

PROPOSALS FOR CATECHETICAL HOMILIES
ON THE NEW TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL
IN THE FALL OF 2011

Introduction & Explanation:

The following notes are meant as a potential guide for catechizing on the new English translation of the Mass this fall. This resource covers all Sundays and Holy Days from Sept. 25 (26th Sunday of Ordinary Time) until Christmas.

The points listed here are simply suggestions – one need not use every theme or point that is mentioned for each day, nor focus solely on the new translation in every homily. Naturally, it will still be necessary for the homilist to research and craft a full homily as he sees fit.

The use of catechetical homilies on the new Roman Missal is perhaps one of the most critical elements that can be used to prepare the people for this change. Undoubtedly, more parishioners can be reached and instructed at the Sunday Mass than at any other time.

Explanations and reflections for some of the major translation changes are included. Whenever possible, these notes make use of pertinent references from themes or direct quotes within the day's Lectionary readings. On occasion, even if no direct connection is suggested by readings on a particular day, important topics are listed when the timing seems opportune.

Some items appear multiple times on this resource, thereby allowing the homilist to choose whether to address certain points earlier or leave them for later. The table of contents and the topical index that follow this introduction might help with such decisions. Reference is also made within the text to repeat appearances of themes, directing the reader back to the principal entry that contains the full exposition on a particular topic.

In addition to Lectionary readings, some examples from the proper prayers of the day (e.g. Collect prayers) are cited beginning with the First Sunday of Advent (Nov. 27 – when the new Mass texts will be implemented). The full propers for Advent and Christmas are available online now: <http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/advent-christmas.pdf>

Drawing upon the propers is in keeping with GIRM 65:

"The homily...should be an exposition of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Ordinary or from the Proper of the Mass of the day and should take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners."

It is important that catechesis continue after the implementation. In fact, the First Sunday of Advent will be one of the most important days for addressing the changes. Christmas will also be important, given that there will surely be a number of people in church that day who do not attend Mass regularly, and so would be unfamiliar with the changes.

Structure

The proposed topics for any given Mass in this resource are structured in this manner:

1. The date and specific Sunday/Feast and are given as the heading on that page
2. "Possible themes" for that day are listed immediately below the heading
3. These same themes or topics are then treated with their own separate sub-headings in the remainder of the entry, each featuring such material as:
 - References to passages in the day's Scripture readings (or Mass propers, if applicable)
 - Connections and catechesis regarding particular parts of the new Mass translation
 - Further related reflections on theology, history, Church documents, etc.

The following is a sample of part of a Sunday entry, featuring the structure just described:

December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent

Possible Themes: Preparing/Meeting the Lord

Holiness and Purity (Penitential Act; Lord, I Am not Worthy)

➤ Preparing for and Meeting the Lord

- The familiar Advent exhortation is featured in both the First Reading (Is 40:1-5,9-11) and the Gospel (Mk 1:1-8): "Prepare the way of the Lord."
- Again, the theme of readying ourselves to welcome Christ is strong. This is seen in the day's Collect as well (closely connected to last Sunday's):

**Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.**

- The First Reading also notes that with His coming, "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." The language of the new translation is meant to show forth more overtly the splendor of God's glory. The counter-cultural style and the fact that the theological content of the prayers is more precisely conveyed also promote not an earthly but a "heavenly wisdom" (Collect).

Again, this resource was created with the vision of pointing out content in the Sunday readings and other Mass texts that could offer homilists opportunities to discuss various aspects of the new translation. Sometimes this takes the form of an explicit Scriptural allusion also seen in the new Mass texts. In other cases, the overall theme of the day lends itself to discussion of a certain aspect of the new translation philosophy. And on some days, there are so many connections that could be made to the changes that it might be impossible to address all of them.

This is why it is important to view this resource as a whole, tailoring it to your parish's timeline and the themes you wish to address, rather than using it simply as a week-by-week homily outline.

May the arrival of the new translation provide us with an opportunity for a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ in the holy Mass.

Basic Contents by Date

- September 25 (26th Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Divine Worship
 - Humility & Repentance (Confiteor)

- October 2 (27th Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Receiving the Texts
 - Scriptural Allusions Stronger
 - Sanctus (“Lord God of hosts”)
 - “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter...”
 - “And with your spirit”

- October 9 (28th Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Sacramental, Transcendent Worship
 - Sanctus (“Lord God of hosts”)
 - Heavenly Banquet
 - “For many” (“*pro multis*”)

- October 16 (* Mass of Thanksgiving for Bl. John Paul II in FW-SB)
 - Bl. John Paul II’s involvement in the new translation
 - Reverence at Worship
 - The *Gloria*
 - Reign of God

- October 23 (30th Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Dismissal/Mission
 - Creed (“I believe,” “consubstantial”)

- October 30 (31st Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Thanks/*Eucharistia*, Preface & Sanctus
 - Humility (Confiteor, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter...”)
 - Receiving the Word of God

- November 1 (Solemnity of All Saints – Holy Day)
 - Heavenly Banquet and “Lamb of God” imagery
 - *Agnus Dei*
 - “Behold the Lamb of God...”
 - Communion of Saints

