



Sacred Heart

Catholic Church

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Homily Fr. Paul Ward

Saturday, July 16, and Sunday, July 17, 2011

16th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Imlay City

New Translations, n.2 Greeting, Penitential Rite and Sprinkling Rite

Last Sunday I introduced the topic of the New Translations which we will be using in America starting on the first week of Advent. These new translations adhere to the Latin, as opposed to the current translations which follow more nebulous criteria.

As promised, today we will be discussing the greeting, the penitential rite and the sprinkling rite. The ushers should have already passed out to the congregation some aids to follow this homily a bit more clearly, with the Latin on one side, the current translation in the middle, and the new translation on the right. [To spare lots of time, paper, toner and wear on our photocopy machine, I would ask that you not destroy these photocopies and please return them at the end of Mass for parishioners of the next Mass to use. These will be on the parish web site if anyone wishes to look at them at home.]

The priest, at the beginning of Mass, kisses the altar, which is a symbol of Christ, and a “permanent sign of Jesus Christ among his people.”^[1] This is a liturgical expression of reverence. “It is... the salutation of the place where the holy mystery will be consummated.”^[2] He may incense the altar, which we do here on the first Sunday of the month at the 10am Mass, and on some solemnities: a symbol of purification and of prayer.

Then, invoking the name of the Trinity, and making the sign of that cross upon which the Incarnate Son of God redeemed us, the congregation assents with an “Amen.” The words of

the sign of the cross are not affected by the new translations.

Then the priest greets the congregation. I put on your sheets the greeting I most often use, but others are available. [Direct them how to follow me on the sheet. Mention bold/underline “attention getters.”] Little has changed here, except you will notice that the word “communion” takes the place of “fellowship.” “Fellowship” may refer to any association, even a business one, where there is a common interest. “Communion” is a better translation of the Latin term “communicatio” has both “union” and “communion” at its root, perfect terms to describe the effect of charity upon a soul as regards God and neighbor; but also, because the Latin term here means more specifically an *imparting*. That is, the Holy Spirit, who is the *Gift of the Father and of the Son*, is desired upon the entire congregation by the priest celebrant.

Then all respond notably, no longer, “And also with you,” but “And with your spirit,” which is what the Latin actually says. This is an ancient formula used in the earliest centuries, and founded in the scriptures.^[3] The “spirit” referred to is the Holy Spirit the priest received when he was ordained; indeed, the laity, should they lead any liturgical rite such as the Liturgy of the Hours, may never use this dialogue (“The Lord be with you/And with your spirit”), as it is reserved to the clergy, because they have the sacrament of Holy Orders. Thus God is invoked upon the congregation, but the assistance of the Holy Spirit’s actual grace is invoked especially upon the priest, that he may faithfully execute that priestly office which infinitely exceeds him as a poor, sinful creature.

We move on to the “I confess.” It is not the only penitential rite, but it is the one I usually prefer using, as it is the only one found in the Tridentine Mass, and therefore has a certain weight of tradition behind it. It is the moment to confess publicly before God and man that we are sinners, and beg for God’s abundant mercy. Just after the year 1184, the congregation confessed not only “to you my brothers,” but also to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to St. Michael the Archangel, to St. John the Baptist and to the apostles Peter and Paul. In the post Vatican II Mass, promulgated under Pope Paul VI in 1969, if I am not mistaken, that small litany of angels and saints was eliminated.

Let us pray that prayer together. [Recite it.]

You will notice two changes above all the rest: we now admit not only that we have sinned, but that we have done so “greatly.” Also, we say three times “through my fault,” on the third time adding the words “my *most grievous* fault.” This is what we should have been saying for decades, for these are the words found in the Latin, but the current translations do not reflect the Latin precisely.

One might say that there is an emphasis on how great and wicked our sins are; and that is a good thing, for it is true, and we have no grasp of how great and wicked, in fact, our sins are! “Father,” the Lord said, “Forgive them, for they *know not* what they do!” By repeating *three* times “my fault,” we employ the Hebrew form of the superlative, which we see used elsewhere as when the angels cried out to one another in Isaiah 6, “Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God of hosts (or armies).” Let us not shy away from the truth of our own sinfulness, but pursue humility, that God’s mercy may make us sinners holy.

There has been discussion whether to strike oneself in the breast once or thrice, as the rubrics simply say, “Striking their breast, they say...” But since three strikes was how it was done for many, many centuries in the Church, and even to this day, and since we only did it once because of the wording of the new translation, and since no number of strikes is indicated, prudence would say we should strike ourselves three times.

I am also happy to see that the words “Virgin,” “Saints” and “Angels” are all capitalized, as they are in the Latin. If that is but a small point, let us recognize it as an improvement over

the current translations.

Only one note about the sprinkling rite: that in the coming year, on one Sunday per month, we shall begin to incorporate it, so that this liturgical option may be a familiar and normal experience for us all. We will only begin, however, to do it after we have adequately trained the altar boys and musicians.

As you see, much more could be said. These introductions of mine intend not to be comprehensive, but to touch only on some main points. I will often preach about the Mass for years to come, and we will have a long time to consider every detail of the new translation with loving prayer and meditation.

Next week we shall see the Kyrie (Lord have mercy) and the Gloria (Glory to God in the highest).

May Mary help us always participate more perfectly in every Mass. Amen.■

[1] Peter Elliot, *Ceremonies of the Modern Roman Rite*, Ignatius (San Francisco), 1st ed. 1995, p. 75.

[2] Jungmann, I, 314.

[3] E.g., Ruth 2:4, 2 Tim 4:22.

[Please click here for the translation aid.](#)

New Translations of the English Roman Missal (Advent 2011) – Homily Aid for Congregation #1

Which part of the Mass:	Latin Misal (source)	Current Translation	New Translation
One of the greetings after the sign of the cross (there are others), which Fr. Ward prefers to use more often	<p><i>Priest:</i> Gratia Domini nostri Iesu Christi, et caritas Dei, et communicatio Sancti Spiritus sit cum omnibus vobis.</p> <p><i>People:</i> Et cum spiritu tuo.</p>	<p><i>Priest:</i> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.</p> <p><i>People:</i> And also with you.</p>	<p><i>Priest:</i> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.</p> <p><i>People:</i> And with your spirit.</p>
“Confiteor,” or “I confess”	<p><i>Priest:</i> Fratres, agnoscamus peccata nostra, ut apti simus ad sacra mysteria veneranda.</p> <p>(Pause.)</p> <p><i>People:</i> Confiteor Deo omnipotenti et vobis, fraters, quia peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo, opere et omissione: (They strike their breast 3x.) mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.</p> <p>Ideo precor beatam Mariam semper Virginem, omnes Angelos et Sanctos, et vos, fratres, orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.</p>	<p><i>Priest:</i> My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries, let us call to mind our sins.</p> <p>(Pause.)</p> <p><i>People:</i> I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned through my own fault (They strike their breast.) In my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do;</p> <p>and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.</p>	<p><i>Priest:</i> Brethren, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.</p> <p>(Pause.)</p> <p><i>People:</i> 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 in what I have failed to do, (Striking their breast, they say): <u>through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;</u></p> <p>therefore I ask <u>blessed Mary ever-Virgin,</u> all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.</p>