



## DIOCESE OF COVINGTON

Office of the Bishop

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November 2011

My dear friends in Christ,

As the Church approaches the beginning of a new Liturgical Year on November 27, 2011 (the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent), we in the English speaking world will complete our own advent or period of waiting as the Revised Translation of the Roman Missal is finally put into practice. It is a period of excitement for many, anxiety for some, and indifference for others.

In every age, the Church calls the world and particularly the faithful to a renewal of our hope in Jesus Christ and to strive to refresh our lives in His Gospel. As we approach the implementation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the Roman Missal in English in the Diocese of Covington, we are called to rejuvenate our faith in Jesus Christ, particularly through our participation in the Sacred Liturgy.

For the last year, we have been engaged in a major catechetical effort, organized through the diocesan Office of Worship and Liturgy, to introduce the Revised Roman Missal to the people of the Diocese of Covington and to emphasize that which the Church has always taught concerning Her Sacred Liturgy. Conferences for our priests, deacons, religious, school teachers, and various other parish leaders, as well as articles published in our diocesan newspaper, *The Messenger*, on the revised translation and other aspects of the Sacred Liturgy, have been provided to help catechize the faithful. I am grateful for the dedication and cooperation of so many who have assisted in these efforts, as well as to those who have been laboring in our parishes.

The rituals of the Roman Church, of which we are a part, call for specific words to be used as well as particular actions and gestures, both on the part of the priest and the faithful who join their hearts with his in their worship of God. We are encouraged as the Mystical Body of Christ to continual, ongoing conversion in the faith and to strengthen that which is good and holy in our individual lives as well as our common life as Catholics and to root out that which is evil.

As we continually give ourselves to the Lord, to His Word and to His Church, as your bishop I ask for your cooperation with the implementation process and to take to heart the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, in the decree *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy), that no one on their own authority, for any reason, may add to, remove or change anything in the Sacred Liturgy. I am grateful that, in my travels throughout our Diocese, I have not observed any serious liturgical abuses; however there are some areas that should be addressed and corrected, details of which are outlined in the decree accompanying this letter.

My dear friends, now that we find ourselves at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, let us be united in the faith and with God's help and the grace of His Holy Spirit, come to a greater love for the Lord, His Church and Her Sacred Liturgy. Let us, together, strive to enliven our faith and to renew our portion of the world here in the Diocese of Covington.

Know that you are in my prayers daily. Please pray for me.

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

Most Reverend Roger J. Foys, D.D.  
Bishop of Covington



**ROGER JOSEPH**

**BY THE GRACE OF GOD  
AND THE FAVOR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE**

**BISHOP OF COVINGTON**

In preparation for the implementation of the Third Edition of the Roman Missal in English in the Diocese of Covington and in conformity with the decree *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of the Second Vatican Council, which states:

1. Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and, as laws may determine, on the bishop.
2. In virtue of power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established.
3. Therefore no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority. (SC 22)

and adhering to the Liturgical Law of the Roman Catholic Church found in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and *Redemptionis Sacramentum*,

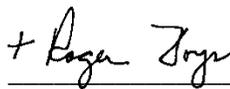
we hereby direct that:

1. The text of the Roman Missal be used exactly as it is written. As stated in the citation from the Second Vatican Council none of us has the authority to change the text for any reason.
  - a. This includes altering or changing any of the language contained in the liturgical books of the Church, not only the Roman Missal, but the Lectionary and other ritual books - the responses and prayers of the priest, and also those of the people.
  - b. Please note that only those texts approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States may be used.
  - c. Priests and deacons are restricted in their use of the *Penitential Act – Form C*, to those invocations found in the *Order of Mass* of the Roman Missal and those in *Appendix VI*.
2. The music used in the Sacred Liturgy be theologically sound and properly composed in accord with the teaching of the Church on Sacred Music.