- November 6 (32nd Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Preparedness
 - Opportunity to Address Miscellaneous Other Translation Points
 - “And with your spirit”
 - “For many” (“*pro multis*”)
 - “Consubstantial”

- November 13 (33rd Sunday Ordinary Time)
 - Attentiveness and Preparedness
 - New Translation as a Challenge for Our Benefit
 - Elevated Language

- November 20 (Christ the King Sunday)
 - Lord as Shepherd
 - The Sacred Liturgy as Homage to Christ
 - Welcoming Christ

- November 27 (First Sunday of Advent – * Implementation *)
 - Meeting Christ
 - The Sacred Liturgy Forms Us
 - Worshiping with Reverence

- December 4 (Second Sunday of Advent)
 - Preparing for and Meeting the Lord
 - Holiness and Purity
 - Penitential Act
 - “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter...”

- December 8 (Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception – Holy Day)
 - Glorifying God (*Gloria*)
 - Incarnation (Creed)
 - “by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man”

- December 11 (Third Sunday of Advent)
 - “And with your spirit”
 - Rejoice in the Lord

➤ December 18 (Fourth Sunday of Advent)

- Angelus Prayer
- Incarnation (Creed)
 - “by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man”

➤ December 25 (Christmas – Holy Day)

- The *Gloria*
- “Only Begotten Son”
- The Incarnation and the Creed
 - “by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man”

Alphabetical Index of Major Topics

Agnus Dei (Nov. 1)
“And with your spirit” (Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 11)
Angelus (Dec. 18)
Attentiveness (Nov. 13, Nov. 27)
“Behold the Lamb of God...” (Nov. 1)
Bl. John Paul II (Oct. 16)
Communion of Saints (Nov. 1)
Confiteor (Sept. 25, Oct. 30, Dec. 4)
“Consubstantial” (Oct. 23, Nov. 6, Dec. 8, Dec. 25)
Cosmic Scope of the Liturgy (Sept. 25, Oct. 16)
Creed (Oct. 30, Dec. 8, Dec. 18, Dec. 25)
Dismissal (Oct. 23)
Elevated Language (Oct. 9, Oct. 16, Nov. 13)
Eucharistia/Thanks (Oct. 30)
“For many” (*Pro multis*) (Oct. 9, Nov. 6)
Gloria (Oct. 16, Dec. 8, Dec. 25)
Heavenly Banquet (Oct. 9, Nov. 1)
Humility (Sept. 25, Oct. 30, Dec. 4)
“I believe” (Oct. 23)
Incarnation (Dec. 8, Dec. 18, Dec. 25)
Lamb of God Imagery (Nov. 1)
Lord as Shepherd (Nov. 20)
“Lord, I am not worthy...” (Oct. 2, Oct. 30, Dec. 4)
Mission (Oct. 23)
“Only Begotten Son” (Dec. 25)

Preface (Oct. 30)

Preparedness (Nov. 6, Nov. 13, Dec. 4)

Receiving the Church's Texts (Oct. 2, Oct. 30)

Repentance (Sept. 25, Oct. 30, Dec. 4)

Reverence (Oct. 16, Nov. 27, Dec. 11)

Sanctus (Oct. 2, Oct. 9, Oct. 30, Dec. 25)

Scriptural Allusions (Oct. 2, Oct. 30, and throughout)

Vernacular Adaptation (Oct. 16, Oct. 23, Dec. 18)

Welcoming Christ (Nov. 20, Nov. 27, Dec. 4)

Worship as Divine, Sacramental, Transcendent, & for our Sanctification

(Sept. 25, Oct. 9, Oct., 16, Nov. 20, Nov. 27, Dec. 25)

September 25 - Twenty-Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Divine worship
Humility (Confiteor)

➤ Divine Worship

- The famous Christological hymn of St. Paul (Second Reading Long Version - Phil 2:1-11,) emphasizes that the Church on earth unites with Christians from all times and places in giving fitting worship to Jesus Christ ("at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father").
- The sacred liturgy is truly cosmic, and a participation in the eternal. The upcoming new translation of the holy Mass will help us to recognize these qualities more readily, by elevating the speech by which we address God

➤ Humility & Repentance

- The heavenly virtue of humility (the antithesis of the deadly sin of pride) is a common theme in today's readings. Humility is a key element in Christian prayer, and certain opportunities for recalling the need for humility and repentance at Mass are being recovered or highlighted in the new translation. For instance, the Confiteor will now more directly translate "*mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*" into "through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault." (Mention striking one's chest at the Confiteor, which alludes to the penitent tax collector's actions in Luke Chapter 18, which is not part of today's readings)
- First Reading (Ez 18:25-28) - "if he turns from the wickedness he has committed, and does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins that he has committed" ("right and just" also new in the Preface dialogue)
- Psalm 25 - the Lord "guides the humble to justice, and teaches the humble his way"
- Second Reading - "Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves"
- Gospel (Mt 21:28-32) - the son who changed his mind and did his father's will is an example of the humility necessary for Christian life (think of the Our Father: "thy will be done")

October 2 - Twenty-Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Receiving the new texts

