

Dear Parishioners,

Toward the end of this New Year, in November of 2011, Catholics in the United States will begin using a new English translation of the Roman Missal. This is the third such revision of the prayers we use at Sunday Eucharist since the Second Vatican Council. This work of editing and translating has been going on for almost a decade. Parish priests and lay ministers are beginning to receive more information about the new Missal. You will undoubtedly see articles in the coming months in both Catholic as well as secular magazines and newspapers. A helpful website for information is www.usccb.org/romanmissal.

During this past Advent I sent a small brochure to those parishioners involved in our parish liturgies as readers, ministers of communion and the like. During the next several weeks I want to use this space for articles about the coming changes as well as general information about what we do on Sunday morning and its importance to us as Roman Catholics. I hope they will make for interesting reading and prove to be helpful to you and to your family.

We have arranged for two speakers in early February. Michael McMahon, President of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, and Father Paul Colloton, Director of Continuing Education for the same association, will provide information as to the background of this most recent edition of the Roman Missal as well as an overview of changes we can expect. Time will be provided for questions you may have.

The changes in the new missal involve only the prayers we use at Mass. In many cases only a phrase or a word or two have been changed. New musical settings will need to be composed for the responses we sing. What we do – our gestures and our ritual actions – however will remain the same.

As with previous changes, this reception of the third edition of the Roman Missal provides an opportunity to reflect on how well we as individuals and as a community celebrate the Sunday Eucharist. Next week look for the first in a series of articles introducing the newly revised Roman Missal.

Let us pray that these latest revisions nourish our faith as the prayers of the Roman Missal have nourished the faith of the Church through the centuries.

With kind regards,

Fr. Bill Schardt