



NewsLetter

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USCCB Approves Final Segments of the *Roman Missal*

Concluding a lengthy process that began with the publication of the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia* in 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has given its final approval to the English translation of the third edition of the *Roman Missal* and now awaits the *recognitio* of the Holy See in order to begin the phase of proximate nationwide catechesis and implementation of the liturgical text in the next two years.

During the November 2009 plenary meeting of the USCCB in Baltimore, the final segments of the third edition of the *Roman Missal* were approved by the requisite two-thirds majority of the Latin Church Bishops. The five action items were: the “Gray Books” of the *Commons*, *Proper of Saints*, and *Supplement*, prepared by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), the *Proper of Saints for the Dioceses of the United States of America*, and a list of U.S. adaptations to the *Roman Missal*. All five action items will now be sent to the Holy See for *recognitio*.

ICEL Gray Books: *Commons*, *Proper of Saints*, and *Supplement*

After 48 modifications to the text and seven amendments to the *Commons* Gray Book, the final text was approved by 200 Latin Church members of the USCCB, or 91%. In its Green Book version, some 170 particular suggestions had been made by the American bishops to ICEL. Many of the early concerns about the text were addressed in the Gray Book version. The Gray Book of the *Proper of Saints* received 76 modifications and 19 amendments to the text. With a vote of 195-23, the text was approved by 88%. Finally, the text of the *Supplement* contained the Vigil for Pentecost and additional orations that were not included in the Gray Book of the *Proper of Saints*. With only three amendments to the text, it was approved by 92% or 203 Bishops.

Proper of Saints for the Dioceses of the United States of America

This text contains the proper prayers for the 12 saints and blessed on the U.S. liturgical calendar. Extensive modifications – including 15 amendments – were made to these texts, and the prayers for Independence Day and Thanksgiving Day were carefully examined and revised. Prayers based on an original Latin text were retranslated in accord with the principles of *Liturgiam authenticam*. 199 Latin Rite bishops, or 90%, approved the texts.

U.S. Adaptations to the *Roman Missal*

Finally, the Committee on Divine Worship identified other adaptations contained in the *Proper of Seasons* in the current *Sacramentary*. The bishops had to re-approve

these adaptations in order for them to be included in the new edition of the *Roman Missal*. Only one suggested amendment was made: to allow the diocesan Bishop to permit the celebration of the Easter Vigil in another language for a particular parish community. 92% of the Latin Rite bishops approved the adaptations.

Catechetical Resources for the *Roman Missal*

After the final votes were taken, Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Committee Chairman, addressed the plenary meeting and outlined the process of catechesis for the new *Roman Missal* (see below for the text). Following the address, Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., USCCB President, added the following reflection on the importance of the *Roman Missal*:

“The *Missale Romanum* – the *Roman Missal* – is a book that not only expresses the faith as the people come to understand it, but constantly challenges people to move that faith into what is the heavenly Liturgy. And it is a book that has been defended by martyrs: the English Martyrs at the time of Elizabeth died for the sake of the *Roman Missal* and the Mass that was incorporated in it.

“We have a liturgical tradition that is a necessary part of the Magisterium, of handing on the faith. It is the *Missal*, along with Scripture, that indeed tells us how God wants to intertwine, inter-work in the affairs of the human race. So there is a tremendous moment of religious renewal that is possible now and that I really hope, with the help of our own Committee [on Divine Worship], we will be able to take advantage of it.”

Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond Elected Committee Chairman for 2010-2013

The November 2009 USCCB plenary meeting also saw the election of the next Chairman of the Committee on Divine Worship. By a vote of 126 to 110, Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond of New Orleans was elected over Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit to lead the Committee beginning on November 18, 2010 through November 14, 2013.

Prior to being appointed the 14th Archbishop of New Orleans in June 2009, Archbishop Aymond served nine years in Austin, Texas, first as Coadjutor Bishop (2000-2001) and then as its 4th Bishop (2001-2009). He also served a term as Chairman of the USCCB Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People from 2005 to 2008, and is a member of the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations and the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth.

Bishop Serratelli Announces Catechetical Opportunities for the New *Roman Missal*

On November 17, 2009, following the approval of the final segments of the third edition of the Roman Missal, Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Committee Chairman, addressed the USCCB plenary meeting. His remarks are provided below for the benefit of our readers:

We have come to an historic moment. After much collaboration on the international, national, and diocesan levels, with clergy and laity, with experts and the faithful, after hours of discussion and debate, we have completed our work as a national conference on the translation. I wish to thank not only our present Committee on Divine Worship, both bishops and staff, but also our previous two Committees on the Liturgy, under His Eminence [Francis] Cardinal George and Bishop [Donald] Trautman, for all their careful and competent work. With honesty and diversity, with enthusiasm and passion, we have debated vocabulary, syntax, sentence structure, and proclaimability. Even the best of all possible translations of the new *Missal* will not suit every individual's preference. But there is something much more at stake.

Liturgical language is important for the life of the Church. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*. In liturgy, the words addressed to God and the words spoken to the people voice the Faith of the whole Church. They are not simply expressions of one individual in one particular place at one time in history. The words used in liturgy pass on the faith of the Church from one generation to the next. For this reason, we bishops take seriously our responsibility to provide for the faithful translations of liturgical texts that are accurate and inspiring. Hence, the sometimes rather passionate discussion of words, syntax, and phrases. Following the instruction of *Liturgiam Authenticam*, the new translation does provide us with prayers that are theologically accurate, in a language with dignity and beauty that can be understood (cf. *Liturgiam Authenticam*, 25).

When put into effect, the new *Missal* will come as the result of years of growth and understanding. It will improve our liturgical prayer, but it will not be perfect. No translation is. But the new translation is good and worthy of our use. Perfection will come when the Liturgy on earth gives way to that of heaven, where all the saints praise God with one voice.