Scriptural allusions

- God of hosts (Sanctus) - must use Psalm of Day

➤ Receiving the New Missal Texts

- Second Reading (Phil 4:6-9) - "Have no anxiety at all" but rather trust in God's peace by prayer and petition. "Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen." Although it may seem daunting, the new translation should bear great fruit if we actively receive it as an expression of the Church's treasury of faith. We sincerely ask that God will give us the peace and understanding to welcome and enter more fully into the universal prayer of the Church (since our translation brings us closer to the content of the original Latin and the other Roman Catholic vernacular translations).
- St. Paul says to "think about these things" that are "worthy of praise" or that exhibit qualities of truth, beauty, and goodness. Having a new, enriched translation should spur us to deeper meditation upon the divine mysteries. Although liturgical worship does indeed involve learning and repeating prayers, we have an opportunity to give greater thought and attention to the words we offer in prayer.
 - Scriptural Allusions
- Psalm 80 - "O Lord, God of hosts, restore us." This is one of the many Scriptural occurrences of "God of hosts," which is a more accurate new translation of the Sanctus - "Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts" (rather than "God of power and might). The word "hosts" (from Hebrew "*Sabaoth*") refers to a great gathering or multitude, and speaks here of God's command over the heavenly host of angelic armies. This line has a direct Biblical foundation in Isaiah 6:1-3, where the prophet writes, "I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne...Seraphim were stationed above... 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!' they cried one to the other. 'All the earth is filled with his glory!'" And in Luke 2:13, a "multitude of the heavenly host" also announces the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. The Sanctus reminds us that all creatures on "heaven and earth" owe thanksgiving to God ("Eucharist" comes from the Greek word for "thanksgiving" - *Eucharistia*).
- One of the great benefits of the new translation is that Scriptural allusions will shine through much more clearly.
 - Another example is the line we will say immediately before receiving Holy Communion, which comes directly from Mt 8:8, in which the faith-filled centurion begs Jesus to heal his paralyzed servant: "Lord, I

am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.” Praying this conveys humanity’s unworthiness on account of sin, and our need for sincere humility (last week's theme) before receiving the Holy Eucharist. In considering the use of "roof," consider also that Saint Paul says, “your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you” (1 Cor 6:19).

- Could also take the opportunity simply address "And with your spirit" on this day, given its Biblical foundation and status as one of the most noticeable changes in the Mass (see Dec. 11 for notes)

October 9 - Twenty-Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Sacramental worship
Heavenly wedding banquet
Salvation - "*pro multis*"

➤ Sacramental Worship

- First Reading (Is 25:6-10a) - "On this mountain" the Lord of hosts "will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations." The sacred liturgy is the place where we encounter "the Lord for whom we looked" most directly and vividly while on this earth. Nevertheless, we have a limited, human understanding of the mysteries of God. This new liturgical language demonstrates our human capacity to understand God, while also offering us a deeper glimpse into his glory through the use of a more elevated type of language than what we use in everyday speech.
- Pope Paul VI stated in an address in 1969 that the language used in the sacred liturgy "should always be worthy of the noble realities it signifies, set apart from the everyday speech of the street and the marketplace, so that it will affect the spirit and enkindle the heart with love of God."
- * Can also address "Lord of hosts" in the Isaiah reading, if haven't done so in previous week.

➤ Heavenly Wedding Banquet

- Gospel Long Version (Mt 22:1-14) - the wedding feast of the king is a parable for the wedding banquet of the Lamb. The Mass is the heavenly banquet - as the priest will say before Holy Communion, "Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb."

➤ Pro Multis

- While speaking of the heavenly banquet may be a good opportunity to address the new wording during the consecration of the chalice: the Blood will be "poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins." At the most basic level, the replacement of "for all" with "for many" is a faithful translation of the original Latin phrase, "pro multis." Turning to Scripture, Isaiah 53:12 prophesied that the Messiah would take away "the sins of many," and Christ Himself at the Last Supper also said His Blood would be shed for "many" (Mt 26:28, Mk 14:24). This does not mean that Christ did not die for the sake of all humanity, for that is also clear from Scripture (2

Cor 5:15 - “He indeed died for all”). Rather, “for many” upholds the reality that each individual must also accept and abide in the grace won by Christ in order to attain eternal life. The recovery of this wording affirms that salvation is not completely automatic. Nonetheless, it should not be interpreted as overly restrictive, either. The fact that Jesus was addressing only the Apostles in the Upper Room while saying, "for you and for many," implies far-reaching inclusion – that many more besides the Twelve would benefit from this new covenant.

October 16 - * Commemoration of Bl. John Paul II in Diocese of FW-SB
Twenty-Ninth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible JP II Themes: JP II Story

- Bl. John Paul II - At the request of Pope John Paul II, *Liturgiam Authenticam* was published in 2001. Having observed major discrepancies in liturgical books during his travels, and being an accomplished linguist himself, the Holy Father recognized a need to provide a guide to ensure that all the vernacular translations of liturgical texts throughout the world would more closely correspond to the original Latin. Often, entire phrases of the original prayers were being lost in translation! With *Liturgiam Authenticam's* renewed emphasis on faithful adherence to the Latin, the respective translations would carry more accurate theological and scriptural content, and also maintain greater universality. It is from this document, concurrent with the release of the third edition of the Roman Missal in Latin, that our new translation was born.

