

## Seven Questions on Implementing the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*

Since the implementation of the Roman Missal, Third Edition on November 27, 2011, the Secretariat of Divine Worship has received a number of questions regarding the Missal, and in particular, the Order of Mass. To resolve these confusions, answers are provided here for the benefit of our readers:

### 1. Does the use of the word “chant” in the *Roman Missal* forbid hymnody during the Entrance and Communion processions?

No, the use of the word “chant” is a title for all sung pieces. The Secretariat has had numerous inquiries regarding the significance of this change in translation and its implications in liturgical practice. The 1985 edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) explained the “entrance song” in terms of antiphons, psalms, or another song. In the revised 2011 GIRM, no. 48 and nos. 86-87 now refer to the “Entrance Chant” and “Communion Chant,” respectively, and give as musical options: antiphons, Psalm chants, or other liturgical chants. While the 2003 GIRM rendered “chant” in lowercase, the new version has capitalized the word.

“Chant” (the translation of the Latin *cantus*) is intended here to refer not to a particular musical form (e.g., Gregorian *chant*), but as a general title for any musical piece. This is seen most clearly in the *Missal* itself. During the Good Friday celebration, the *Missal* has as a heading for one section, “Chants to Be Sung during the Adoration of the Holy Cross.” The “Chants” that follow include antiphons, the Reproaches, and a hymn. Similarly, in Appendix II, the Rite for the Blessing and Sprinkling of Water, a rubric states, “one of the following chants... is sung.” There follows antiphons and a hymn. From these examples, it is clear that the *Missal* in no way forbids the use of hymns or songs for the Entrance and Communion processions.

### 2. How many times do we strike the breast in the *Confiteor*?

The Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship addressed this question in a 1978 *dubium* (found in *Notitiæ* 14 [1978], 534-535): While in the Roman Missal promulgated by the authority of the Council of Trent the words were very frequently also accompanied by minute gestures, the rubrics of the Roman Missal restored by the authority of the Second Vatican Council are noteworthy for their discretion with regard to gestures. Having said this: The words *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa* which are found in the *Confiteor* are introduced in the restored Roman Missal by a rubric of this sort: “All likewise... striking their breast, say...” (Order of Mass, no. 3). In the former Missal, in the same place, the rubric read like this: “He strikes his breast three times.” It does not seem, therefore, that anyone has to strike his breast three times in pronouncing those words in Latin or in another language, even if *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa* is said. It suffices that there be a striking of the breast.

### 3. What are the new rubrics in the *Missal* regarding the *Gloria*?

In the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, the rubrics call for the *Gloria* more frequently than before. Nine out of the ten Ritual Masses prescribe the *Gloria*, the only exception being the Mass for the Institution of Lectors and Acolytes. These Masses are all treated as if they were Feasts, and the *Gloria* is used for them even when celebrated during Advent or Lent. Thus for example, Masses for Confirmation, Holy Orders, or Marriage would include the *Gloria*, even when they occur during Advent or Lent. (It should be noted, though, that Ritual Masses are prohibited on Sundays of Advent and Lent.)

#### **4. Where are all the Prefaces located in the *Missal*?**

In the previous *Sacramentary*, all the prefaces were located in one section. In the new *Roman Missal*, however, prefaces that are proper, that is, which are only used with one particular feast (e.g., the Immaculate Conception) are placed with their proper formulary for the sake of convenience, and in fidelity to the layout of the Latin typical edition. All other prefaces, which may be used with more than one formulary, are placed together in the Order of Mass just before the Eucharistic Prayers. In the *Sacramentary*, the prefaces for weekdays in Ordinary Time were called Weekdays I-VI and were located after the prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time. In the *Roman Missal*, they are now called Common Prefaces I-VI, and are located just before the prefaces for the Dead, following all the prefaces of higher rank.

#### **5. What does the *Missal* say about the posture of the faithful when receiving Holy Communion? What about Communion in the hand?**

Both of these questions are covered in no. 160 of the GIRM. It states clearly there that the “norm” established for the United States for reception of Holy Communion is standing. In the 2003 GIRM, it stated that no one should be refused Communion if they kneel, but that afterward they should be properly catechized. In the current edition, the exhortation to catechesis is removed and the exception to the norm of standing is left to the discretion of the faithful: “unless an individual member of the faithful wishes to receive Communion while kneeling.” The Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 91, is then cited. With regard to receiving Communion in the hand, there is a significant development from the 1985 GIRM to the 2003/2011 edition. Whereas in 1985, Communion in the hand was granted by virtue of an indult received in 1977, in the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, Communion in the hand is now ordinary liturgical law for the United States, though every communicant retains the equal right of receiving on the tongue.

#### **6. Will a “Book of the Chair” be published for liturgical use?**

Given the size of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, the Secretariat has received numerous inquiries regarding the possibility of publishing a “Book of the Chair,” which would include only those prayers used by the celebrant at the chair. In the past, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has discouraged such an initiative. Given the new pastoral situation, however, where many priests are now presiding from the altar rather than the chair due to the size of the *Missal*, the Secretariat will continue to examine this possibility.

#### **7. When traveling abroad, what edition of the *Missal* do I use?**

The *Roman Missal* is tied to the authority of the Conference of Bishops which publishes it. An American priest traveling to England, for example, is bound to the approved *Missal* of that territory, at least when celebrating publicly. An exception can be made if he is part of a pilgrimage group from the United States who will celebrate Mass primarily for their group. This also holds true regarding which liturgical calendar to use. The reverse practice should also be followed for those coming to the U.S. For example, even though the Philippines has not yet implemented the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, a stable Filipino community in the U.S. celebrating Mass in English is bound to use the third edition as published in this country, along with the liturgical calendar of the particular diocese in which they live.