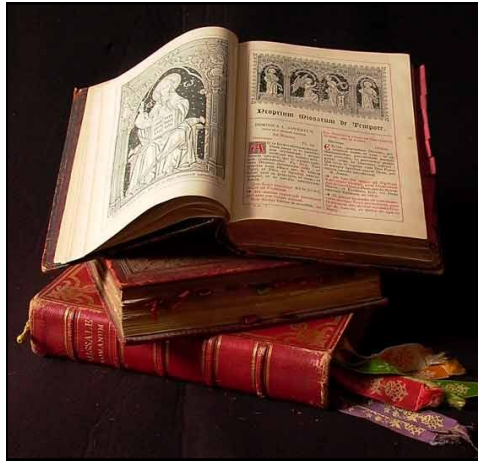


WHAT IS THE ROMAN MISSAL?

The Roman Missal is the ritual text for the celebration of Mass in the Roman Catholic Church. It is written in Latin under the title of *Missale Romanum*. The text is then translated into the vernacular (the native language of the people of a particular country) for use in local churches. The use of a common book ensures that we are all in unity with the Roman Catholic Church throughout the world. Through this unity, we can come to know Christ more clearly through our prayer of the Mass. Through our active participation of listening, singing, and responding to the prayers with sincerity, we prepare ourselves more readily to answer the question posed by Christ to his disciples, “Who do you say that I am?”



WHAT IS FOUND IN THE ROMAN MISSAL?

The Roman Missal contains the following:

- ◆ GIRM – The **G**eneral **I**nstruction of the **R**oman **M**issal. This document provides details on how the Mass is celebrated.
- ◆ RUBRICS – Rubrics are particular directions to the priest, ministers and people on what to do at a specific part in the Mass. They are called rubrics because they are presented in red ink; the word ‘rubric’ is the Latin for ‘red.’
- ◆ TEXT – This includes all the prayers and responses spoken during Mass – everything we say and hear.

WHY DO WE NEED A REVISED ENGLISH TRANSLATION?

There are several reasons for a revised translation:

- ◆ Following the Second Vatican Council, a revised Latin edition of the Missal was written. The process of translating this Missal into English was an enormous task but parishes were anxious to begin celebrating Mass in the vernacular. Therefore, the process of translation was done very quickly. It was always meant to be temporary. A revised translation will produce a better translation.
- ◆ The early translations used what is called *dynamic equivalence*, a process which focused on the wider meaning of what was being said; it was less formal and more conversational. Today’s translations use *formal equivalence* which pays more attention to

the specific words and sentence structure; it is a more literal translation. In this way, we will be more in unity with our fellow Catholics around the world.

- ◆ After the year 2000, Pope John Paul II promulgated (put into effect by official proclamation) a third edition of the Roman Missal in Latin. This was necessary because a number of new prayers for the Mass had been written. Also, because he had canonized more than 480 saints, these prayers needed to be included as well. Therefore, this third edition of the Missal contained many new texts that needed to be translated into English.

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE LESS FORMAL, MORE CONVERSATIONAL STYLE WE HAVE BEEN USING SINCE VATICAN II?

A more exact translation from Latin into English is important for several reasons:

- ◆ The language of this revised translation will be more similar to that which we hear in the Scriptures. Thus, connections between the Scriptures and the Mass texts will be easier to make.
- ◆ Many of the original phrases used in Latin were altered or lost in the English translations. The revised English translation will bring us closer to the translations used by many other cultural and language groups and will connect us linguistically to other Catholics throughout the world.
- ◆ The English versions of many of our liturgical texts are used as the base language by a number of other countries to guide their own translations. Therefore, it is important that the English translation be as precise and as close to the original as possible.
- ◆ Even in this modern technological age, words are important. During liturgical celebrations, we should pray what we believe, and believe what we pray. In order to do this, translations need to be authentic and accurate.

