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Pope Benedict XVI on Sunday Celebration of the Eucharist

On August 18, 2005, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated the Eucharist at Marienfield in Cologne, Germany for those gathered for the twentieth celebration of World Youth Day. In the course of his homily, the Holy Father reflected on the role Sunday Mass in the life of the Church. The following excerpt is provided for the information of our readers.

Let us return once more to the Last Supper. The new element to emerge here was the deeper meaning given to Israel's ancient prayer of blessing, which from that point on became the word of transformation, enabling us to participate in the "hour" of Christ. Jesus did not instruct us to repeat the Passover meal, which in any event, given that it is an anniversary, is not repeatable at will. He instructed us to enter into his "hour".

We enter into it through the sacred power of the words of consecration - a transformation brought about through the prayer of praise which places us in continuity with Israel and the whole of salvation history, and at the same time ushers in the new, to which the older prayer at its deepest level was pointing.

The new prayer - which the Church calls the "Eucharistic Prayer" - brings the Eucharist into being. It is the word of power which transforms the gifts of the earth in an entirely new way into God's gift of himself, and it draws us into this process of transformation. That is why we call this action "Eucharist", which is a translation of the Hebrew word beracha - thanksgiving, praise, blessing, and a transformation worked by the Lord: the presence of his "hour". Jesus' hour is the hour in which love triumphs. In other words: it is God who has triumphed, because he is Love.

Jesus' hour seeks to become our own hour and will indeed become so if we allow ourselves, through the celebration of the Eucharist, to be drawn into that process of transformation that the Lord intends to bring about. The Eucharist must become the centre of our lives.

If the Church tells us that the Eucharist is an essential part of Sunday, this is no mere positivism or thirst for power. On Easter morning, first the women and then the disciples had the grace of seeing the Lord. From that moment on, they knew that the first day of the week, Sunday, would be his day, the day of Christ the Lord. The day when creation began became the day when creation was renewed. Creation and redemption belong together. That is why Sunday is so important.

It is good that today, in many cultures, Sunday is a free day, and is often combined with Saturday so as to constitute a "week-end" of free time. Yet this free time is empty if God is not present.

Dear friends! Sometimes, our initial impression is that having to include time for Mass on a Sunday is rather inconvenient. But if you make the effort, you will realize that this is what gives a proper focus to your free time. Do not be deterred from taking part in Sunday Mass, and help others to discover it too. This is because the Eucharist releases the joy that we need so much, and we must learn to grasp it ever more deeply, we must learn to love it. Let us pledge ourselves to do this - it is worth the effort! Let us discover the intimate riches of the Church's liturgy and its true greatness: it is not we who are celebrating for ourselves, but it is the living God himself who is preparing a banquet for us.

Five Questions on the New Translation of the Roman Missal

In recent months, the Secretariat has received numerous questions concerning the status of the new translation of the Roman Missal. The following questions are provided for the information of our readers and may be reproduced freely.

1. I've heard that the BCL is conducting a consultation with the Bishops on some new Mass texts. Why are they retranslating the Mass prayers?

There are two reasons for the new translations, and both were given by the Holy See. First, Pope John Paul II published a new Roman Missal in the Jubilee Year, more than 15% of which is new. Secondly, the Holy See published new principles for translation in 2001 in an instruction entitled *Liturgiam authenticam*.

2. Couldn't we wait for five or ten years before embarking on such an enormous project?

Not if we are to fulfill the mandate of the Holy Father. Pope John Paul II has entrusted "to the Pastors of the Church the important task of making available to the faithful, as quickly as possible, the vernacular translation of the editio tertia of the *Missale Romanum*." (letter of Pope John Paul II to Cardinal Jorge Medina Estevez, April 20, 2002)

3. Is the Roman Missal the only liturgical book to be retranslated?

No. *Liturgiam authenticam* calls for a review of all previously translated liturgical books, with a view toward producing better translations and further states that "any further delay in making such emendations is to be avoided." (LA, 133)

4. What are the groups involved in this process?

Ultimately, it is the Conference of Bishops which must approve translations of liturgical texts. The translations for English speaking Conferences are prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, a mixed commission requested by the Conferences and erected by the Holy See. Once the Bishops have approved a translation, it requires confirmation by the Holy See before it may be used in the Liturgy. An international group of senior Bishops, called the *Vox Clara* Committee, advises the Holy See on such questions.

