

The Revised Translation and Catholic Music

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From the beginning of time, communities have gathered together to give praise and worship to God through the gift of song. The style and language of that music has continually evolved and developed with the passage of time. With the revised translation of *The Roman Missal* (the ritual book for the celebration of the Mass), English-speaking Catholics around the globe will sing God's praises using different texts than the ones in current use. The new texts will reflect a translation that is more closely aligned to the original Latin text. Some of the changes will occur in the parts of the Mass that are sung by the assembly, most notably the Gloria; the Holy, Holy, Holy; and the Memorial Acclamation.

Before exploring these changes, it is important to note that *most* of the music of the liturgy will remain the same. For example, there are *no* alterations to the opening or closing songs, nor to the music for the Presentation and Preparation of the Gifts, or the Communion Rite (unless parishes are using the entrance antiphons and communion antiphons; those have been retranslated). Additionally, some sections of the Order of Mass (those parts that are constant at all Masses) will stay the same—the Lord, Have Mercy and the Lamb of God. Also unchanged is the repertoire for occasional and sacramental liturgies—funerals, weddings, Confirmation, and Ordination. In other words, most of the music found in today's hymnals will still be current after the new translation is implemented.

The musical texts that *are* changing have been the subject of scrutiny for the past several years. Composers and publishers have been devoting much time and attention to the new translation of the Gloria; the Holy, Holy, Holy; and the Memorial Acclamation. More than 20 beloved Mass settings in current use have been revised to reflect the changes. In addition, several dozen brand new settings have also been written and published.

The new and revised Mass settings can be examined on the Web sites of the major publishers of liturgical music. Listen to audio files and view PDF's of the music on the



following sites: GIA Publications, Inc (www.giamusic.com); World Library Publications (www.wlp.jspaluch.com and www.singthenewmass.com); OCP Publications (www.ocp.org).

Additionally, the revised edition of *The Roman Missal* itself will include Gregorian chant settings in both Latin and English for all parts of the Order of Mass. These settings will also appear in all hymnals produced by the major publishers. Parish communities might choose to sing these chant settings as a way to honor the rich Gregorian tradition of the Church, as well as to bring together diverse contemporary communities. Listen to and view these chants on the Web site of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (www.npm.org).

In addition to the changes in the Gloria; the Holy, Holy, Holy; and the Memorial Acclamation, there is the matter of the "Sung Dialogues." These dialogues include such common exchanges as "The Lord be with you," to which the people will respond, "And with your spirit." Dialogic exchanges also happen during the Liturgy of the Word, for example "The Gospel of the Lord," to which the people respond, "Praise to you Lord, Jesus Christ." When these and other such dialogues are sung, it heightens the awareness of the assembly to the importance of these moments. These dialogues foster unity between the priest and the people. Many parishes will begin to sing these dialogues at the same time as implementing the textual changes of the revised Missal. Go to www.npm.org to view and listen to examples of the some of the sung dialogues.

Whether singing a new Mass setting or a revised one, Gregorian chant or contemporary melody, or dialogic exchanges, music "is a way for God to lead us to the realm of higher things" (*Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*, 2). Singing our new song will provide an opportunity for English-speaking Catholics to pray with a renewed spirit, a deeper understanding of the liturgy, and a transformed heart. Let God always be praised!

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Look for the "Preparing for the Revised Roman Missal" link.**