

“Failure is not fatal, but failure to change might be.”
(Coach John Wooden, d. 2010)

As you already may have heard, on November 27, 2011 – the First Sunday of Advent – Catholic believers in English speaking countries will begin praying a revised translation of the Holy Mass. It will be different for us all because many of the words we use will be different.

The revised English translation of the official Latin version (*Missale Romanum*) has been debated and discussed by English speaking bishops in one way or another for nearly 40 years. Last year the Vatican approved the language changes requested by our bishops.

Many people can recall the Latin language as the language of the Mass. After the Second Vatican Council ended (1965), bishops quickly moved forward to create translations of the official Latin version in their own national languages.

In the United States, the effort brought forth the first English translation of the (still) official Latin version in 1969. The understanding *then* was that the bishops would continue refining the English translation used for Mass, seeking to improve the accuracy of the English translation of the official Latin version.

The goal of the revised translation coming this November, is to make our praise and worship of God conform as closely as possible to the official Latin version. Some of the English words and phrases in the revised translation will feel slightly more formal. The language changes represent a tightening of the belt, not a loosening. The intention is for us to celebrate the splendid beauty and remarkable richness of our great Catholic tradition with English language that is the most fitting for public worship and praise of Almighty God.

The structure of the Mass remains unchanged. The prayers led by the priest along with many of your responses with which we all have grown so familiar over the past 40 years will change.

The revised English translation will be used by no less than 11 different English-speaking countries throughout the world including the USA, Canada, Iceland, Great Britain, Ireland, Scotland, South Africa and Australia.

As an aside, other major language-groups (e.g. German, French, Spanish, and Portuguese) have long since completed their respective revised translations of the Mass.

There are many more changes in store for the priest than for you. Some chants and music used during Mass are being modified slightly like the “Gloria” and “Holy, Holy.”

Now, please don't worry that you won't know what to do or say at Mass! As we approach this historic English translation revision, I will make sure you will hear all about it. Homilies preached here at St. Mary's on the fourth weekend of every month will be "teaching homilies", intended to help you understand what will be different and why we can be excited for the changes in the English language used during Mass.

In addition, the first Saturday night of each month through May, the "Meaning of the Mass" series I am leading continues. These fun and informative evenings are designed to explain the entire Mass piece by piece and to explain the language changes in store for us beginning in November.

[Next: **Saturday, February 5** – Doors to the **Commons** open at 7:30 p.m. and my 30 - 40 minute presentation begins promptly at **8:00 p.m.** Twenty-one and over, please].

For the tech-savvy ones, you may enjoy a sharp resource developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops that outlines the revised Mass translation: www.usccb.org/romanmissal.

As we anticipate the most significant language changes in the Mass since English first was used, I know it stands be a moment full of grace for us all.

The implementation of the revised translation gives everyone of us the opportunity to learn much more than new English words and phrases; indeed, the greatest opportunity before us is to grow in our understanding, appreciation and practice of the central act of our Catholic Faith!

As a Christian and priest, I want to fall more deeply in love with Christ Jesus and His Church. And I want people around me to seek the same.

The revised English translation and further strengthening of our three Sandusky parishes (July 2012), sound a clarion call that the Catholic Faith here is alive and well!