5. What is the next step in producing an English language edition of the Roman Missal?

All parties are presently striving to complete the Missal in a timely fashion. The Bishops of the United States are in the midst of a second consultation on the Order of Mass, which could come before them for a final vote as early as next year. The rest of the parts of the Roman Missal will come before the Bishops, first for consultation and then for approval, in the course of their subsequent meetings.

Notes on the New Translation of the Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia

While there are many and complex elements of the translation yet to be decided by the Bishops, the translation of several phrases in the Order of Mass have been previously decided by the instruction *Liturgiam authenticam*. Among these are "certain expressions that belong to the heritage of the whole or of a great part of the ancient Church, as well as others that have become part of the general human patrimony..." Therefore, the response *Et cum spiritu tuo* is to be respected by a translation that is as literal as possible.¹ Commentaries for a popular understanding of these two elements of the Liturgy are provided here and may be reproduced freely with the customary copyright acknowledgement by our readers.



AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT

Perhaps the most common dialogue in the Liturgy of the Roman Rite consists of the greeting :

*Dominus vobiscum
et cum spiritu tuo*

Since 1970, this has been translated as:

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

As a part of the revised translation of the Roman Missal, now taking place, the translation of this dialogue has been revised, to read:

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Latin Text	1970 Translation	New Translation
<i>Dominus vobiscum. Et cum spiritu tuo.</i>	The Lord be with you. And also with you.	The Lord be with you. And with your spirit.

Since it is clear that the change to “and with your spirit” is a significant and wide ranging change in a longstanding liturgical practice, the following questions are provided to clarify the reasons for the change and the meaning of the dialogue itself.

1. Why has the response *et cum spiritu tuo* been translated as and with your spirit?

The retranslation was necessary because it is a more correct rendering of *et cum spiritu tuo*. Recent scholarship has recognized the need for a more precise translation capable of expressing the full meaning of the Latin text.

¹ *Liturgiam authenticam*, no. 56.

2. What about the other major languages? Do they have to change their translations?

No. English is the only major language of the Roman Rite which did not translate the word *spiritu*. The Italian (*E con il tuo spirito*), French (*Et avec votre esprit*), Spanish (*Y con tu espíritu*) and German (*Und mit deinem Geiste*) renderings of 1970 all translated the Latin word *spiritu* precisely.

3. Has the Holy See ever addressed this question?

In 2001, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments published an instruction entitled, *Liturgiam authenticam*, subtitled, *On the Use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy*. The instruction directs specifically that: “Certain expressions that belong to the heritage of the whole or of a great part of the ancient Church, as well as others that have become part of the general human patrimony, are to be respected by a translation that is as literal as possible, as for example the words of the people’s response *Et cum spiritu tuo*, or the expression *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa* in the Act of Penance of the Order of Mass.”²

4. Where does this dialogue come from?

The response *et cum spiritu tuo* is found in the Liturgies of both East and West, from the earliest days of the Church. One of the first instances of its use is found in the *Traditio Apostolica* of Saint Hippolytus, composed in Greek around 215 AD.

5. How is this dialogue used in the Liturgy?

The dialogue is only used between the priest and the people, or exceptionally, between the deacon and the people. The greeting is never used in the Roman Liturgy between a non-ordained person and the gathered assembly.

6. Why does the priest mean when he says “The Lord be with you”?

By greeting the people with the words “The Lord be with you,” the priest expresses his desire that the dynamic activity of God’s spirit be given to the people of God, enabling them to do the work of transforming the world that God has entrusted to them.

7. What do the people mean when they respond “and with your spirit”?

The expression *et cum spiritu tuo* is only addressed to an ordained minister. Some scholars have suggested that *spiritu* refers to the gift of the spirit he received at ordination. In their response, the people assure the priest of the same divine assistance of God’s spirit and, more specifically, help for the priest to use the charismatic gifts given to him in ordination and in so doing to fulfill his prophetic function in the Church.

8. What further reading could you suggest on this dialogue?

For those who wish to pursue this issue from a more scholarly perspective, they might consult:

- J.A. Jungmann, S.J., *The Mass of the Roman Rite: its Origins and Development*, trans. F.A. Brunner C.Ss.R (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1986),363.
- Michael K. Magee, *The Liturgical Translation of the Response “Et cum spiritu tuo”*: *Communio* 29 (Spring 2002)152-171.
- W.C. Van Unnik, “*Dominus Vobiscum*,” *The Background of a Liturgical Formula*: A.J.B. Higgins (ed.), *New Testament Essays* (Manchester, University Press, 1959) 270-305.

²*Liturgiam authenticam*, no. 56