

September 8, 2010

Dearest Parishioners,

Peace in the Lord. I have recently attended a workshop explaining changes that will occur to some of the prayer texts of the Mass in the English language. Currently revisions are being made to the so-called *Roman Missal* (our Missalettes in the pews are a condensed version of it). The *Roman Missal*, a.k.a., the *Sacramentary* is the large book that the priest uses during the celebration of Holy Mass in English. The *Roman Missal*, as well as the Missal in any language, is translated from the Latin edition of the Mass texts, the so-called *Missale Romanum* which was most recently revised in 2002. The *International Commission on English in the Liturgy* (ICEL), a group of liturgy experts representing the English speaking countries of the world (e.g., the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, etc.), is overseeing the latest translation of the *Roman Missal*. Their work is being supervised by Church officials at the Vatican who will eventually approve the revision.

I am informing you of this because, come Advent 2011, the new revision will come in force.

This means that the Mass prayers and responses that we are accustomed to praying now will be revised with *slightly different wording*. To put it succinctly: ***New Words: A Deeper Meaning, but the Same Mass***. For *both* the clergy and lay people, we will have to be trained in the new texts and wording. On the parish level, the training will occur throughout 2011 through our bulletin, from the pulpit, letters to parishioners, pamphlets, training sessions, the parish website, etc. On your own, you can begin informing yourself of the current revisions by accessing the following internet addresses: www.usccb.org/romanmissal or www.fdlc.org.

Any change normally brings some uncertainty and anxiety; I know I feel this way. When we will be actually praying and singing the new texts and words, we will make some mistakes and feel awkward. Nonetheless, these are minor obstacles that we will overcome in time. Most importantly, this time of revision and training will be a “graced moment” for our Church – a time to deepen our understanding of the Holy Mass itself. It will be a time to understand more fruitfully the *rich history and content of the Mass* from various points: biblical, patristic, poetic, and theological. In the end, I hope that this time of reflection will strengthen our prayer life, our faith, and our Christian living.

Fr. Matthew R. Weber

Pastor

P.S. – The revision of the *Roman Missal* is not only for Catholics in the United States, but for all English speaking Catholics throughout the world. Thus this is a propitious time uniting us with fellow Catholics from around the world growing together as one world family in the faith.

My next letter will give a synopsis of the translation process of the *Roman Missal* from the time of Vatican Council II (1962-65) until today. Hopefully it will give a deeper appreciation of this arduous, yet rich process.