

# FAQs

## **Why is there a new translation of the Missal?**

The missal we currently use was published in 1973 and has served the Church well for nearly 40 years. However over that time there has been much discussion of the need to revise this initial translation of the Latin into English in order to recapture more accurately the meaning and poetry of the original Latin texts and their allusions to Scripture. In 2001 the Vatican published guiding principles for translating the Latin Missal into other languages. This new translation follows these guidelines and will adhere more closely to the Latin text. It will be more formal at times but will provide a richer and more nuanced translation of our rich heritage of prayer that is contained in the Roman Missal.

## **Who is doing the work of translation?**

The work of translation has been done by a group of Bishops specialising in translation and linguistics. The International Commission for English in the Liturgy (ICEL) has translated the Latin into English and then submitted the drafts to all the Bishops of the English speaking world. Finally the translation has been approved by the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments with the assistance of a committee called Vox Clara.

## **Is this Missal the Vatican II Missal?**

It is most definitely the Vatican II Missal. It is the same missal which was produced in 1970 and revised on two later occasions. It is the translation into English that has changed not the original prayers of the Mass.

## **Will it sound very different?**

Yes, it will. Not only will the people's responses change but the prayers said by the priest will also change. The Eucharistic Prayers will sound different. Remember, it is not the original Latin Missal that has changed only the translation. So it will be the same Mass that we have had since Vatican II but it will sound different.

## **Will there be any changes in posture?**

No, any changes in posture have already been introduced in recent years. Therefore you will continue to sit, stand and kneel as you have always done.

## **How will we know the new responses?**

There will be pew cards produced throughout Australia to assist the people with responses. Some Churches have data projectors that may also assist with the people's responses.

## **Will the readings change?**

At this stage the readings will remain the same. In a few years time the Lectionary will be revised and the translation of the readings will change then.

**When can I buy a new Missal for my personal use?**

The new Missal for use by the priest during Mass will be printed in the latter half of 2011 or early 2012. The new version of the readings will not be available for a few years. Brisbane Liturgical Commission has produced a missalette with the new translation of the main parts of the Mass. At this stage it is not known when publishers will publish personal missals.

**Will there be one book for the Missal or will it be several volumes?**

The Missal will be in one volume. Eucharistic Prayers for Children will be published in a separate supplement.

**When will the new translation be introduced at Sunday Masses in Australia?**

In Australia the new texts for the people's responses will be introduced gradually between Pentecost Sunday 12 June 2011 and November 2011. Once the date of publication of the Missal is known the Conference of Bishops will decide on the implementation date for the whole Missal.

**Will there be many changes?**

For the people the changes are minor ones. For the priest, however, the changes involve all the Prayers and the Eucharistic Prayers and are quite extensive.

**Will there be a cost involved?**

Yes, Parishes will need to budget for the cost of the new Missal and also for pew cards and music for new Mass settings.

**How will we sing the parts of the Mass when there are new words?**

New Mass settings have been written by Australian and international composers. There is also a chant setting in the Missal. The Australian Bishops Conference has recommended six Australian settings of the Mass. Parishes are free to sing the new Mass settings from 1 Jan 2011 but the spoken texts will not be used before 12 June.

**Will Communion of the Sick change?**

Yes, wherever parts of the Mass are used the words will change. Texts used at Weddings and Funerals will also change.

### **Why do we say consubstantial in the Nicene Creed?**

In the new translation of the Nicene Creed, “consubstantial with the Father” replaces the expression “of one Being with the Father”, in speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ. The nature of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son, and the truth of the Son’s divinity, are most important aspects of the Christian faith, and Councils such as Nicaea (325ad) and Calcedon (451ad) were held to address these questions and to discern and express the orthodox belief of the Church.

The difficulty in expressing in an acceptable way the relationship between God the Father and God the Son required the early bishops and theologians to give new subtleties of meaning to existing Greek and Latin words. The expression “of one Being with the Father” in the current translation of the Nicene Creed is not always thought to convey the meaning of the Latin consubstantialis, nor indeed the original Greek homoousios which it referred to, in a satisfactory way. Some Latin words have meanings which are simply not readily translatable into ordinary English. The metaphysical concepts of “essence”, “being” and “substance”, of which consubstantialis and homoousios speak are not straightforward and in fact they are easily misunderstood because their theological meaning is not exactly the same as their meaning in ordinary English. “Consubstantial”, which has been chosen in the revised translation of the Creed’s Latin consubstantialis, has a genuine and distinct theological meaning. It is not a common word in English, but is being used to identify and express a unique relationship.

### **Why is it that we say “through my fault...” three times in the Confession... isn’t that too repetitive?**

The simplest answer is, because that is what the Latin has - but that does not really cast any light on the matter. Simple versions of the Confiteor are found from the 700s. The phrase "mea culpa" (through my fault) first appeared in about AD 1080, and it remained in this single form in the liturgies of the Carmelites and Dominicans until modern times, and in the Roman missal until the 1500s. The version "mea culpa, mea maxima culpa" is attributed to St Thomas Becket (died 1170). The triple form only entered the Roman Missal in 1570. We can only speculate about why it evolved into the triple form. It is sometimes said that we like to triple things in honour of the Trinity, but intensifying by triplication seems to be a common human practice. In some contexts this results in the triple recitation of a whole prayer or an action. Another example of triple intensification in our liturgy actually predates the liturgy because it is a direct citation of Isaiah 6:3, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Some three - fold elements result from reducing a litany to its minimum form. The best example is "Lamb of God" which we say three times, but when it was introduced in about AD 800 it was as a litany sung continuously until the breaking of all the consecrated bread was finished. Other forms of intensifying triplication are found in our Mass, but with some variation each time, such as in the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer 1) "these gifts, these offerings, these unblemished sacrifices". Similarly on Good Friday we find the ancient Trishagion (Thrice - holy) in "Holy is God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal." It appears that the role of such triplications is to intensify our focus on some element. The repetition and expansion in "through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous" thus has the effect of making us pause, in a sense, to really acknowledge what we are saying. It helps it "sink in", so to speak.

