

**THE THIRTY-FOURTH WEEK OF ORDINARY TIME, Year A  
CHRIST THE KING**

Ez 34:11-12,15-17; Ps 23:1-3,5-6; 1 Cor 15:20-26,28; Mt 25:31-46

**THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE CURRENT SACRAMENTARY  
NEW ROMAN MISSAL BEGINS NEXT WEEK**

Homily by Fr. Michael A. Van Sloun  
Saturday, November 19, 2011, 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday, November 20, 2011, 9:30 a.m.

**Spiritually** this is a **major moment**.

Today is the Feast of **Christ the King**.  
It is the grand and **glorious conclusion** to the current **church year**.

**Next week** is the **First Sunday** of **Advent** and the beginning of the **new church year**,  
and after so much anticipation and preparation,  
next week is also the **beginning** of the **new Roman Missal**.

This is the **last Sunday** for the *Sacramentary*.

The **new responses** start **next Sunday**,  
and if you are **worried** about not knowing all of the correct responses,  
you are not alone, and **you are OK**.  
There will be plenty of help in the **new Worship Aid**.  
They are printed, folded, assembled, and stapled;  
they arrived on Friday;  
and the school children will be putting them in your pews on Monday or Tuesday.

If you are a little **apprehensive**, so am I.  
Almost all of the **priest's prayers** have been **changed** in some way,  
so I plan to keep the new **Roman Missal** near me and open.  
And there is more singing for the priest, too.

First, when it comes to a **lesson**,  
before the new material there usually is a **short review**.  
Ours will only be **one item**.  
You have **one new important response** that repeats multiple times.  
Let's imagine that it is next Sunday.

Ready?  
The Lord be with you.  
**AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT.**

## **THE MYSTERY OF FAITH** (formerly the Memorial Acclamation).

**Currently** there are **four options**.

They will be set aside in favor of three new ones.

Currently the priest says, "Let us proclaim the mystery of faith."

The **four response options** are:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,  
until you come in glory.

Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. You are the Savior of the world.

The **three new response options** are:

We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again.

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

The old form was a **statement**; the new form is a **prayer** to Jesus.

They are more faithful to the **original Latin** text.

All of them make mention of the **two central "Mysteries of Faith:"**

the **death** and **resurrection** of Jesus.

At Sunday Mass like today the Mystery of Faith will **normally** be **sung**,  
but at **daily Mass** they will be **spoken** or **recited**.

## **THE LAMB OF GOD.**

This three-part prayer remains the same.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.

The verse is very close to John the Baptist's statement

when Jesus was baptized at the Jordan River before his public ministry:

*"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world"* (Jn 1:29b).

## **THE RAISING AND SHOWING OF THE EUCHARIST.**

This is the last Sunday the priest will say:

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Happy are those who are called to his supper.

Next week the new priest part is:

**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**.

Currently, “This is” to “Behold.”

“**Behold**” is closer to the **original Latin**.

“**Behold**” is much more **majestic**.

“**Behold**” is much **closer** to the **scripture** verse that it is taken from:

“***Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world***” (Jn 1:29b).

It also alludes to Pilate’s statements:

“***Behold the man***” (Ecce homo) (Jn 19:5);

“***Behold your king***” (Jn 19:14).

The second part is taken from the book of Revelation:

“*And the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to **the marriage supper of the Lamb**’* (Rev 19:9).

“**The marriage supper of the Lamb**” is unusual language that says that this is no usual meal.

This is not the lunch or dinner.

It is not even a banquet or a state dinner.

It is not a reception and dinner after of regular wedding.

It is far better than any “supper” or meal we ever have.

“**The marriage supper of the Lamb**” is a metaphor or figure of speech for **heaven** and the **great banquet** in heaven, the **eternal banquet**.

It doesn’t last for a moment; it lasts for **all time**.

What takes place at this altar, and at our Communion stations, is participation in “the marriage supper of the Lamb” in heaven.

This is a **foretaste** of the **eternal banquet**.

“**The marriage supper of the Lamb**”

is a special form of **spiritual nourishment**, not physical nourishment, that prepares us for the journey to heaven.

“The marriage supper of the Lamb” is what the **angels and saints** are **enjoying in heaven**, what they have celebrated in the **past**, what they are celebrating **now**, and what they will celebrate for all **eternity**, so if we celebrate “the marriage supper of the Lamb” **here on earth**, we are in **union** with **angels** and **saints** and all our **ancestors** in **heaven**.

