rose again
on the third day**

- **“Suffered death”** replaces two verbs in the current translation, “suffered, died.” The Latin is ambiguous. Literally, it says, “he suffered and was buried,” and the word “suffered” implies his dying.

Because the verb “died” is not there in Latin, “suffered death” seems a better way to express what happened to Jesus.

The point is that he really died, and that is what gives his Resurrection its full meaning.

**in fulfillment
of the Scriptures;**

**in accordance
with the Scriptures.**

- On the surface there seems to be little difference between the current translation and the new one.
- In Latin, the word more nearly means “in accordance with” or even “according to.” The current translation implies that the Resurrection fulfills Old Testament prophecies, which it does, but the New Testament also proclaims the Resurrection.
- The new translation broadens the meaning of the word “Scriptures” and the role they play in our faith.

**he ascended into
heaven and is seated
at the right hand
of the Father.**

**He will come again
in glory to judge
the living and the dead
and his kingdom
will have no end.**

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in glory to judge
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will have no end.**

We believe in the
Holy Spirit
the Lord, the giver of
life,
who proceeds from the
Father and the Son.
With the Father
and the Son
He is worshipped and
glorified.

And in the
Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of
life,
who proceeds from the
Father and the Son,
who with the Father
and the Son
Is **adored** and
glorified.

- Adored.” replaces worshipped because it nearly resembles the word in Latin, and it is so translated consistently throughout the Missal.

He has spoken
through the prophets.

We believe in one holy
catholic and apostolic
Church

who has spoken
through the Prophets.

And one, holy,
catholic, and apostolic
Church.

We acknowledge
one baptism
for the forgiveness
of sins,

I confess
one baptism
for the forgiveness
of sins,

- **“I confess”** is a more forceful expression. In this context, “confess” means “profess belief in” – not “express sorrow for sins.”

It sounds stronger than “acknowledge” because it involves the heart, not just the head.

We look for
the resurrection
of the dead,
and the life of
the world to come.
Amen.

and I look forward to
the resurrection
of the dead
and the life
the world to come.
Amen.

“I look forward to the resurrection” is a clearer translation of the Latin, but it also resounds with confidence. It summons a certain tone of voice. With confidence we state belief in God who gives us faith.

- After the Creed, the Liturgy of the Word concludes with the Prayer of the Faithful. To keep parishioners connected with the greater, and often suffering world, the liturgy has intercessions for the world at large.
- The petitions are supposed to cover four considerations: the needs of the Church, public authorities and the salvation of the whole world, those burdened by any kind of difficulty, and the local community.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

- This part of the Mass is brief, and there will be only a very few changes to the words when we start using the revised translation for it.
- There are no changes to the instructions governing the choice of music, so the current custom and repertoire should remain in force.
- Once the priest has received the gifts and stands at the altar, he praises God, who has provided them.

- The words of the priest, though, will be slightly different. For example, while holding the bread the priest will say, “Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, / for through your goodness we have received / **the bread we offer you:** / fruit of the earth and work of human hands, / it will become for us the bread of life.”

- Currently he says, we have “**bread to offer,**” but soon he will say that we are in the act of offering it, and we are offering it to God.
- To each of these prayers – your response remains the same: “**Blessed be God for ever.**”
- After he washes his hands, the priest invites you to pray. His invitation is slightly different:
- “Pray, brethren, (brothers and sisters), /that **my sacrifice and yours** / may be acceptable to God, / the almighty Father.”

- “Pray, brethren, (brothers and sisters), /that **my sacrifice and yours** / may be acceptable to God, / the almighty Father.”
- This implies that more than one sacrifice is being offered. Mass is a single sacrifice offered by all present. Each baptized member of the assembly is offering a sacrifice, in keeping with his or her priestly role.
- Your response to this plea changes by the addition of one single word: “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands / for the praise and glory of his name, / for our good / and the good of all his **holy** Church.”

- Holy appears in Latin, so it is being added to the English. The reason that the Lord will hear the prayer and accept the sacrifice of the humble priest has to do with the holiness of the Church, which benefits from his prayer.
- The Preparation of the Gifts concludes as the priest says the prayer over the Offerings.
- You respond with the word “**Amen.**”

The Eucharistic Prayer

- The Eucharistic Prayer is the center and summit of the entire Mass. It is a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The priest invites you to lift up your heart in prayer. You unite your thoughts with those expressed by the priest, who addresses God in the name of the entire community. The priest and the people all join themselves with Christ to proclaim the marvelous deeds of God.

- The Eucharistic Prayer is the great prayer of thanksgiving that the priest prays in our name. It is important that we pray this prayer by listening carefully to what he prays and making it our prayer in the silence of our hearts.
- The Eucharistic Prayer begins with a dialogue between the priest and the people.