Possible 29th Sunday Themes (if using Sunday readings):

Reverence at worship (Gloria)

Cosmic reign of God (Eucharistic Prayer III)

➤ Reverence at Worship

- Psalm 96 Refrain - "Give the Lord glory and honor." And in the final verse: "Worship the Lord in holy attire."
- Gospel (Mt 22:15-21) - Repay "to God what belongs to God."
- We owe our entire being to God, and the purpose of the sacred liturgy is to advance our salvation by directing all our actions with Him in mind. ("The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the body of Christ, and, finally, to give worship to God" - *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 59.)
- The new translation will help us accomplish this by elevating our language of worship. We are exhorted to "worship the Lord in holy attire" - just as wearing a suit to an interview or a formal gala elevates our mannerisms, so should our conduct at Mass show that we are doing something very important. In particular, the words we speak in His presence should enrich our vocabulary and make it clear that the Mass calls us outside of ourselves to a transcendent encounter with Christ.
- The *Gloria* expresses the great extent to which we should give worship to God: "We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give

you thanks for your great glory." These new lines we sing are actually a recovery of entire phrases that were left out from our previous translation!

➤ Cosmic Reign of God

- First Reading (Is 45:1,4-6) - "so that toward the rising and the setting of the sun people may know that there is none besides me."
- This is very similar wording to Malachi 1:11 ("For from the rising of the sun, even to its setting, my name is great among the nations"), which will replace the phrase in Eucharistic Prayer III that currently reads, "so that from east to west a perfect offering may be made to the glory of your name."
- While the geographic east-west imagery is beautiful in its own right, it does not carry the full cosmic scope of both space and time implied in the rising and setting of the sun. The new imagery conveys the sense that the Holy Mass and the one Sacrifice of Jesus Christ have a truly eternal quality. The Lord is ruler of space and time.

October 23 - Thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Dismissal and mission
 Creed ("I believe" and Consubstantial)

➤ Dismissal & Mission from the Mass

- Second Reading (1 Thess 1:5c-10) - "For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth...in every place your faith in God has gone forth."
- With the new Missal, our three current dismissal formulas will be replaced by four options. The first corresponds to the ancient Latin dismissal, which is familiar to many: "Ite, missa est." In fact, this is where the word "Mass" comes from - "missa est" - which at its most fundamental level means "it is sent" or "it is the dismissal." More than a mere declaration that it is time to leave, this has the function of emphasizing our Christian call to "mission" (a word with the same Latin origins).
- Pope Benedict XVI spoke of this in *Sacramentum Caritatis*, the Apostolic Exhortation he released in 2007 as a follow-up to the 2005 Bishops' Synod on the Holy Eucharist. He said our participation in the Eucharistic liturgy should translate into a life in imitation of Christ, such that from the sacred liturgy should spring forth the "missionary nature of the Church."
 - The Gospel (Mt 22:34-40) also speaks of the utmost importance accorded to Christian charity

➤ The Nicene Creed (no direct connection to readings, but could be a good time to address, perhaps relating it to a personal commitment necessary to advance the Church's mission)

- The Creed will say "I believe in one God" ("*Credo in unum Deum*") instead of "We believe." Other language groups have been using "I believe" in the vernacular, because it is a straightforward translation of the Latin "Credo." This offers a recurring opportunity to reaffirm one's personal faith, just as when individuals respond, "I do," if there is a renewal of baptismal promises during Mass. This personal profession is also necessary if one wishes to join the Church's communal mission in the world.
- "One in being" becomes "consubstantial with the Father." "Consubstantial" ("*consubstantialis*" in the Latin text) is an unusual word, but a crucial early theological term, asserting that the Son is of the "same substance" with the Father – meaning He equally shares the Father's divinity as a Person of the Holy Trinity. Although it carries the same basic meaning as "one in being," the more precise use of "consubstantial" is an acknowledgement of how the Greek equivalent of the word was so important for safeguarding orthodoxy in the Early Church. In the Fourth Century, the description "*homoousios*"

("same substance") was affirmed over "*homoiousios*" ("like substance"). The reality of who Christ is thus hinged upon a single letter! This is one of the most important truths of our faith - that God became flesh: fully God and fully man. This is why it is important to be precise in speaking about it, and also why it is so important to discuss it in such a formal setting as a homily.

- In addition, it's interesting to note that the translation of this phrase has evolved - from "of one substance" in the 1960s, to "one in being" in the translation we've known since the 1970s, now to "consubstantial." This illustrates the Church trying to "get her footing" in the vernacular. The Church is two millennia old, and we've only been using English to such an extent in the Mass for a few decades - it is natural that it should take some time to discern how best to describe so important a reality.

