

Changes for the Deacon in the New Roman Missal

During the Gospel Acclamation the deacon approaches the priest and says in a low voice:

Your blessing, Father

The deacon blesses himself when the priest makes the sign of the cross over him, and replies:

Amen.

At the end of the Gospel the deacon says:

The Gospel of the Lord.

He then (after looking at the people and receiving their response) kisses the book, saying quietly:

**Through the words of the Gospel
may our sins be wiped away.**

When he pours a drop of water into the chalice, the deacon says quietly,

**By the mystery of this water and wine
may we come to share in the divinity of Christ
who humbled himself to share in our humanity.**

Please note the drop of water is poured only into the main chalice, not into a flagon before it is poured, or into auxiliary chalices. It is about symbolism, not chemistry.

At the Greeting of Peace the deacon says,

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

This is a simple invitation and no time for a mini homily or attempting to be unique.

The Concluding Rite: After the final blessing, the deacon has four options:

- 1. Go forth, the Mass is ended.**
- 2. Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.**
- 3. Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.**
- 4. Go in peace.**

Please note this is not one of those times when you can use “these or other words.” Stick to the text.

Other Features in the New Roman Missal

The Penitential Act is no longer called a “rite.” It is an “act.”

The 1st option is a longer Confiteor and calls for **all to strike their breast three times**, like we did when it was in Latin.

The 2nd form of the Penitential Act is different:

Priest: **Have mercy on us, O Lord.**

People: **For we have sinned against you.**

Priest: **Show us, O Lord, your mercy.**

People: **And grant us your salvation.**

The 3rd form (which involves the deacon) remains the same. If you compose (not making up off the top of your head!) your own, remember the invocations are addressed to Christ (not the Father or the Trinity). They are positive affirmations of what Christ does for us, and not our failures. There are seven beautifully worded examples in Appendix VI at the back of the New Roman Missal.

The Profession of Faith is now also called “The Symbol.” There is now a choice of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed or the simpler Apostle’s Creed. In either choice all are to **bow** during the words that describe the incarnation.

The General Intercessions is now called the Universal Prayer. It is fitting that the deacon who, as a minister of charity, has his pulse on the needs of all should be involved in composing these. He should always be the one to announce the intentions (cf. #171 in the GIRM). Because there were no deacons when the Prayer of the Faithful was reintroduced after Vatican II, many people mistakenly thought this prayer belongs to lector. It is only the absence of a deacon that these should be done by a lector or cantor.

If the deacon is blessed with the opportunity to compose these, remember the fourfold pattern: Pray for: 1. The Church, 2. The world, 3. The needy, and 4. The local community. There are eleven excellent examples for different occasions in Appendix V found at the back of the New Roman Missal. Use these to model your own composition, and remember these are not mini-homilies or political statements.

Be sure to take personal time to get acquainted with all of this. You will be more comfortable and your prayerfulness will be a good witness. If ever you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call. God bless you for all you do!

More on the New Roman Missal

When I sent out the changes for the deacons for the New Roman Missal, I left out two items:

The first is for when the priest is using a Solemn Blessing or one of the Prayers Over The People at the end of Mass. After the “The Lord be with you” of The Concluding Rites, the deacon invites people to prepare for either of these by saying:

Bow down for the blessing.

This is a literal translation of the Latin, following the principal of formal equivalence.

The other is a prayer said when purifying the vessels. In #183 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal it states that the deacon should do this at the credence table (not at the altar). It can be done after Mass. Check with priest as to when he wants to do this.

The prayer said quietly at this time is:

**What has passed our lips as food, O Lord,
may we possess in purity of heart,
that what is given to us in time
may be our healing for eternity.**

The New Roman Missal (#137) states that the priest says this prayer. Common sense would argue that the deacon says it when he purifies. A legalistic rubricist might argue over whether it is the priest or the deacon who may or must say this prayer. You should be aware of what the prayer is.