

**“FOUR-FOR-FOUR”**  
**CATECHESIS ON THE *ROMAN MISSAL***

**Introductory Rites: Greeting** (November 13–14, 2010)

There are four parts of the Mass, going back to Scripture and to the early Church:

1. Introductory Rites
2. **Liturgy of the Word**
3. **Liturgy of the Eucharist**
4. Concluding Rites

The first four catecheses on the *Roman Missal* will deal with the Introductory Rites.

The purpose of the **Introductory Rites** is to gather the Church for the celebration of Mass.

There are six Introductory Rites:

1. Entrance Chant (opening song)
2. Sign of the Cross
3. **Greeting**
4. Penitential Act
5. Gloria
6. Collect (opening prayer)

The purpose of the **greeting** is to welcome the Church (which means “assembly”)—in the name of God, into a sacred realm.

The English translation of the texts used by the priest, and the people’s response, will change:

There are three options for the priest’s greeting (which will only be slightly modified):

- (1) “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.”
- (2) “Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- (3) “The Lord be with you.”

And the people's response will now be:

**“And with your spirit.”**

The priest's greeting and the people's response are taken from the Scriptures.

This is an example of how the Bible is the “language” in which the Mass is prayed.

The use of Scripture is not limited to the readings; the prayers themselves contain biblical expressions and phrases.

For example, we read in the Book of Ruth:

“Boaz himself came from Bethlehem and said to the harvesters,  
‘The LORD be with you!’  
and they replied, ‘The LORD bless you!’” (2:4).

The other greetings used by the priest are drawn from the letters of St. Paul (1 Cor 13:13; Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3).

The new response to these greetings will be “And with your spirit” (no longer, “And also with you”).

1. This is a more faithful translation of the underlying Latin text:  
*Et cum spiritu tuo.*
2. This is similar to the present translation in the major vernacular languages:

Spanish: *Y con tu espíritu*

Italian: *È con il tuo spirito*

German: *Und mit deinem Geiste*

With the new translation, we will be able to see more clearly that the people's response is also drawn from Scripture.

For example, St. Paul writes in his Second Letter to Timothy:

“The Lord be with your spirit”  
(4:22; see also Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; Philmn 25)

The priest's greeting and the people's response acknowledge the presence of God in the assembly, and in the priest.

By the Sign of the Cross, we—the Church—gather,  
“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”  
(i.e., the Trinity).

Christ is present in various ways in the Mass, including the assembly and the priest.

The response “And with your spirit” acknowledges the special role of the priest;  
i.e., the special presence of the Holy Spirit in him.

The priest acts in person of Christ (*in persona Christi*) and in the name of the whole Church (*in nomine Ecclesiae*).