

## Five Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Why is there a need for a new translation?

Pope John Paul II issued the third edition of the *Missale Romanum* (the Latin text of the Roman Missal) during the Jubilee Year in 2000. This new edition included many new texts requiring translation. In addition, the experience of the years since the Second Vatican Council gave rise to a desire for more formal and literal translations of the original Latin texts. This new translation will employ the best of what we have learned about translation and liturgical language in two generations of celebrating the Liturgy in the vernacular. It will provide an opportunity to reflect ever more deeply on the Eucharistic celebration that lies at the heart of the Church's life.

### 2. Who completed the work of translation?

Promulgated by Pope John Paul II in the year 2000, this new edition of the Roman Missal is the fruit of a highly consultative work of several groups for a period of nearly ten years. The International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the other member Conferences of Bishops, and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (Vatican) are the main groups who carried out the work of translation.

### 3. Can we start using the texts approved by the bishops immediately?

The translation of the *Missale Romanum* could not be used in the celebration of the Mass until the complete text was confirmed by the Holy See. Now that the translation has received the *recognitio*, the USCCB has established the first day on which the new translation may be used. Use of the revised text requires preparation and catechesis for both priests and the faithful. When the time comes to use the texts in the celebration of the Mass, priests will be properly trained, the faithful will have an understanding and appreciation of what is being prayed, and musical settings for the liturgical texts will be readily available.

### 4. If my parish likes the old translation better, can we continue using that one?

Now that the Holy See has granted the *recognitio* to the revised translation, the USCCB has established a date for first use and a date for mandatory use. No parish may continue to use the current translation after the mandatory use date. Parishes will need to use the period before the mandatory use date to help parishioners renew their love for the Sacred Liturgy, to understand the changes, and to develop an appreciation for the revised translation.

### 5. Do these changes mean that the old translation was not valid and orthodox?

The current translation was approved by the Conferences of bishops and confirmed by the Holy See. Until the new text becomes effective, it remains the valid ordinary form of the Liturgy in the Roman Rite. The revised translation attempts to address some inadequacies in the present translation by introducing a more elevated style of language and by retaining many poetic texts and scriptural allusions. The current translation fostered the faith of two generations of Catholics and retains a valid place in church history.

**Prepared by: Father Joy Varkey**

*"Based upon Roman Missal Formational Materials provided by the Secretariat for the Liturgy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010."*