

Introducing **The Roman Missal, Third Edition**

What are the changes and Why?

Changes in the Penitential Act - (*Confiteor*)

The *Confiteor* is one of those prayers every Mass-going Catholic knows, but may not be aware of its name. The name is taken from the very first word of the prayer in Latin, *Confiteor*, which essentially means “I confess”. Since Catholics have a whole sacrament dedicated to the confession of sins they might wonder why the *Confiteor* is part of the Mass. Essentially the *Confiteor* is a necessary preparation for what we participate in at Mass, a work of the Lord. In the new translation we have a new version of the *Confiteor* that is slightly different from the current version.

| Current Version | New Version |
|---|--|
| 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 words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; 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. | 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, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore 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. |

The most obvious change in the above new version is the restoration in English of the Latin triple declaration of culpability for one’s sins, accompanied by **restoring the physical action of striking one’s breast three times** -- *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*, “through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.”

The conclusion of the entire Act of Penitence remains the same, with the *Confiteor* always being followed by the invocation, “Lord, have mercy...Christ, have mercy...Lord, have mercy.” This supplication may also be said in the original tongue: “*Kyrie, eleison...Christe, eleison...Kyrie,eleison.*” The *Kyrie* is actually not Latin, but Greek, which is a still more ancient liturgical language.

(...to be continued)

Prepared by: Father Joy Varkey

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