October 30 - Thirty-First Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Thanks & *Eucharistia*, Preface
Sanctus
Humility (Confiteor; Lord I am not worthy)
Word of God as Received

➤ *Eucharistia* / Thanks

- Second Reading (1 Thess 2:7b-9,13) - "we too give thanks to God unceasingly"
- The Eucharistic Prayer begins with the Preface dialogue, and then the Preface itself (of which many new options exist in the revised Missal). Most Prefaces in the new translation expand upon the words of the preceding dialogue by beginning, "It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks."
- "Thanks" is a critical element of the sacred liturgy - *Eucharistia* means "thanksgiving" in Greek. We offer thanks to God for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ His Son, and in the Holy Mass we receive the grace He won.
- This "ceaseless thanksgiving" is also seen in the eternal praise offered to God in heaven, as illustrated in the Sanctus.

➤ The Sanctus

- Sung at conclusion of the Preface
- First Reading (Malachi 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10) - "A great King am I, says the Lord of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations."
- Can use same discussion of Sanctus and Scriptural allusions as outlined for October 2

➤ Humility

- Gospel (Mt 23:1-12) - "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."
- Humility is key to offering sincere thanksgiving, and worthily participating in the sacred mysteries.
- Can use same discussion points on the *Confiteor* as from Sept. 25, or the discussion of words before Holy Communion ("Lord, I am not worthy") from Oct. 2

➤ Word of God as Received

- Second Reading - "in receiving the word of God from hearing us, you received not a human word but, as it truly is, the word of God, which is not at work in you who believe."

- The Church's sacred liturgy is not simply invented, but handed down to us through Christian history and finding roots in Jewish worship. In welcoming the new translation of the Mass, we should embrace these prayers as more fully and richly expressing the word of God - especially since it conveys more accurate Scriptural allusions

November 1 - The Solemnity of All Saints (Holy Day of Obligation)

Possible Themes: Lamb of God (Behold the Lamb of God)
Communion of Saints

➤ The Lamb of God

- First Reading (Rev 7:2-4,9-14) - The imagery of the exaltation of the Lamb is prevalent - beautiful account of heavenly worship and the fact that purity (represented by the white robes) comes from the blood of the Lamb
 - The Second Reading (1 Jn 3:1-3) speaks of purity that comes through hope in God
- The Book of Revelation is a look at the heavenly liturgy we celebrate in the Mass. There is an emphasis in our Eucharistic Prayers on the purity of the victim, Jesus Christ, the unblemished paschal Lamb.
- We sing the Lamb of God (*Agnus Dei*) at every Mass, reinforcing this imagery.
- Immediately afterward, the priest holds the Holy Eucharist and will say the new translation: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb."
- "Behold the Lamb" recalls the words of John the Baptist, as he heralded Christ's arrival at the River Jordan: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). It also evokes the words of Pilate to the crowd in presenting the scourged Jesus: "Behold, the man" ("Ecce homo" – Jn 19:5).
- The translation change from "Happy are those" to "Blessed are those" also offers a connection with the day's Gospel (Mt 5:1-12a) on the Beatitudes

➤ The Communion of Saints

- This theme is central to the feast, of course - but also present in the First Reading. (Though not today's reading, Rev. 5:8 also is often cited as showing intercessory prayer by the holy ones.)
- The Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I) speaks powerfully of the Communion of Saints in naming the Apostles and various Saints of the early Roman Church

November 6 - Thirty-Second Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Preparedness

Look at Miscellaneous Translation Revisions

➤ Preparing for the Missal

- The Gospel (Mt 25:1-13) about the wise and foolish virgins speaks of always having to be ready for Christ's Second Coming and the heavenly wedding feast - this can be related to the more immediate sense in which we should spiritually prepare for Christ's coming in the Holy Eucharist at Mass (itself a partaking in the banquet of the Lamb).
- Just as the virgins were to meet the bridegroom, so we should be ready to meet Christ in the Mass (including in the words we pray).
- This eschatological theme of preparedness is also related to the approaching end of the liturgical year (which brings with it the advent of the new Missal)

➤ This could be a Sunday to catechize on particular significant changes, such as "for many" (see Oct. 9) or "consubstantial" (Oct. 23) if these have not yet been covered. Could also do "And with your spirit" (see Dec. 11 for notes).

November 13 - Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time

Possible Themes: Attentiveness/Preparedness

New Translation as a Challenge for Our Benefit

➤ Attentiveness/Preparedness

- Second Reading (1 Thess 5:1-6) - "the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night." This is an eschatological reference, appropriate at the end of the liturgical year.
- Also in the second reading - "let us stay sober and alert." This builds on the theme of preparedness from last week, and certainly speaks of preparing for the coming of Christ and the eschatological fulfillment of all things. But it also can be helpful as a reminder that we should always be attentive especially during the Mass. And with the arrival of the new translation in a couple weeks, it will be extremely important to pay more attention to the words we pray - which is of course a very good thing.

➤ New Translation as a Challenge for Our Benefit

- The Gospel (Mt 25:14-30) recounts the parable of the servant who did not make use of the talent his master gave him. The servant did not strive to meet the master's expectations, instead remaining idle.
- The new translation - especially with its elevated language - will be a challenge for us at first. But we must actively engage it, because the fruit it bears will ultimately be for our spiritual benefit - deepening our language and life of prayer.

