

## THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE MASS ...

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### SOME PRINCIPAL IDEAS CONCERNING THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE MASS

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#### Reasons for change:

- The Mass is the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ; it is public worship and **not a social meeting**.
- We are invited to participate in this Divine Sacrifice and liturgy. We do not come to be entertained but to be renewed.
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist was given to the Church and **not to any individual**.
- Each Sacrament has **its own form and matter** – as is with the Sacrament of the Eucharist,
- **Nobody can change** anything on his own personal authority, (Vat. II)
- The Mass is not about **“feeling good”** it is about **“doing right”**, following the instructions of Christ.
- The Mass was **instituted by Christ** for our salvation not for our entertainment.
- The words the Mass contains aren't there for their psychological meaning or reason. They're there because **they mean something theologically**, because they say something true and important about God, the world and the human condition.
- Many of those words were first used in the Mass by the apostles, the saints and the Church Fathers. They were drawn **from the scrolls of Hebrew Scripture** and the written and oral tradition of the Church.
- Indeed, some **are the very words of Christ** and **we cannot alter them** in a capricious way.
- Others are the words of those who followed Him. Through the centuries, the faithful have given their lives to say those words. They've also given their lives to ensure that **the right words were said**.

For all these reasons and more, the words of **the Mass matter**. They matter a great deal. That's why the forthcoming changes to the translation that English-speaking Catholics use in the Sacred Liturgy aren't about theological quibbling (pedantry) or liturgical minutiae (niceties). It's serious business ... although serious business that takes a bit of time and study to understand.

So, what are some of the changes Catholics will encounter starting on Nov. 27, the first Sunday of Advent, that seem small but are actually quite significant?

***The Lord be with you ...***

Now we say, **“And also with you.”**

Beginning Nov. 27, we'll say, **“And with your spirit.”**



#### WHY

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To start with, it's accurate. In the original Latin, whenever the priest says to the people **“Dominus vobiscum”** (“The Lord be with you”), the people's response is **“Et cum spiritu tuo”**, literally “And with your spirit.”

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The words of the Mass are there **for a reason**. And the response “And with your spirit” conveys something different than “And also with you”. The latter sounds like a cultural greeting, which was the point. The original translators wanted something that sounded more like everyday speech. But it can sound like the congregation is saying, ‘Right back at you, Father,’ or ‘You too.’”

Please notice that some priests went even further and instead of the liturgical "**the Lord be with you**" they were introducing a totally, not-liturgical, "**Good morning (evening) everybody**". This is an abuse.

And that's not what the Latin phrase means. **It's not just another way of saying "hi" to the priest.**

Rather, **Et cum spiritu tuo** is "**a liturgical greeting given to the priest at four significant moments, when the priest is about to do something that, by virtue of Holy Orders, he has been ordained to do:**

- **preside over the Mass,**
- **proclaim the Gospel,**
- **pray the Eucharistic prayers and**
- **dismiss the congregation"**

The congregation's response is intended **TO REMIND THE PRIEST WHO HE IS**, that he has been ontologically changed by ordination, and that **it's the spirit of Christ, to which his own spirit has been configured,** which allows him to carry out those sacred tasks. It's meant to be a reminder that **what the priest is doing is not about him.** It's a reminder that **this isn't about Father and Father's Mass.** It's about Father allowing Christ to act in him."

Likewise, "**And with your spirit**" isn't intended to suggest that the priest is any holier than his congregation. Rather, it "**expresses a prayer that the ordained may be made worthy of the dignity of their divine calling.**"

The response also reminds the laity of a thing or two. To start with, it reminds the congregation **WHO THE PRIEST IS.**



- **He's not just a representative of the community,**
- **He's not a liturgical animator,**
- **He's there and acting in the **person of Christ**, - "*in Persona Christi*",**
- **He is there as the **ORDAINED MINISTER of Christ**, and not acting as an individual, elected and designated by the community.**
- **He **makes present** the Passion and Death of Christ Himself,**
- **He acts in the Spirit of Christ and not on his own personal or private authority,**
- **So we are greeting his spirit, the Spirit of Christ.**

It also **reminds the laity**, that **the priest is doing for them what they cannot do for themselves.** Through the grace of the Holy Spirit he has been conformed to Christ and is therefore able to transform gifts of bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood.

