

What Will We Be Doing and Why?

Why a new translation?

As previously noted, there have been various versions of the Roman Missal, our book of Mass prayers, over the centuries. The most recent version – The Third Edition of the Roman Missal - was introduced by Pope John Paul II in the year 2000, which we will begin using in its new English translation this coming November 27th, the First Sunday of Advent. While the original Latin version of the prayers in the Missal will be the same as in the previous version, there are also quite a number of additional new prayers included in the Third Edition of the Roman Missal. There are new Masses and prayers for feast days of new saints named since the second edition of the Missal which we have used over the past forty years, as well as new prayers for various other special occasions. The English translation of these new prayers will not be a “new” translation, but actually their first translation into English. When Pope John Paul II introduced the new Missal, he also called for a new translation of its old and unchanged texts into English according to the formal equivalency principle of translation previously described in this series. To simplify, the basic reason the Pope wanted the translation done in this way so the English prayer texts would have a more formal or sacred sound to them, in contrast to the more common and “everyday” style of language used in our present translation. As the Vatican document describing this new style of translation says: The texts of the revised translation of the Roman Missal are marked by a heightened style of English speech and a grammatical structure that closely follows the Latin text. In addition, many biblical and poetic images have been restored. We will look at some of the actual texts and translations in our next article.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact our Council for Catechesis at tkautza@saintmaryhc.org.