When the priest says, “**Behold, the Lamb of God,**”

it is an **invitation** to each person present to share in the greatest banquet of all, to **receive “Holy Communion,”**

to be in **full union** with Jesus our Lord,

a union that is **stronger** and **more personal** and **more intimate** than a **marriage**.

To be **this close** to our **Savior** is **unnerving**.

It is no wonder that we say:

“Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.”

The new congregation response is:

Lord, I am not worthy **that you should enter under my roof**,  
but say only the word and **my soul** shall be healed.

The new congregation response recalls to the **centurion's comment** to Jesus.

The centurion had a **slave** who was **sick** and **about to die** (Lk 7:2).

When the centurion heard the Jesus was in the vicinity,

he sent messengers to ask Jesus to save his servant (Lk 7:3).

Jesus decided to go to the centurion's house.

When the centurion heard that Jesus was coming,

and only a short distance away,

“The centurion sent his friends to tell him [Jesus]:

‘Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am **not worthy** to have you enter **under my roof**.

Therefore I did not consider myself worthy to come to you,

but say the word and my servant will be healed” (Lk 7:6-7).

The **centurion** knew full well that he was **not worthy**,

and **none of us** are worthy **either**.

The centurion was in touch with his sinfulness - and he was **humble**.

When **we say**, “I am not worthy,” we are expressing the **same sort of humility**.

When we say, “Under my roof,”

we are **not** saying, “under the **roof of my mouth**.”

When the **centurion** said, “under my roof,” he was **referring to his home**,

and when **we say** “**roof**,” we are saying, “**where we live**,”

inside our **mind**, in **hearts**, in our **bodies**, **where our spirit lives**,

and unfortunately, our “spirit” is often ailing because of our sins.

Then the centurion said, “But say the word.”

This was a tremendous **act of faith**.

The centurion acknowledged that Jesus is all-powerful,

and whatever he commands will happen.

None of us are worthy to receive Holy Communion,

but when Jesus says the word, Jesus can and does make us worthy.

When we say “**My soul** will be healed,”

it refers to **spiritual forgiveness**, not a physical healing.

It also says that our union is not a physical union like two people sitting close together,

or two people hugging or holding hands.

**Holy Communion** is a **spiritual union**,

the Spirit of Jesus and our soul, united, connected across time and space.

Jesus heals our souls and is united to our souls.

## THE CONCLUDING RITES.

The response to the dismissal has changed.  
The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

The blessing with the Sign of the Cross is the same:  
May almighty God bless you, the Father, (+) and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
Your response is the same: Amen.

The **dismissal options** have **all changed**.

There are **three current options**:

Go in the peace of Christ. The Mass is ended, go in peace.  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Normally I have combined two of these:

The Mass is ended, let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

These are now **four new options** for the dismissal.  
Please listen for the **word** that all four have **in common**.

**Go forth, the Mass is ended.**

**Go and announce the gospel of the Lord.**

**Go in peace, glorifying the Lord with your life.**

**Go in peace.**

“Go. Go. Go.” Every option says, “Go.”

When the Mass is done, **we are not finished**.

We are being asked to **go into the world on a mission**.

The Jesus that we encountered and received at Mass we are asked into the world.

We are asked to **announce the gospel** in word and deed, to evangelize, to witness (Mk 5:19).  
**Glorify the Lord with your life** – like a lamp on a bushel basket for all to see (Mt 5:15-16).  
**Go in peace**. Jesus wants us to be peacemakers (Mt 5:9).

The **Assembly response** to all four options remains: **Thanks be to God**.

This is not: “Thank God that the Mass is finally over! At last we can leave!”

No. It is a **profound** expression of **gratitude**.

**Thank God** we were able to be **here**.

**Thank God** we had the opportunity to **experience Christ** in our **brothers** and **sisters**.

**Thank God** we could be instructed by the **gospel** and nourished by the **Eucharist**.

**Thank God** we had the opportunity to share in these **sacred mysteries**.

My friends, this is the **last weekend** for the *Sacramentary*.

Years from now we will look back and talk about the “good old days.”

But, as good as these days have been,

with the new *Roman Missal* better days are ahead, starting next week,

with revised prayers intended to **draw us closer to God**.