

Merry Christmas!

Been away for a while? First of all, welcome home!
Visiting our Parish? First of all, welcome to our Parish!
Wondering what all these revised prayers are?
Read on for more information...

“Today a light will shine upon us, for the Lord is born for us; and he will be called Wondrous God, Prince of peace, Father of future ages: and his reign will be without end.” These poetic words, drawn from the prophet Isaiah and the Gospel of Luke are given in the prayers for the Nativity of the Lord as the entrance “antiphon” or verse. The words beautifully speak of the birth of Jesus Christ who comes into the world as the true light of all nations. It is in the joy of Christ’s coming that we come to offer the Mass and celebrate Jesus Christ who is Emmanuel—God with us.

While the greatest source of joy and renewal in our praying of the Mass this day is in the newborn Christ himself, our own experience today of offering the Mass is marked by its own newness. For, as we pray this Mass, only four weeks have passed since we fully implemented the newly translated prayers of the 3rd edition of the *Roman Missal*. During recent months we have studied the new translations of prayers and have grown in our understanding of the Mass. Back on November 26-27, as we began our Advent journey, we offered the Mass with these new translations for the first time. On this day that we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us reflect momentarily on how the words of the prayers for Mass impact our celebration. First, however, some background is needed on the new prayers themselves.

In the year 2000 the most recent version of the book that is used in celebrating the Mass, called the *Roman Missal*, was issued—but only in the Latin language. Since 2000 much work has gone into translating the Latin version into the various languages. In 2009, the translation of the *Missal* into English was completed, and in 2010 it was officially approved for use.

Over the past year, parishes throughout the English-speaking world (there are eleven countries!) have been preparing to implement the English version of this latest edition of the *Roman Missal*. Here in the United States all parishes were to prepare so as to be ready to use this edition fully beginning on November 27. ***Today, as we celebrate Christmas, we have not only completed such preparation; we here at the Parish of St. John the Baptist–Holy Angels continue our tradition of preparing and celebrating Liturgy well and***



have truly begun to pray and sing the Mass anew and are continually being renewed in our prayer. We invite you to come back and join us.

Our Christmas Masses today illustrate what is new and beautiful in the new English translation of the prayers. One very visible change that you may have observed are references in the worship aid or parish bulletin to today’s holy day as “The Nativity of the Lord.” Likewise, the prayers of the Mass that directly speak of today’s celebration regularly refer to Jesus’ birth using this same word “nativity.” You may have also noticed some different words used during Mass such as “consubstantial” and “chalice,” or the phrase “and with your spirit.” All of these choices of words reflect how the English translations of the original Latin prayer texts are more literal, using more

elevated, sacral, and doctrinal language.

Today, as we celebrate the Lord’s Nativity, the words used in the prayers make the meaning of this holy day even clearer. In particular, that the prayers frequently speak of Jesus as “incarnate” expresses that God has taken on the nature of man “in the flesh” in the person of Jesus Christ. The “birth” of Christ is only one moment in the truth of his being incarnate and living in the human condition.

In days to come, our prayers of the Mass will continue to be opened up to many opportunities for deeper understanding of our faith and the words that we pray. ***May today’s celebration of the Nativity of the Lord, when Jesus is born for us as the light who shines upon us, help to illumine our path, that we might always pray and sing the Mass in the joy that comes from Christ our Lord.***

If you are interested in learning more about what was taught and distributed in the parish from September to November, please log on to our parish website, www.stjohn-holyangels.com, and click on “Parish Bulletin” for all of the inserts.

On the back of this page, you will find a summary of the information to answer some basic questions you may have. If you still have questions, please contact Stephen Adams, Director of Liturgy & Music, at sadams@holyangels.net.

What is the Roman Missal?

Beginning on the First Sunday of Advent, 2011, (this past November 26) all the countries of the “English speaking world” (the United States, Australia, Canada, England and Wales, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Scotland, and South Africa) began the use of a revised translation of the *Order of Mass* and the Prayers of the Mass.

Why a revised Missal?

The Church is the living “Body of Christ” and as we journey through time, we grow in grace and experience. The current Second Edition of the Roman Missal in English (previously called “The Sacramentary”) was published in 1985. In the past 26 years many Masses (for example, for new saints) have been added to the Calendar and to the Prayers of the Mass and has led to this moment where the book itself needs to be both reprinted and “upgraded.”

Why a revised translation of the Mass and the Prayers of the Mass?

The reprinting of the *Missal* gave the Church the opportunity to evaluate if the language we use to pray in the Liturgy is in harmony with the original text of the prayers. After study and prompting from Pope John Paul II, it was decided more formal translation rules needed to be used to revise the original translations of the 1960s and 70s.

Is the Mass “changing?” Are we going “back” to Pre-Vatican II times?

No. The structure and order of the Mass have not changed since the reforms of the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s and 70s. However, some of the responses and the common prayers which we use will have a different translation to which we are most familiar. The language of the Liturgy is now more formal, more poetic, and makes more use of Sacred Scriptures (biblical texts).

What is translated differently?

In addition to the prayers used by the priests, the following are revised translations:

- The greeting response of “And also with you” became “And with your Spirit.”
- There are revisions to the text of the *Gloria* to reflect more fully the original Latin texts.
- There are revisions to the text of the *Nicene Creed* to reflect more fully the original Latin and Greek texts; we now profess “I believe.” This does not mean our belief system has changed; it is still the same.
- During the Preface to the *Eucharistic Prayer*, the response to “It is right to give him thanks and praise” has become “It is right and just.”
- The *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy) saw a revision from “God of power and might” to “God of hosts.”
- The use of “Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again” is no longer one of the options for the *Memorial Acclamation*. It never appeared in the original Latin and was not meant to be used for a long period of time like it came to be.
- The response following the raising of the chalice and bread has become, “*Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed*” to reflect the story of the Roman Centurion from the Gospels of Saints Matthew and Luke.

What is new in the Third Edition of the Roman Missal?

- Restoration of the “Prayers over the People” for the each of the days of Lent
- Vigil Masses for the Solemnities of the Epiphany and the Ascension
- Additional Masses for Various Needs and Occasions and new Votive Masses (such as a Pro-life Mass)
- The inclusion of the Eucharistic Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions
- Masses for all the new saints canonized by Blessed Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI
- Additional rubrics for celebration of Masses during Triduum (Holy Week)

For more information please go to:
stjohn-holyangels.com and click on “Parish Bulletin” OR uscgb.org/romanmissal