Mass should be the **Sacrifice of Christ** ...and, if it is not it is a **sacrilege!!!**

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There is a second change emphasizing the same idea:

Until now, after the preparation of the gifts, the priest was inviting us to pray:

**Pray, brethren, that OUR sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.**

Starting Nov. 27 the priest will say

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),  
that **MY** sacrifice and **YOURS**  
may be acceptable to God,  
the almighty Father.



Once again it is not to make a separation between "me" and "you", but to remind us that this is not mine or yours, or our Sacrifice but the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the priest pronouncing the words: " that **MY** sacrifice and **YOURS**" is saying them "IN PERSONA CHRISTI".

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### THE SECOND IDEA:

#### PRO MULTIS

Now the priest says:

*"This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and FOR ALL so that sins may be forgiven."*

Beginning Nov. 27 he will say:

"For this is the **chalice** of my Blood, the Blood of the new and **eternal** covenant, which will be **poured out for you and FOR MANY** for the forgiveness of sins."

Here's why:

In the Sacred Liturgy, there is no moment more important or more filled with grace than when the **priest repeats Christ's words**, first spoken at the Last Supper, and the bread and wine become Christ's Body and Blood.

For the past 40 years, English-speaking Catholics have heard those words of consecration, when spoken over the **cup**, translated as: "Take this, all of you, and drink from it: This is the **cup** of my blood, the blood

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of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for **all** so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me.”

Most of those changes won't raise any eyebrows. **Chalice, rather than cup** (cup is too vernacular it is the mug, the goblet, etc.) **the Poured, rather than shed. Eternal, rather than everlasting.** Each has its significance, and together they give a more reverent tone to the prayer, but none are controversial or puzzling. The same can't be said, however, of the phrase, “**for you and for MANY.**”

At first hearing, it sounds as if the Church is saying that Christ didn't die for everyone, that there's some special class of individuals who aren't of “salvation-grade quality”. But that can't be what the Church actually means. Or is it?

The answer is no ... and yes. **Christ did die for everyone.** He **offers salvation to all.** But **not everyone accepts what he offers.** That's what the phrase “for you and for **MANY**” reminds us. And that's what the original Latin says.

In Latin, the phrase used is “**QUI PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS**”, which literally means “for you and for many,” or “for you and the many.” “The many” can mean the same thing as “all,” but traditionally that's not how the phrase has been interpreted, not by Catholics and not by Protestants who continue to use the words “for many” in their own communion services.

In part, “**for many**” because **the passage is a translation of the words Jesus spoke at the Last Supper, words which refer to a passage from Isaiah 53 about the suffering servant who would make many righteous.**

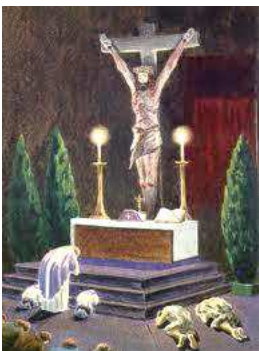
It's also been translated as “many” rather than “all,” because of Jesus' own words about heaven and hell in Matthew 7:14: “**How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few.**”

On a spring day outside Jerusalem, the Second Person of the Trinity saved every member of the human race, potentially. It's **'potentially' because not everyone will be saved.** The Lord says that in the Gospel.

Again, however, **that's not to say that Jesus doesn't want to save everyone. He does.**

But, in order to receive salvation, something on our part needs to happen. **We don't earn our salvation, but we need to embrace it and live it.**

Our decisions have consequences. We're not Jansenists, whose crucifixes were long and narrow, signifying that only a few would be saved. Our crucifixes have Christ's arms spread wide to show that salvation is for the many. But **if we eliminate human choice, then morality has no meaning or content,** i.e., one can do whatever one pleases and just presume God will forgive all offenses without repentance. But that's not how it works, and presumption is a sin against the Holy Spirit.”



