

Bulletin Blurbs on the New Roman Missal

April 2011

In preparation for the implementation of the new Roman Missal in November, we're encouraging parishes to include a short blurb in their bulletins each week. The Office of Worship will send suggested bulletin blurbs monthly. Since this is an excellent opportunity for catechesis on the liturgy, some blurbs will focus specifically on the upcoming changes; others will focus on our celebration of the Eucharist in general.

Below are the bulletin blurbs for April 2011:

Sunday, April 3, 2011

On Sunday, November 27 of this year, Catholics in the United States will begin worshiping with the newly-translated texts of the third edition of the Roman Missal.

The Mass begins first with the Introductory Rites and then the Liturgy of the Word. Immediately following is the Liturgy of the Eucharist, beginning with a short transitional rite called the preparation of the gifts. During this rite, members of the assembly bring forward the gifts of bread and wine that will become for us the body and blood of Jesus. Many of us revert to a language from a previous era and call this the “offertory” of the Mass. The new translation of the Roman Missal tells us that this is more accurately called the “preparation of the gifts”. This is not the time in the Mass when the gifts are “offered” but when they are prepared for an offering that comes later in the Mass. As the Roman Missal notes, the offering occurs later during the Eucharistic prayer. Thus, in Eucharistic Prayer III, the priest says “Therefore, O Lord, we celebrate the memorial of the saving Passion of your Son, his wondrous Resurrection and Ascension into heaven, and as we look forward to his second coming, we offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice.”

Sunday, April 10, 2011

On Sunday, November 27 of this year, Catholics in the United States will begin worshiping with the newly-translated texts of the third edition of the Roman Missal.

During the preparation of the gifts, the bread and wine are brought to the altar. At the same time, another very important event is taking place: a collection. Unfortunately, the collection is often viewed solely as a way for the parish to pay its bills. Too many of us do not see this collection as a spiritual act – as an expression of the way we hope to live the other six days of the week. In the Profession of Faith, we proclaim our belief and our trust in God as the creator of all things. We express our belief that everything we have is a gift from God. Our response is to live as caretakers of God’s gifts and to use them wisely for the good of all. Since we ultimately have no ownership of anything but are entrusted with the care of that which belongs to God, we must be good stewards of God’s gifts and share generously of our time, talent, and treasure. Jesus was the ultimate steward. He generously gave of himself, sharing with others his gifts of teaching and healing, and moving ultimately to the most unselfish act of all – offering his life for others. As disciples of Jesus, we strive to live as he lives.

Sunday, April 17, 2011 (Palm Sunday)

On Sunday, November 27 of this year, Catholics in the United States will begin worshipping with the newly-translated texts of the third edition of the Roman Missal.

The purple that has been seen throughout Lent is replaced today by red as the Church enters into the celebration of Holy Week. The liturgy for today is a mixture of both Eastern and Western traditions. The day's Mass has its origins in Rome, which titled this day "Passion Sunday" and centered the liturgy on the passion and death of the Lord. However, the Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem is borrowed from the Christian East, where Palm Sunday marks the festive conclusion to Lent. It wasn't until the 9th century that the procession with palms made its way from Jerusalem to the Church in the West (Rome). This new element was simply added on to the existing rites. The name that we now give to this solemnity, "Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion," acknowledges the dual nature of the celebration. We begin our liturgy today with the procession with the palm and then focus our attention on the passion of Jesus. Through the blessing of palms, the story of the triumphal entry, a procession, the proclamation of the Passion, and the celebration of the Eucharist, we are swept into the mystery of Holy Week.

Sunday, April 24, 2011 (Easter Sunday)

On Sunday, November 27 of this year, Catholics in the United States will begin worshipping with the newly-translated texts of the third edition of the Roman Missal.

The *Exultet* - also known as the "Easter Proclamation" - is sung at the opening of the Easter Vigil. In the history of music for Mass, no song was more important, no chant more beautifully crafted, no moment so significant as the exultet on the Easter Vigil. The exultet has roots in the first centuries of Christianity. It is a hymn of thanksgiving. The text expresses the meaning of Easter. It invites heaven, earth, and the church to rejoice ("exultet") in this feast. Easter is the most blessed of nights, the night of Passover, baptism, resurrection, and redemption. In joy we offer God our Easter candle, a pillar of fire, mingling with the lights of heaven, a candle which will meet Christ, whose resurrection forever dispels darkness.

Next Easter, with the new translation of the Roman Missal, we will hear some changes in the exultet. One notable change will be the return of the "bees". In early versions of the medieval texts, bees were featured rather prominently in the exultet, and they will be once again. Next year, we'll hear these words sung: *On this, your night of grace, O holy Father, accept this candle, a solemn offering, the work of bees and of your servants' hands, an evening sacrifice of praise, this gift from your most holy Church...*