As Pope John Paul II said on the 25th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, this is the moment "to renew that spirit which inspired the Church at the moment when the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was... promulgated" (*Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, 23). In the days ahead, as the discussion and debates recede into the background, we should be united as bishops in inspiring our clergy and laity to receive the new text with enthusiasm and, to quote our Holy Father of happy memory, to accept the new *Missal* as "a moment to sink our roots deeper into the soil of tradition handed on in the Roman Rite" (*ibid.*).

Now that we have reviewed all the material for the *Missal*, we turn our attention to the process of catechesis, a catechesis that needs to be undertaken to prepare for the reception of the new text. At the present moment we are in the remote stage of preparation, and this remote stage will last until the *recognitio* is given for the text. The proximate preparation will begin when the *recognitio* is given, and then will last for a period of 12 months.

It is good to know: a number of publishers have already been preparing materials to be made available. The Leeds Group, a group of scholars preparing an international English multimedia catechetical resource in collaboration with ICEL, is working very hard. The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions is also working hard to provide extensive materials for use in our dioceses. The Committee on Divine Worship has created a very good website [www.USCCB.org/romanmissal] containing background material and information on the already-approved *Ordo Missæ*. We need, as bishops, to encourage everyone—clergy and faithful—to use the materials that are available, or will be available, in preparing for the new translation.

In parishes, material could easily be placed in parish bulletins beginning now. Priests can be encouraged to go to the website, to look at the prayers, and to become familiar with them. We have also provided on the website bibliographical material to encourage further reading, because this moment is not simply about new texts, but about continuing the liturgical revival since the Second Vatican Council.

By the end of this month, the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions hopes to have available for sale the first part of a resource that has been developed by the liturgical commissions of the dioceses of Illinois and Indiana. The FDLC has prepared a collection of essays, to be published in the spring. Our own Bishop [Gerald] Kicanas has written one of the articles, and those articles present some basic aspects of translation and implementation that can be useful even for us. At this point, I would say, as Bishops, we should be ensuring that the parishes begin to make use of these many resources.

While the full text of the *Roman Missal* still awaits final approval, there is sufficient material to provide the people with the information that will be helpful. This is the time when the general theological context about of the Mass can be presented. In the spring, the FDLC and the Secretariat of Divine Worship will host a series of 20 workshops in various regions of the United States. These workshops will be for priests and diocesan leaders. It will provide them with the material that they can use and allow them to train the people and prepare for the implementation of the new text within their own dioceses.

Once the *recognitio* is given, the date then will be set for the first use of the new translation. At that time, even more catechetical material will be available. Both the Leeds Group and the FDLC will have a whole range of material ready at that time. And it is important to note that USCCB Publishing will be printing a Parish Guide that will enable parishes to move step-by-step to ensure a smooth reception of these new liturgical texts.

Merely providing the resources is not enough. We need to encourage people to use them. In fact, some dioceses have already developed a team to oversee the implementation of the new *Roman Missal*. Once the *recognitio* comes, the Committee will urge each bishop to work with parishes to develop a parish plan. Bishops may use various means of communication to convey the message about the *Missal* to their parishes.

The point is rather simple, and in one sentence, it is this: Now is the time to act. We should not wait. And I want to thank all of you for your patience, for your cooperation, and for your approval of these texts. Thank you.

November 2009 Meeting of the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship

Much time was devoted during the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship's meeting on November 15, 2009 in Baltimore, Maryland to the topic of proximate catechesis for the forthcoming third edition of the *Roman Missal*. In addition, the Committee reviewed the final segment of the revised New Testament Lectionary readings for the Sundays in Ordinary Time. The discussions of the Committee should be of interest to all who are considering catechesis for the new translation of the *Roman Missal*.

Resources from the USCCB

Three main resources are being offered by the USCCB: the existing *Roman Missal* website (www.USCCB.org/romanmissal), a Parish Implementation Guide to be published by USCCB Publishing, and a series of 20 two-day workshops to catechize priests and diocesan leaders on implementing and catechizing on the new translation of the *Roman Missal*, co-sponsored by the USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship and the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), and supported by the National Organization for the Continuing Education of Roman Catholic Clergy (NOCERCC).

The Committee took three actions relative to these resources. First, they encouraged dioceses and pastors to make use of as much of the material that is now available on the website in anticipation of the *recognitio* next year. The website will also be reviewed and updated to ensure that all present and future materials are made easily accessible as the proximate preparation time draws closer. Second, Committee members suggested that part of the Parish Implementation Guide be made available to give pastors a sense of what to expect. USCCB Publishing will give consideration to this idea. Finally, the Committee agreed that the workshops were a good use of the resources of the Secretariat, and also instructed the Secretariat to devote the December 2009 issue of the *Newsletter* to detailing all of the catechetical resources and opportunities available for the new *Roman Missal*.

Resources from the FDLC

The Committee reviewed the text of a forthcoming FDLC publication, which includes a foreword by Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Committee Chairman, and an essay written by Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, USCCB Vice President. This resource of four in-depth essays will be the foundation for many other resources that the FDLC will be producing. Msgr. John Burton and Mrs. Lisa Tarker of the FDLC updated the Committee on additional resources. One is a manual for implementing the *Missal* produced by the liturgical offices of the dioceses in Illinois and Indiana, and another is a "boxed workshop," which can be tailored and offered by individual dioceses.

Resources from the Leeds Group

Finally, members of the Committee reviewed some of the early materials that have been worked on by the Leeds Group, a group of liturgical experts producing resource materials for the implementation to be offered by ICEL. One of the members of that group, Msgr. Kevin Irwin, provided the Committee with further information. The group will meet in London in December to further review the materials in production.