BY RETURNING TO THE TRADITIONAL “FOR YOU AND FOR MANY,” THE CHURCH ASKS US TO REMEMBER THAT:

- The words remind us, that **there is no such thing as automatic salvation.** Just because someone poured water on your head 50 years ago doesn't

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- mean you're saved!
- The language, these words, also force us to **confront our own sins**.
  - They're meant to be **a call to an examination of conscience**. At every given celebration of the Mass, they're an invitation to ask, 'Where do I stand? I recognize Christ has died, so what have I done to accept it?'

### AND FINALLY THE THIRD IDEA BEHIND THE RETURN TO ORIGINAL TEXT

#### *Mea Culpa, Mea Culpa, Mea Maxima Culpa*

Presently, we say:

"I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters that I have sinned through my own fault in my thoughts and in my deeds, in what I have done and what I have failed to do."

**Beginning Nov. 27, we'll say:**

"I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have **greatly sinned** in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and what I have failed to do, **through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.**"

#### HERE'S WHY:

The new translation of the Roman Missal won't just bring a change in words. It will also **bring a change in tone, calling for greater humility** from both the priest and the congregation.

Likewise, in the introduction to the penitential rite, the priest **no longer calls** upon the congregation **to "acknowledge our failures,"** but rather to **"acknowledge our sins."**

To some, the changes might sound a bit like an invocation to breast beating, rather like the Church is calling congregants to indulge in some "good old-fashioned Catholic guilt". But that's not what's happening.

As with the other changes, the new translation is just faithfully rendering what's always been there in the original Latin. And what's there isn't there to make us think badly about ourselves. It's there to make us think correctly about ourselves.

**The words are intended to help us realize how grateful we should be.** In spite of the fact that we've gravely sinned and have grievous faults, we have a God of mercy who died for us. We need to realize the gift that our salvation is.

We also need to **realize that we all need that salvation.**

In our current culture, many people, Catholics included, have an **'I'm OK, you're OK' attitude**. But **we're not**. We're broken people in need of being fixed. We need God. We're completely dependent on Him,

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and without him, we're nothing. Unfortunately, most of us only remember that in times of great need. The language of the Mass tries to help us realize that in good times as well.

It also reminds us that God is not a vending machine for spiritual and material favours, dispensing grace at our command.

In the new translation, you hear the priest saying things such as, 'humbly we beg you,' 'we beseech you,' 'be pleased to grant'. There's less bossing, less 'Lord do this,' and more petitioning, more 'Lord, grant this we humbly pray.'

That can sound like groveling or begging. But it's not. It articulates the truth that we don't dare just present a list of demands to God. We're not engaged in commodity trading. Everything is a gift and only because God is gracious and merciful do we dare approach him, let alone receive the gift of a response.

In articulating that, the new translation does what the Mass is supposed to do:

**It puts us in right relationship with God. It also reminds us who we are.**

We are beggars before God. We are not His equals. He's not "our buddy". He is our Creator, and as His creatures we owe him adoration. We haven't come to Mass to give orders, but to receive orders. The current texts have blocked that distinction.

**All this matters, of course, because in the journey to holiness, humility is a must.**

Humility involves real knowledge of self. Even the ancient pagan Greeks understood the importance of that. 'Know thy-self,' said the Delphic Oracle. Christians recognize humility as the first rung on the ladder to perfection. The final rung is charity, but the journey starts with humility. It's where the path of perfection begins.

Generally speaking the background for the more faithful translation is

**More praise for God.**  
**Throughout the new translation, God is more fully and faithfully praised.**  
**We stress the sacredness and holiness of the Eucharist.**  
**We avoid the wrong "creativity" of some bold, self-confident and even arrogant priests of the past.**