- a. Music for the Ordinary Parts of the Mass (also known as Service Music – e.g. *Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei*) must have the approval from the Diocesan Office of Worship and Liturgy.
    - i. From November 27, 2011, until June 30, 2012, only the following three English settings are permitted for use:
      1. The Chant Mass of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the Roman Missal (mandatory)
        - a. This one setting is mandatory so as to foster a unified participation of the faithful at Mass throughout the Diocese.
      2. The Heritage Mass (optional)
      3. The Mass of Renewal (optional)
    - ii. Other Mass Settings will be approved for use on July 1, 2012.
    - iii. Please note: Hymns that are theologically sound and properly composed are not restricted.
3. The use of the Responsorial Psalm in the Liturgy of the Word follow the guidelines set forth in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. Specifically, “the responsorial Psalm should correspond to each reading and should, as a rule, be taken from the Lectionary.” (GIRM 61) and “Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the responsorial Psalm.”(GIRM 61)
  4. The gestures for the priests, deacons, religious and lay faithful be strictly carried out in accord with the *rubrics* of the Roman Missal, for “the gestures and bodily posture of both the Priest, the Deacon, and the ministers, and also of the people, must be conducive to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, to making clear the true and full meaning of its different parts, and to fostering the participation of all. Attention must therefore be paid to what is determined by [the] *General Instruction* and by the traditional practice of the Roman Rite and to what serves the common spiritual good of the People of God, rather than private inclination or arbitrary choice. A common bodily posture, to be observed by all those taking part, is a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered together for the Sacred Liturgy, for it expresses the intentions and the spiritual attitude of the participants and also fosters them.” (GIRM 42)
    - a. It should be noted that the *rubrics* for the Roman Missal, those actually in the Missal as well as others in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and *Redemptionis Sacramentum* specify what gestures the priest, deacon and lay faithful make.
    - b. Special note should be made concerning the proper posture during the Eucharistic Prayer. In the United States the lay faithful are instructed to kneel from the end of the *Sanctus* through the end of the *Great Amen* (see GIRM 43). Deacons kneel from the *epiclesis* through the showing of the chalice. Priests remain standing. In addition, “the faithful kneel after the *Agnus Dei* unless the diocesan Bishop determines otherwise” (GIRM 43).
      - i. Please note: Within the Diocese of Covington the Bishop has not determined otherwise so as to remain in accord with the norms set by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
    - c. Special note should also be made concerning the gesture for the *Our Father*. Only the priest is given the instruction to “extend” his hands. Neither the deacon nor the lay faithful are instructed to do this. No gesture is prescribed for the lay faithful in the Roman Missal; nor the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, therefore the extending or holding of hands by the faithful should not be performed.

5. That choirs and other musicians use choir lofts in churches that are structured as such. While this is not mandated, we strongly recommend it.
  - a. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, informs us of the importance that choirs have in the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy and that they have a distinct role in fostering the active participation of the faithful by means of supporting the people's singing. (see GIRM 103-104) It should be noted that the primary purpose of any choir is to support the singing of the faithful gathered in prayer, so as to allow the full, active, and conscious participation of all the faithful. While this does not eliminate pieces of Sacred Music restricted to just the choir, it is a reminder that choirs are not performing at Mass.
  - b. The sanctuary is reserved for the Priest Celebrant, concelebrants, the Deacon and the other ministers who serve at the Altar. (see GIRM 294)
6. Sacred Silence be observed in our churches prior to the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy to allow the clergy and the faithful to properly prepare and dispose themselves for the Sacred Mysteries to which they are about to participate. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* reminds us: "Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times.... Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence is observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner." (GIRM 45) Silence following the Mass is also encouraged for those who might want to remain in the church to pray.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Covington on this  
the 18<sup>th</sup> day of November in the  
Year of Our Lord, 2011.



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Most Reverend Roger J. Foys, D. D.  
Bishop of Covington



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Margaret M. Schack  
Chancellor