### **Why do we only say “It is right and just” in the dialogue before the Preface of the Eucharistic Prayer?**

Again this translation reflects the precise words of the Latin text. The Preface will then take up this phrase and repeat it as its opening words: “It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation...” To appreciate this connection between the words of the assembly and the Preface, we need to understand the role of the faithful in the Eucharistic Prayer – they are not silent spectators, but must be participants who make their thanksgiving to God. St. John Chrysostom (died 407 ad) writes: “The offering of thanksgiving again is common, for the priest does not give thanks alone but all the people join him in doing so. Once they respond by assenting that it is ‘right and just’, he begins the thanksgiving”. Once the assembly has assented that it is right and just to give thanks, the priest can begin the Eucharistic Prayer because the assembly provide living witness to his words of thanks. Because of the living faith of the assembly, “it is truly right and just” to give thanks to God.

### **Why is our response now “And with your spirit” in the greetings?**

This is an accurate translation of the Latin text and is reflected in other language translations. To understand this translation it is helpful to look at the meaning of this phrase in our tradition:

1. “In the most sacred mysteries themselves (the Mass), the priest prays for the people who in turn pray for him since this is the meaning of the words, ‘And with your spirit’”, writes St. John Chrysostom (died 407 ad).
2. Chrysostom also writes, “If there were no Holy Spirit, there would be neither shepherds nor teachers in the Church ... You acclaimed, ‘And also with your spirit’. You would not have done this unless the Holy Spirit were actually dwelling within him”.
3. “They reply ‘And with your spirit’. In this way they make known to the bishop and to all that not only do others need a blessing and the bishop’s prayer but that the bishop himself also needs the prayer of all... This is why the bishop blesses the people at the ‘peace’ and then receives their blessing as they respond, ‘And with your spirit’”. These words come from Theodore of Mopsuestia (died 428 ad).

Thus when the assembly respond to the words, “The Lord be with you”, they communicate something of mutual importance between the ordained and themselves. They mutually confirm the presence of the Lord who unites them and who is the Supreme Celebrant of the holy mysteries. This is made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit to the ordained and to the faithful.

### **Apostles’ Creed - “He descended into hell”**

This brief and matter-of-fact statement holds the promise of immense hope for believers. It asserts that Jesus Christ not only died our death but also entered the realm of the dead and set them free. This “hell” is not the hell of later popular imagination – the fiery hell of eternal punishment – but the hell of the scriptures, Hades or Sheol, the shadowy domain where the dead are spiritless and lost, cut off from light and life. Dwelling with the dead Jesus brings his life-giving love to bear on all the powers of darkness and disarms them. Nothing in the cosmos is excluded from this victory, as Paul writes, “I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Roms 8:38-39).

## **Why are we now saying “for many” rather than “for all” in the consecration of the chalice?**

How “multis” from “pro multis” in the Institution Narrative should be translated is of particular concern today because changing from our 47 year old use of “all” (it first appeared in the 1964 Australian edition of the Altar Missal as “for all men”) to “many” appears to signify change in teaching. Translating it is not a simple matter. This answer seeks to untangle some of the knot by first touching on the Latin, then returning to the phrase’s origin and the connected issues in translating it, and, briefly, the theology.

“Multis” literally translates as “many/the many/the common mass/the common herd/the multitude”. While these may be interpreted as indicating “all people”, that is not quite its sense in classical Latin. Even the equivalent English references to such as the mob, masses, crowd, and herd, have a somewhat pejorative meaning and tend to indicate others less sophisticated than the speaker(s) – us. It is doubtful that Jesus meant that, and he certainly was not speaking Latin.

The origin of the phrase is in the cup unit of the Last Supper in Mark 14:24 and Matthew 26:28 as “huper/peri pollon”, simply “for many”. The cup unit in Luke 20:22 has “for you”, as also does the bread unit (22:19) and Paul in 1 Cor 11:24. So neither set of Scripture traditions indicates “all” in the Greek, and there is the difficulty. We do not know what Jesus actually said since he was not speaking in Greek. It may represent a Hebraism or Aramaism, but if so then it was not translated that way in the Greek.

Given the phrase’s scriptural origin, and given the desire that the liturgical translations more accurately correspond to our Scripture translations, the translators are left with a problem; either they are accused of changing the words of the Gospels, and of Jesus himself, or they are accused of reversing a more inclusive interpretation that is now more favoured. It is true that the Italian and German missals also currently translate it as “all”, but of greater importance, and helpfully separating it from debate about our liturgical translations, all major modern translations of Scripture translate the word from Mark and Matthew as “many”, never as “all”, e.g., The Jerusalem, New Jerusalem, New American, New Revised Standard Version. So to date we have had a discrepancy between our liturgical versions and the Scripture antecedents that is apparent in each liturgy that we read those Gospel passages.

The thorny theological issue really revolves around the matter of the universality of Christ’s self-giving – was it for all or only some? What we all perhaps need to be reminded about is that while the offering is to and for all people, not all necessarily accept it. Perhaps we need to teach the people that in this instance “many” means “innumerable others”.