



# The Roman Missal Translation

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As we continue to explore the new Roman Missal translation, let's take a look at some of its specific characteristics. Have you ever gone on a guided tour of an art museum? If so, you probably noticed how the tour guide provided insight into the major characteristics of each painting. A good guide will point out how artists intentionally use light, color, texture, shapes, and so on to express themselves. In a similar way, the words we use in worship can be compared to works of art. This is no ordinary language—it's ritual language. With that in mind, the translators of the 3rd Edition of the Roman Missal intentionally sought to make certain characteristics obvious, thus bringing out the depth, beauty, and rich meaning of the words we pray at Mass.

One of the first characteristics you'll notice is a more formal, elevated style of language. For example, in Eucharistic Prayer I you'll hear, *"To you, therefore, most merciful Father, we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord."* Remember, when we pray the texts of the Mass, we are addressing God the Father—the almighty creator of the universe—and the style of the English translation reflects this characteristic of the Missal texts.

### Look for biblical allusions in this Roman Missal translation

A second characteristic of the Roman Missal translation is that the biblical allusions, and in many instances the quotes from Scripture, that are found in the Latin texts are more obvious. A good example of this is the invitation to Holy Communion and the response. The priest will say, *"Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb."* The allusions are to the Gospel of St. John (1:29) and to Revelation (19:9). We will then respond to the invitation, *"Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."* This is almost a direct quote from the account of the Centurion in Luke's Gospel (7:6-7).

Another characteristic of the new Roman Missal English translation is how closely it follows the poetry and literary style of the Latin. For example, in the *Gloria* we will sing, *"We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father."* Notice the poetic quality and the repetitive cadence of *"We praise...we bless...we adore...we glorify..."*

## Bringing the world together through the Roman Missal

There's one other characteristic you'll notice. In many instances, the English translation of the Latin texts is more closely in line with the translations of other languages in the world. For example, in almost every other major language of the world, the response to "*The Lord be with you*" has always been "*And with your Spirit.*" This is how it is translated in Spanish, French, Italian, German, Polish . . . even in the African language of *isiZulu*. The translation of the Mass texts can serve as a beautiful reminder that, as the Scriptures tell us, we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Just as we pause to take in the beauty and complexity of a work of art, we also need to stand back and look carefully at the words of the new Roman Missal translation, allowing them to speak to us at a deeper level than do ordinary words and phrases. Over time, as we continue to ponder and reflect on these words and images, they will reveal to us ever-deeper levels of meaning that we may miss at first glance. In doing so, they draw us deeper and deeper into the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ.

- Make participation at Sunday Eucharist a priority. Go over the readings in advance and offer a prayer for those who will be celebrating the Mass in your parish and around the world.
- Dress with care. As you get ready for the day, consider what thoughts and attitudes you will wear that reflect the mind and heart of Christ.
- Allow enough time to arrive at church early in order to greet others in your community. Consider what offering you, can bring to the parish to help it grow and flourish as the people of God.
- Take time after communion to thank God for the gifts in your life. Center on one or two, and bring that prayer into the week ahead.
- As you get ready to retire for the night, go back over the day and reflect on one way Christ has been revealed to you through prayer, community, and your faith.