The Eucharistic Prayer

Current Translation

Priest: The Lord be.
with you

All: **And also with you.**

Priest: Lift up your
Hearts

All: We lift them
up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give
thanks to the Lord
our God.

New Translation

Priest: The Lord be
with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Priest: Lift up your
Hearts

All: We lift them
up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give
thanks to the Lord
Our God.

**All: It is right to give
him thanks and praise.**

All: It is right and just.

- “It is right and just,” is much closer to the Latin – just a declarative statement without explanation.

Preface

- The preface begins with a phrase such as, “It is truly right and just.” So when the priest begins his part, he expands on what you have just said . The preface will explain why it is truly right and just to give God thanks on this particular occasion. During a given season of the liturgical year, or when celebrating a day in honor of a saint, the preface recalls something pertinent about God’s wonderful deeds. Other prefaces are more generic, but they always give specific reasons why we give God thanks on this day.

- The word *Eucharist* means “thanksgiving.” In the dialogue at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest invites you to “give thanks,” you declare that it is right and just to do so, and he proclaims why it is right and just today.
- The Eucharistic Prayer demands and rewards a lot of attention. The translation into English will affect the entire collection of Eucharistic Prayers
- When the text changes come, priests will need time to learn how best to express the new texts in a way that helps everyone pray.

- The sentences will be longer and more involved, and the vocabulary will be broader.
- The priest may choose from a variety of Eucharistic Prayers especially appropriate on Sundays, on days when we celebrate any of the saints mentioned in the prayer, and on days when a special phrase denoting the nature of the celebration may be inserted into it – such as Christmas, Holy Thursday, and the octave of Easter.

- Eucharistic Prayer II is the shortest of them all and was designed especially for weekday Mass. It is based on a prayer that dates to the 3rd or 4th century.
- Eucharistic Prayer III is newly composed, and it is especially appropriate for Sundays and feast days.
- Eucharistic Prayer IV is based on a 4th century prayer from the Eastern tradition of the Church. It has its own preface that gives fuller summary of salvation history. It was intended for use during Ordinary Time.

Holy, Holy, Holy

- At the end of the preface, all join in the Holy, Holy, Holy.

Current Translation

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of **power and might**.

New Translation

Holy, holy, holy Lord
God of **hosts**.

- In Latin, the word for *hosts* appears as “Sabaoth.”
- Actually, that word is in Hebrew. Latin borrows it without change because it could not find no better word.

“Sabaoth” refers to God’s command over an army of angels. It proclaims the power of God; hence *hosts* means the angelic hosts, the invisible powers that work at God’s command. The new translation will emphasize the sublime power of God, who has all the forces of nature under control.

- After starting this hymn, we ask the Holy Spirit to exercise that power by changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. This miracle happens because the only one who can do it is God, who controls all forces, the Lord God of hosts.
- For these reasons we affirm that God is “Holy, Holy, Holy.”

- The Holy, Holy, Holy comes at a significant moment in the Mass.
- The entire Eucharistic Prayer is the center of the celebration because we are asking the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Before we make this request, we praise God. We acknowledge the wonderful things that God has done, and we proclaim how holy God is.

- The first line of the Holy, Holy, Holy is based on a passage from the book of Isaiah (6:3)

The prophet in a vision sees God sitting upon a lofty throne. In that special realm that God inhabits, angels are in attendance. They know how holy God is, and they sing about this holiness to one another.

Even though they are in the divine presence, they talk about God – they do not address God.

- This is the hymn that we take up when we sing the Holy, Holy, Holy. We join the angels in their song.
- The difference is we are directly addressing God, because that is what the entire Eucharistic Prayer does.
We sing it in a way that even the angels did not do.

- The difference is we are directly addressing God, because that is what the entire Eucharistic Prayer does. We sing it in a way that even the angels did not do.
- The preface concludes by announcing that we are about to proclaim God's majesty together with the angels. In this way our singing lifts a universal hymn of praise to God. All of creation signs its theme song, one that comes from the choir of angels, and that makes a perfect hymn to praise a holy God.

Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who
comes in the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the
highest.

Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who
in comes the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the
highest.

- The second part comes from Matthew 21:9. It quotes the crowds in Jerusalem, who shout, “Hosanna!” to Jesus at his triumphant entry on the day we commonly call Palm Sunday. In turn , the crowds in this Gospel story also quote Psalm 118:26, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”

- The Holy, Holy, Holy affirms the divinity of Christ, the unity of testimony in the Old and New Testaments, the holiness of God, the power of God over all forces, and the universal desire of all creation to raise a voice together to praise God. If you only sing one song at Mass, you should raise your voice to join this chorus. The rest of creation is depending on you.
- The Eucharistic Prayer comes to a close with the priest's doxology and the people's **Amen**. ("So be it," "I agree," or "I believe.")