

This week's letter includes the fourth in an ongoing series of comments and reflections on our celebration of Mass and the new translation of Mass texts which English speaking Catholics around the world will begin to use on November 27, 2011, the First Sunday of Advent.

One benefit of the new translation is the way it will inevitably make all of us more aware of what's happening in our worship. As I've written earlier, most of the changes will be in parts of the Mass that the priest prays. For some time I'll need to pay more attention to the texts in the Missal because they won't be exactly the ones I've been praying for the last 38 years. Those same changes, though I'm the one to speak them, will get your attention, too, since they'll be different than the one's you've heard (depending on your age) for four decades or more. Such changes will lift us all out of what may have become rote in spite of my effort to truly *pray* those words each week and your effort to prayerfully listen.

The changes won't just perk us up to a different vocabulary but will also have the benefit of prompting us to think about and reflect on the words we sing, say, hear and pray. Let's look, for instance, at the heart of the Eucharistic Prayer when we remember the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper.

We're accustomed to hearing this translation of the Latin text:

Before he was given up to death, a death he freely accepted,

he took bread and **gave you** thanks.

He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, **and said:**

Take this, all of you, and eat it:

this is my body which will be given up for you.

When supper was ended, he took the **cup.**

Again he gave you thanks **and praise,** gave **the cup** to his disciples, **and said:**

Take this, all of you, and drink from it:

this is the **cup** of my blood, the blood of the new and **everlasting** covenant.

It will be shed for you and **for all so that sins may be forgiven.**

Do this in memory of me.

... but will begin, in Advent, to hear this translation of the same Latin text:

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion,

he took bread and, **giving thanks,**

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, **saying:**

Take this, all of you, and eat **of** it:

for this is my Body which will be given up for you.

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the **chalice and,**

once more giving thanks, **he gave it** to his disciples, **saying:**

Take this, all of you, and drink from it:

for this is the **chalice** of my Blood, the Blood of the new and **eternal** covenant,

which will be **poured out** for you and **for many for the forgiveness of sins.**

Do this in memory of me.

*(In both samples above, the **bolded** words indicate those which have been changed.)*

That's a sample of some of the difference we'll hear in the new translation. Next week, I'll compare several examples of the Opening Prayer from the beginning of Mass. It's going to take some time, perhaps a good deal of time, to become accustomed to these new texts and we'll need to be patient with the texts, with one another and with ourselves as these words become part of our prayer.

And now, something not much at all related to what I've written above, but something certainly worth the consideration of all of us, including me...

When was the last time you personally shared with someone who's been away from Mass
what coming to Sunday Mass means to *you*?

When was the last time you gently, graciously invited such a person
to come home to pray with us?

Sincerely,
Fr. Fleming

P.S.

Please take a moment to read and consider what I wrote in the bulletin regarding some situations concerning our church parking lot.