November 20 - Christ the King Sunday

Possible Themes: The Lord as Shepherd
Sacred Liturgy as Homage to Christ
Welcoming Christ

➤ The Lord as Shepherd

- First Reading (Ez 34:11-12,15-17) speaks of the Lord as Shepherd. So does the Psalm (Ps. 23)
- Christ will guide us in all future things, whether the new liturgical year and towards the eschaton - or as we implement the new Missal

➤ Sacred Liturgy as Homage to Christ

- The Second Reading (1 Cor 15:20-26,28) speaks of Christ's primacy, His kingdom, and His reign
- We must never forget the Kingship of Christ, and that the sacred liturgy should always give the most fitting possible worship to Him. This is a main reason for the new translation - enabling us to praise God in a more elevated manner, through speech that is clearly more formal, transcendent, and non-colloquial. This, in turn, helps us to pray more richly.

➤ Welcoming Christ

- The Gospel (Mt 25:31-46) is about how welcoming and caring for the poor and the stranger is in fact an act of love towards the king, our Lord.
- In a different sense, we can welcome Christ (who is the *Word* of God) in His words in the Mass by accepting the new Missal with fervor. The Mass is the principal means by which we encounter Christ and then receive His grace. From the sacred liturgy, we are sent into the world to minister to the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, ill, and imprisoned. The Eucharist is the "Sacrament of Charity," and the greatest commandments are love of God and love of neighbor as oneself.

November 27 - First Sunday of Advent (IMPLEMENTATION DAY)

Possible Themes: Meeting Christ
The Liturgy forms us
Worshiping with reverence

➤ Meeting Christ

- Advent is a season of preparation for the Lord (also seen in the readings leading up to now).
- The newly translated Collect for the day beautifully expresses the idea of meeting Christ:

**Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God,
the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ
with righteous deeds at his coming,
so that, gathered at his right hand,
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.**

- The prayer's words of rushing "to meet" Christ "with righteous deeds at his coming" so that we may join him in the heavenly kingdom are an encapsulation of the Christian life, the sacred liturgy, the season of Advent, and also even the welcoming of the new Roman Missal
 - We should strive to greet Christ by joyfully encountering Him in the Mass – and particularly now in the words of this new translation, which has been undertaken for our spiritual benefit and for the sake of greater reverence at Mass. The sacred liturgy exists to form us in Christ's image, so we need to recognize and contemplate Him there.
 - Talking about this Collect also provides an opportunity to discuss how much richer the new proper prayers of the Mass (the prayers of the priest that change with the liturgical day and season) are.
- The First Reading (Is 63:16b-17,19b; 64:2-7) says, "Would that you might meet us doing right, that were mindful of you in our ways!" Once again, preparedness to meet God is emphasized, as well as the need for purity. This ties in nicely with the Collect.
 - In the Gospel (Mk 13:33-37), Jesus exhorts listeners to be watchful and alert. Once more, the need to be attentive and prepared - in an overarching sense as we conform our lives to Christ in the hope of heaven, but also in readying ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries more fruitfully in the liturgy on earth (which is inseparable from our hope of heaven).
 - The new translation can be more challenging to understand at times, but it will thereby help us to be more alert and attentive - to think actively about

what is being said and prayed. A fruitful, lasting encounter with Christ always involves us going beyond where we are now.

➤ The Sacred Liturgy Forms Us

- The First Reading says, "O Lord, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands." This familiar line is a reminder that the Church's liturgy should form us (and conform us to Christ) - not vice versa. The new translation should draw us nearer to God - worship should challenge and mold our spiritual lives.
- The Second Reading (1 Cor 1:3-9) speaks of how in Christ, we are "enriched in every way." In the new translation, we can see this enriching particularly in the recovery of more overt Scriptural allusions. An example can be found at the beginning of this same reading: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." This corresponds exactly to one of the new options for the greeting at the beginning of Mass. (Perhaps using that greeting on this day would be appropriate, and address it in the homily.)
- The Prayer After Communion for the First Sunday of Advent eloquently speaks of how the sacramental life should mold and prepare us for heaven:

**May these mysteries, O Lord,
in which we have participated,
profit us, we pray,
for even now, as we walk amid passing things,
you teach us by them
to love the things of heaven
and hold fast to what endures.**

➤ Worshiping with Reverence

- The new translation will help us to worship God with greater solemnity by fostering more reverence in our speech, and also by ensuring that all that is in the Latin Missal comes to us also in the vernacular translation.
- The Prayer over the Gifts for the First Sunday of Advent is pertinent:

**Accept, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we make,
gathered from among your gifts to us,
and may what you grant us to celebrate devoutly here below,
gain for us the prize of eternal redemption.**

- A fruitful celebration and participation in the Holy Eucharist is ordered towards our eternal salvation.

December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent

Possible Themes: Preparing/Meeting the Lord

Holiness and Purity (Penitential Act; Lord, I Am not Worthy)

➤ Preparing for and Meeting the Lord

- The familiar Advent exhortation is featured in both the First Reading (Is 40:1-5,9-11) and the Gospel (Mk 1:1-8): "Prepare the way of the Lord."
- Again, the theme of readying ourselves to welcome Christ is strong. This is seen in the day's Collect as well (closely connected to last Sunday's):

**Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.**

- The First Reading also notes that with His coming, "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." The language of the new translation is meant to show forth more overtly the splendor of God's glory. The counter-cultural style and the fact that the theological content of the prayers is more precisely conveyed also promote not an earthly but a "heavenly wisdom" (Collect).

