

The Roman Missal Changes: Give It To Me Straight (Part 2)

by Joe Paprocki, D. Todd Williamson

The Liturgy of the Word

As we continue our reflections on the new Roman Missal translation, we next move into the Liturgy of the Word. Except for the Gospel dialogues - "The Lord be with you. *And with your spirit*" and "A reading from the Holy Gospel according to -N- *Glory to you, O Lord*"- nothing will be changing in regard to the Scripture readings, Responsorial Psalm, and Gospel Acclamation. The Profession of Faith, however? Now, THAT'S another story. Perhaps some of the most significant changes will be noticed in the Nicene Creed.

Roman Missal Changes to the Creed

The first change we encounter in the Nicene Creed is the changing of *We* to *I* - from the plural to the singular. This is not to diminish our sense of community but is simply a more accurate translation of the word *Credo* - "I believe." The reciting of the Creed is a communal act, however, each individual in the assembly is called upon to profess his or her own faith just as he or she did in Baptism. Our individual profession is then joined together with the profession of the whole assembly.

"Seen and Unseen" Changes in the Roman Missal

Next, the words "*of all that is seen and unseen*" will become "*of all things visible and invisible.*" There is a difference between something that is *unseen* and something that is *invisible*. Something may be unseen for a number of reasons, including an obstacle in our line of vision. Something invisible, however, is clearly unable to be seen with the naked eye, for example, the saints and angels who occupy a place in our worship. They are not just unseen but invisible.

The second part of the Creed, which deals with our beliefs in Jesus Christ, has a number of changes in the new Roman Missal:

- "*the only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages*" - the words "Only Begotten" also appear in the *Gloria* and express our belief that Jesus did not simply materialize as the Son of God but was intentionally begotten by the Father as part of his divine plan. The words "*born of the Father before all ages*" emphasize that Jesus dwelled with the Father before time began.

- "*consubstantial with the Father*" - this replaces the phrase "*one in being*" describing the relationship between the Father and the Son. The early Church labored intensely to find the correct words to define Jesus' relationship with the Father. *Consubstantial*, while an unusual word in English, means literally "having the same substance," which is more technically

accurate than "one in being." To be sure, it's an unusual word, but then again it is describing someone and something unusual and unique: Jesus Christ and his relationship with the Father.

- "*and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary*" - here, the word *incarnate* replaces born. To be born describes the moment of birth. To be incarnate describes the moment of conception: the Word became incarnate - became flesh - in Mary's womb.

- "*he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures*" - while the Latin word for *suffered* implies death, the same is not true in English. As a result, we've been using two verbs: *suffered* and *died*. Now, we will use only one verb - *suffered* - while adding the word *death* to make it clear in English that Jesus indeed died. The word *accordance* with the Scriptures is simply more precise than the word *fulfillment*.

In the last part of the Nicene Creed, as we profess our faith in the Holy Spirit, we will say "*with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified*," which is a more precise translation of the Latin than the words "*worshipped and glorified*." A little later, instead of saying "*we acknowledge one baptism*," we will now say "*I confess one baptism*." To confess, which means "*to express belief in*," is a more forceful expression than to *acknowledge* because it implies involving both the heart and the head.

And last but not least, we will say the words "*I look forward to the resurrection of the dead*" instead of "*we look for. . .*" This expresses eagerness as well as confidence that the resurrection of the dead is indeed going to happen.

*In our next article, as we continue to explore the new *Roman Missal* translation, we will reflect on the changes in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

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