



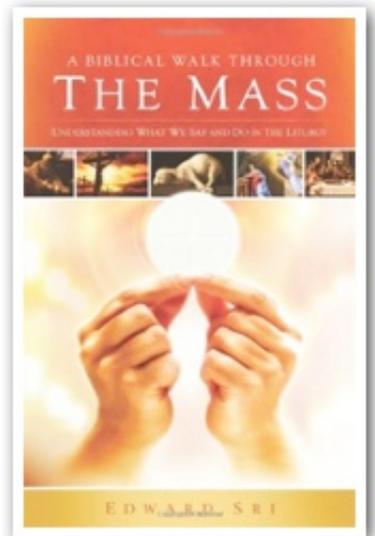
"And with your spirit" EDWARD SRI

On the First Sunday of Advent, 2011, the new translation of the Mass will go into effect in U.S. dioceses. The structure of the Mass will be the same, but some of the responses by the people will change. This is the first of a series of articles on those changes and the reasons behind them.

Catholics are very familiar with the parts of the Mass – perhaps too familiar. Sunday after Sunday, we recite certain words such as, "Amen...Thanks be to God...Alleluia...Holy, Holy, Holy Lord..." These words are so ingrained in us that we often say them almost robotically, out of routine. Indeed, if someone poked us in the middle of the night and said, "The Lord be with you," many of us probably would roll over and instinctively respond, "And also with you."

But do we really grasp the *meaning* of these words? Do we understand the significance of what we are doing and saying in the sacred Liturgy?

The new English translation of the Mass, which will be promulgated the First Sunday of Advent (November 27), will provide a unique opportunity for Catholics to reflect on the meaning of the prayers in the Liturgy. This updated translation will bring about the most significant change in the way most English-speaking Catholics participate in the Mass since the years following the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), when the liturgical texts were translated into English and officially used in worship for the first time. The basic structure of the prayers will remain the same, but the changes in wording at many points will be quite noticeable. For a time, most Catholics will no longer be able to walk into church on Sunday and automatically recite the Gloria, the Creed, and other Mass parts by memory. They will need a guide to help them become accustomed to the new translation of these prayers.



As we are taken out of our routine, we will have the opportunity to ponder the significance of all that we say and do at Mass and rediscover the splendor.

For example, consider the meaning behind one of the most noticeable changes found near the opening of Mass. It involves the people's response to the priest's greeting, "The Lord be with you." In the new translation, we will reply, "And with your spirit." This more adequately reflects the Latin text of the Mass ("*et cum spiritu tuo*") and the biblical language of St. Paul (see Galatians 6:18; Philippians 4:23; 2 Timothy 4:22).

It also more fully expresses an important theological point. When we say, "And also with you" in the present translation, one might get the impression that our response was merely intended to express an exchange of personal greetings or reciprocal good will: "May the Lord be with you, too, Father."

But there is much more to this response. When a man is ordained a priest, the Holy Spirit comes upon

him in a unique way, enabling him to perform the sacred rites of the Mass and consecrate the Eucharist. By responding, "And with your spirit," we acknowledge the Spirit's activity through the priest during the sacred Liturgy. We are referring to the "spirit" of the priest, the very core of his being, where he has been ordained to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. Indeed, we are acknowledging that since God works through the priest who is offering the Mass, ultimately it is Jesus Christ who is the head of the community gathered for the Liturgy, and it is his Spirit who is the primary actor in the Liturgy, regardless who the particular priest celebrating Mass may be.

This is just one of many spiritual gems found in the new Mass translation.

Edward Sri offers the following reflections
on the new translation of the Mass:

"And with your spirit"

"Through My Most Grievous Fault"

"I believe..."

A Happy Meal or the Supper of the Lamb?

For All or For Many?

The New Mass Translation: Just Going through the Motions?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

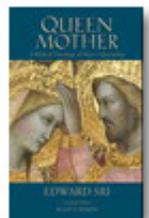
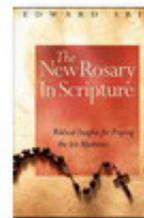
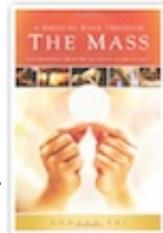
Edward Sri. "And with your spirit." *Fathers for Good* (October 19, 2011).

[Fathers for Good](#) is an initiative for men by the Knights of Columbus.

This reflection is based on Edward Sri's new book, [A Biblical Walk Through the Mass: Understanding What We Say and Do in the Liturgy](#) and is reprinted with permission from the author.

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