➤ Holiness & Purity

- The Second Reading (2 Pt 3:8-14) - "Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of the God...we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."
- St. John the Baptist exhorts listeners in the Gospel to acknowledge their sins. Advent is a penitential season, thus reminding us of the need for purity and humility. This may therefore be a good time to discuss the Penitential Act, and the Confiteor in particular (see Sept. 25). Also the line "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you..." said before receiving Holy Communion (see Oct. 2).
- The Prayer over the Offerings for the Second Sunday of Advent speaks of humility and God's mercy:

**Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings,
and since we have no merits to plead our cause,
come, we pray, to our rescue
with the protection of your mercy.**

December 8 - Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obl.)

Possible Themes: Glorifying God (Gloria)
Incarnation (The Creed)

➤ Glorifying God

- Second Reading - "we were also chosen...so that we might exist for the praise of his glory."
- Connection to the *Gloria* (see Oct. 16, 29th Sunday OT). This is the first time the new *Gloria* will have been used after the implementation date of the new Missal (though it's possible some parishes have used a new sung setting sooner, since permission was given in the fall).
- The Gospel (Lk 1:26-38) relates the Annunciation. The great work God had done for Mary and Elizabeth (and also Mary's *Magnificat* hymn of praise later at the Visitation) shows the extent to which glory is owed to God.

➤ The Incarnation

- In the Annunciation Gospel, Gabriel tells the Blessed Virgin that "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."
- This is a good opportunity to speak of the revised line in the Creed: "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man." Explain how the Incarnation is a divine act, and different than birth. This also represents a significant correction in the Creed translation - previously it could have been interpreted that Christ did not become man until the Nativity. The Annunciation is the moment of Incarnation and conception of Jesus.
- If speaking on the Creed and the Incarnation, it might also be a chance to discuss the word "consubstantial" (see Oct. 23).

December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent

Possible Themes: And with your spirit
Rejoice in the Lord

➤ And with Your Spirit

- This is one of the most noticeable changes in the new translation, and perhaps the most frequent (this new response occurs five times at Mass).
- Naturally, it's the proper translation of "*et cum spiritu tuo.*" Other languages have "spirit" in their vernacular translations.
- One form or other of "The Lord be with you" appears multiple times in the Bible, including the greeting given by the Archangel Gabriel to Mary at the Annunciation: "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you" (Lk 1:28 - the Gospel for Immaculate Conception and for next Sunday, the Fourth Sunday of Advent). Then, in the Pauline epistles, multiple variations of "The Lord be with your spirit" are employed as parting words to different church communities. Understood together, this liturgical dialogue in the Mass is an exchange whereby all present - both priest and congregation - ask that the Holy Spirit (whom we call "the Lord, the giver of life" in the Nicene Creed) establish a stronger communion among us.
- First Reading (Is 61:1-2a,10-11) - "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me..."
 - This can be related to the fact that for the congregation to answer the priest, "And with your spirit," is actually a theological statement about what we Catholics believe regarding ordained ministers. The Catechism (#367) speaks of how "spirit" can refer to an elevation of the soul, whereby the soul "is raised beyond all it deserves to communion with God." Through Holy Orders, Christ has forever configured the priest's soul to Himself in a special way, by the power of the Holy Spirit. By specifically referencing the priest's spirit, we can affirm this transformation and pray for his ministry.

➤ Rejoice in the Lord

- The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called *Gaudete* Sunday - *gaudete* means "rejoice," and comes from the Entrance Antiphon ("Rejoice in the Lord always").
- Second Reading (1 Thess 5:16-24) - "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing." Constant prayer and worship necessary as we strive always to prepare a fitting place in our hearts for the Lord.

- The proper prayers for the Third Sunday of Advent focus on praying unceasingly and with reverence (as the proper means to rejoice in the Lord - particularly within the sacred liturgy). The Collect:

**O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation,
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.**

December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Possible Themes: Angelus Prayer
Incarnation and Creed

- The revised translation of the Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Advent is now clearly evident as the closing prayer of the Angelus:

**Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.**

- This illustrates how the new translation better conveys the texts that have been in the Latin Missal this whole time, while also recovering a clear connection with the familiar language of traditional Catholic prayers
 - This prayer also contains reference to the Annunciation, Incarnation, and Passion & Death of Christ -- all at a time when we prepare for Christmas
- Incarnation and Creed
- The Gospel (Lk 1:26-38) is the same as for Immaculate Conception, so any of the themes from Dec. 8 could be used. Be aware, however, that Christmas next week provides perhaps a better opportunity for discussion of the Incarnation line in the Creed.

