

The Roman Missal Translation

Adjusting to the *Roman Missal* translation next Advent 2011 will be a little like moving into a new room. At certain points in our lives we may realize that we have outgrown a room, an apartment, or even a home and that we need more space. While moving into a new space gives us an opportunity to add new furniture, we don't usually throw away all the old. We combine the new pieces with the pieces of furniture that we are bringing along to create a new living space that serves our needs.

In many ways, the need for a third edition of the *Roman Missal* translation is similar. Like the addition of brand-new furniture, some of the third edition includes completely new texts for use at Mass. Much of this third edition, however, will be as familiar to us as old furniture, albeit renewed in its beauty through a new translation. As we prepare to implement the *Roman Missal* translation next Advent, it is important to know why a third edition is needed and in what ways it will be different from its previous editions.

Recall that 10 years ago, much was being made of the turn of the millennium. As we approached the year 2000, grand events were being planned all over the world. The Church was no different. Each of the three years leading up to the turn of the millennium was dedicated to one of the Persons of the Trinity to help Catholics prepare for Y2K. It was this event – the year 2000 – that the pope chose to commemorate by issuing the third edition of the *Roman Missal* translation.

The Roman Missal Translation was Necessary

However, the issuing of another edition of all the texts we use at Mass was not done solely for the millennium. The truth is, we *needed* another edition. Since the second edition was promulgated in 1975, numerous new prayers and other texts had been added to the Missal. This was largely due to the number of saints who had been canonized since 1975. Pope John Paul II canonized more [saints](#) than any other pope in history (some 480). For those whose [feast days](#) were added to the universal liturgical calendar, there were prayer texts for the Masses celebrated on those days. All of these had to be added to the *Roman Missal*.

In addition to these prayers, other texts have been added. For example, in 1995, a new Eucharistic Prayer was issued – the *Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs and Occasions*. Four new Prefaces were part of this text. Since the prayer is not in the current Missal, it has only been available in supplemental form. With the third edition, the *Roman Missal* translation, this prayer will have its rightful place among the other main Eucharistic Prayers we use.

Although moving into a new living space is exciting, it can also be a challenge as we try to recall where things are now compared with our previous space. As we move toward the implementation of the *Roman Missal* translation in Advent 2011, we will no doubt experience the same excitement and challenge that comes with any change. It will only be a matter of time before we adjust and once again feel at home with the words we use to worship our good and gracious God.

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