

'And with your Spirit' Missal Introduced

Over the last few months we have been introducing a third edition of the Roman Missal. This is the prayer book that we use at mass. Vernacular language has only been used within the liturgy for less than fifty years, which may seem long to us individually but in the context of the prayer texts themselves is quite a short period of time. Many of these texts go back to the 4th and 5th centuries.

Translation is a very difficult task because while you might get the overall sense of the text across in another language many of the subtleties of the prayers may be lost. The desire of this edition of the missal is to have a translation that is truer to the

original, rather than one which only gives an idea of the text.

It also includes many new elements that were not included before, or had been omitted from the last edition. One of the important developments is a whole new Proper of Irish Saints, 72 in total. These have new prayers and in some cases scripture readings that also give a deep appreciation of the depth of spirituality that has been handed down the centuries to us.

In some cases the new phrases in the missal bring back to mind prayers that some of the older generation recalls, like in the passage 'Behold the Lamb of God', Lord I am not worthy that you

should enter under my roof'. This is a clearer link to the line of scripture that it is based on where Christ meets the Roman Centurion who had the sick servant. The depth of language might not always seem so clear but invites prayer and meditation to reveal its meaning.

One of the signature phrases in the new text is the response to 'The Lord be with you: *And with your spirit*' is a phrase that was always used in most other European languages. This acknowledges that when we gather the Spirit of God is with us, indeed we do not gather but in the Lord's name.

While there is criticism of the text there are also many positives as well. It tries to present an ancient

tradition of prayer that will over time become apparent to us in our age. One of the interesting things is that the text in Irish is also being launched this Advent, this Order of Mass has very little change in it because when first translated those who worked on it remained faithful to the Latin text.

The "dismissals" that we now use help us to see what our celebration of the Eucharist is calling us to be, as it tells us to, '*Go in Peace, Glorifying the Lord by our Life*'.



DAY FOR LIFE MESSAGE

*A call to solidarity and hope in difficult times
Rejoice in hope,
be patient in suffering,
persevere in prayer (Romans 12:12)*

Day for life this year reflects on what it means to live a full and happy life. It takes as its starting point the words of Pope Benedict during his recent visit to England, when he said "Happiness is something we all want, but one of the great tragedies in this world is that so many people never find it, because they look for it in the wrong places. The key to it is very simple – true happiness is to be found in God. We need to have the courage to place our deepest hopes in God alone, not in money, in a career, in worldly success, or in our relationships with others, but in God. Only he can satisfy the deepest needs of our hearts."

(Pope Benedict XVI, *The Big Assembly: Address to Young People, Twickenham, England*)

In a culture that often measures happiness in terms of pleasure, success and money; many are thinking again about what brings true meaning and joy to life. The recent upheaval in banking and the economy in particular has left many individuals and families facing an uncertain future.

As a Christian, the deepest joy in life does not come from what I have or what I can achieve. It comes from the knowledge that even before I was formed in my mother's womb I was known and loved by my Creator (Jer 1:5; Psalm 139): that from the first moment of conception to natural death I am loved personally by God and have an eternal future. It comes from knowing that every minute of life is enfolded by God's loving care and that life itself will not end in emptiness. As Blessed John Henry Newman once wrote, "God has created me to do him some definite service ... He has not created me for naught. 'God has a plan for me and that plan is for good, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope' (Jer 29:1-14).

God's love offers a life that is 'truly' life because it is a life not measured by achievements but in the very fact that I am – and that I am eternally loved. In the certain knowledge that 'nothing can separate us for the love of Christ' (Rm 8:39), my life can still be rich in meaning and constant in hope in the face of setbacks, suffering and even death itself. God's love gives us the possibility of persevering day by day with patient joy, spurred on by hope, in a world which by its very nature is imperfect.

When setbacks do come, the friendship and care shown to us by others becomes a vital source of comfort, meaning and hope. Building a culture of life also commits us to building a civilisation of love: it involves showing practical solidarity and concern for those around us who are in need. A society that protects those who are vulnerable and weak contributes to our shared happiness: a society that shows love and concern for others who are in



need enhances our quality of life.

One of the most striking examples of this is found in the story of the Visitation. In a most extraordinary act of generosity and selfless concern for others, St. Luke tells us that Mary, having just received the news that she has conceived a child through the power of the Holy Spirit, set out across the hill country of Judea to give support to her cousin Elizabeth. In one of the most powerful affirmations of the sacredness of life in the womb, Luke tells us that as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child in her womb 'leaped for joy' (Lk 1:44). We are also told that Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months, enough time to help with preparations for the birth. At the news of the birth 'the relatives and neighbours shared their joy' (Lk 1:58).

What is particularly striking about this story is the joy that follows the news of new life and the practical help given by family, friends and good neighbours. A culture of respect for life is essential for a civilisation for a civilisation of love. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI:

Openness to life is at the centre of true development. When a society moves towards the denial or suppression of life, it ends up no longer finding the necessary motivation and energy to strive for man's true good... The acceptance of life strengthens moral fibre and makes people capable of mutual help.