December 25 - Christmas

Possible Themes: The *Gloria*

Only Begotten Son (only at Mass During the Day)

The Incarnation & the Creed

The Proper Prayers

➤ The Gloria

- It is particularly appropriate to discuss the Gloria on Christmas because of the connection to the Nativity in Scripture, and even the familiar carol "Angels We Have Heard on High," which includes the opening Latin line of *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (though this carol cannot be used in place of the *Gloria* at Mass, of course!)
- The Gospel for Christmas Mass at Midnight (Lk 2:1-14) reads: "And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.'"
- The first line of the revised *Gloria* - "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will" - is derived from the angelic greeting in Luke's Gospel.
- The new translation of the Gloria is a richer reference to the fact that the Messiah's coming brings the world a higher order of divine peace that only the incarnate Son of God can bestow. Those who live in accordance with God's will and receive His grace shall experience the fullness of this peace.
- Entire phrases have been recovered in the new Gloria (see Oct. 16, 29th Sunday OT).
- The revised *Sanctus* says "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts." The word "hosts" is a reference to the heavenly armies of angels, and appears in the Midnight Gospel.

➤ Only Begotten Son (appropriate to address at Mass During the Day)

- The Second Reading for Christmas Mass During the Day (Heb 1:1-6) says, "For to which of the angels did God ever say: 'You are my son; this day I have begotten you?'"
- "Only Begotten Son" appears in both the revised Gloria and Creed.
- The addition of "Only Begotten Son" recovers a key phrase from the Latin text – "*Fili Unigenite*." This is a venerable title of Jesus Christ, which speaks of the fact that the Son of God comes forth from the Father, yet is no less an eternal Person of the Divine Trinity.
- To say the Son is "born of the Father before all ages" in the Creed is a profound theological truth, for the Son is not "born" in the human sense of

beginning one's life, but eternally proceeds from the Father while being always fully God. Therefore, we profess that Jesus Christ is "begotten, not made."

➤ The Incarnation & the Creed

- The Incarnation line in the Creed - "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man." - and its implications are very appropriate to address at Christmas (see Dec. 8, Immaculate Conception notes).
- Although the Nativity is not the moment of the Incarnation, the feasts of Christmas and the Annunciation (March 25) are the primary liturgical celebrations of Christ's coming as man, with Christ's birth observed exactly nine months after the Annunciation. Therefore, at all Masses on Christmas and on Annunciation we genuflect during the Creed during those words that reference the Incarnation. By touching a knee to the ground, we reverence the fact that the Son of God humbled Himself to dwell on earth. It is important to promote this reverent practice in the parish at Christmas, and to emphasize the need for a profound bow during these words at other times of the year -- it is a sign of praise and thanksgiving to Emmanuel - God with us.
- The Gospel for Mass During the Day is the Prologue of John (Jn 1:1-18). With its affirmation that "the Word was God," this also presents an opportunity to discuss "consubstantial" in the Creed (see Oct. 23).
- The Gospel for Mass During the Day identifies the Word with light, while the Second Reading for Christmas Mass During the Day (Heb 1:1-6) says the Son is the "refulgence of God's glory, the very imprint of his being." This reminds us of the words of the Creed that precede "consubstantial" and profess Christ's divinity: "God from God, *Light from Light*, true God from true God."

➤ The Proper Prayers at Christmas

- The Masses for the Nativity of the Lord contain a wealth of beautiful proper prayers, which can all be accessed here:
<http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/advent-christmas.pdf>
- In many ways, they are a culmination of the themes seen in the Advent propers.
- Some fine examples include:

➤ Vigil: Collect

**O God, who gladden us year by year
as we wait in hope for our redemption,**

**grant that, just as we joyfully welcome
your Only Begotten Son as our Redeemer,
we may also merit to face him confidently
when he comes again as our Judge.**

- (We welcome Christ now at Christmas, while remembering we must always be prepared to meet Him face to face at the conclusion of our earthly life.)

➤ **Midnight Mass: Collect**

**O God, who have made this most sacred night
radiant with the splendor of the true light,
grant, we pray, that we, who have known the mysteries of his light on
earth,
may also delight in his gladness in heaven.**

- (Incarnation: "God from God, *Light from Light*, true God from true God" as in the Creed.)

➤ **Mass at Dawn: Collect**

**Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, as we are bathed in the new radiance of your incarnate Word,
the light of faith, which illumines our minds,
may also shine through in our deeds.**

- (Incarnation as bringing hope and light to mankind - also "Light from Light" as in the Creed)

➤ **Mass at Dawn: Prayer over the Gifts**

**May our offerings be worthy, we pray, O Lord,
of the mysteries of the Nativity this day,
that, just as Christ was born a man and also shone forth as God,
so these earthly gifts may confer on us what is divine.**

- (Incarnation: Christ "shone forth as God" -- also "Light from Light" as in Creed)

➤ **Mass During the Day: Collect**

**O God, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature
and still more wonderfully restored it,
grant, we pray,
that we may share in the divinity of Christ,
who humbled himself to share in our humanity.**

- (The Incarnation is key to our salvation - it "wonderfully restored" human dignity and opens the path to divinization, whereby our sanctification enables us to "share in the divine nature" [cf. 2 Pt 1:14] in Heaven. Relates also to the Prologue of John's Gospel, which is the Gospel for the Mass During the Day - "But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God")