As a society we have a strong tradition of good neighbourliness and of showing mutual help. Day for Life is an opportunity to ask ourselves if there is anything more we can do to be of help to our neighbours, to improve the quality of life of others and of society as a whole, especially in these financially challenging times.

By embracing a culture of life, and standing with those marginalised and deemed 'useless' or a 'burden' on society, we can turn the values of our con-

sumer society upside down. We can contribute to the happiness and quality of life of all by ensuring respect for the life of every person, from conception to natural death. We can work toward creating a civilisation of love, rooted in a culture of life, by reaching out to those who are suffering as a result of the long recession.

Day for Life 2011 is a call for us to work for a society in which all are valued as created, loved by God, redeemed by Christ: not for their fame, or power or what they own but for their intrinsic worth. It is a call to rediscover the truth that our deepest happiness and joy comes from the knowledge that we are all loved by God from the very beginning, and that by trusting in God's love, through our setbacks and difficulties, our own "joy will be complete" (Jn 15:11).



Day for Life Prayer

*We thank you Lord for the gift of life.
Help us to appreciate the unique dignity
of every person and the individual
contribution they make to the world,
in fulfilment of the task you give them.*

*Enable us by your grace to promote their
wellbeing, serving you in one another
in a spirit of generosity
through Christ Jesus Our Lord. Amen*

*Only the great certitude of hope that my
own life and history in general, despite all its
setbacks and failures, are held firm by the
indestructible power of Love, and that this
gives them their meaning, and importance
only this kind of hope can then give the
courage to act and to persevere*

Pope Benedict XVI

IEC 2011 12
50th INTERNATIONAL
EUCHARISTIC
CONGRESS
PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
You were sent by the Father
to gather together those who are scattered.
You came among us, doing good and bringing healing,
announcing the Word of salvation
and giving the Bread which lasts forever.
Be our companion on life's pilgrim way.

May your Holy Spirit inflame our hearts,
enliven our hope and open our minds,
so that together with our sisters and brothers in faith
we may recognise you in the Scriptures
and in the breaking of bread.
May your Holy Spirit transform us into one body
and lead us to walk humbly on the earth,
in justice and love,
as witnesses of your resurrection.

In communion with Mary,
whom you gave to us as our Mother
at the foot of the cross,
through you
may all praise, honour and blessing be to the Father
in the Holy Spirit and in the Church,
Now and forever.
Amen

50th International Eucharistic Congress – June 10th- 17th

Next June will see Ireland host a Eucharistic Congress. These are events that take place every four years in various venues around the world. The last congress in Ireland was in 1932, shortly after the founding of the Irish State. This is an international event that will see many thousands of people from around the world come to Ireland for the week of events with some of these visitors also touring around the country in the days before hand.

The purpose of the Eucharistic Congress is to highlight and explore the significance of the Eucharist in our lives in the way it is celebrated, in the call to adoration and in our commitment to the way we live our lives with the call to social justice.

The week itself will take place from June 10th until June 17th. Most of this will take place in the RDS, the last days mass celebrated in Croke Park. Each day will begin with morning prayer and different workshops with numerous speakers from different parts of the world, these include the Prior of Taizé, Leader of Focolare, the artist Imogen Stuart, as well as John Bruton, Peter McVerry, John Waters, Monica Browne and many more.

Each late afternoon will have a major speaker on the theme of that day and a celebration of the Eucharist in Simmons Court arena. At night various cultural events will take place in Dublin as well as family activities.

Booking for the seven days, three day or one day event can be done online at iec2011.ie. Also if you would like to volunteer to take part as a helper during that week you can do so online.

As a diocese we are arranging a variety of activities and events based on the theme of the Congress; The Eucharist: "Communion with Christ and with one another. Notice of these will be given out soon."



Pictured are John Farrell and Alan Portbury, with area Governor, Jon Woodford at the Division final of the Humorous Speech and Table Topics Contests held recently in Athlone.

Longford Toastmasters

Develop good speaking and presentation skills, advance your communication, listening and teamwork competence, meet interesting people and make new friends, just some of the reasons people join a Toastmasters club. The Longford Toastmasters group offers a proven and enjoyable manner in which to practice and perfect speaking, listening and communication skills.

With regular participation in a fun and supportive group you can become a more accomplished speaker and leader. The confidence you gain will benefit you in all walks of life, you will be amazed at your own potential.

Daniel Coyle is presently P.R.O. for Longford Toastmasters.

Daniel joined Toastmasters two years ago and finds it most enjoyable and beneficial to him personally. Meetings he says are friendly and relaxed with a break for tea and a chat mid-way.

Longford Toastmaster meetings are held in The Longford Arms Hotel on the first and third Thursday of each month, time 8.20pm. Visitors are always welcome and there is no obligation to join.

For further information contact Daniel, on 086 1559163.

Visit www.toastmasters.org.