

## Pastor's Corner - May 8 & 15, 2011

### Changes to the Sacramentary of the Mass

As most of you now know changes to the mass will be introduced on the first Sunday of Advent on November 26, 2011, in the form of a new GIRM (General Instruction to the Roman Missal). These changes do not change the Mass, which remains the same! One of the changes will be our response to the greeting: "The Lord be with you". "And also with you" will become "And with your spirit." Some gestures will change, e.g. both before and after the words of the institution of the Eucharist (consecration) people will be asked to kneel, **there where kneelers exist and where it is possible. In our churches we will be asked to bow our heads or to make a slight inclination as we have already done for a number of years; bowing is another way of showing respect and of paying homage, honour to Christ present in our midst in the Eucharist.** It is just too difficult to kneel in our two churches and the GIRM provides for the alternative. This also involves that everyone follows the same gesture: you do whatever is commonly done in the particular church you are in. Other changes involve more moments of silence which we mostly already observe: after the readings in order to reflect and meditate on the Word of God just proclaimed; after communion.

In order to prepare for the changes a liturgy workshop will be held for pastoral musicians, singers and clergy on **Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> & Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> at Holy Cross Church** in Victoria . It will include a session on the new GIRM, new psalm settings, new settings of the Ordinary of the Mass and the ministry of Pastoral musician. It will be facilitated by Bernadette Gasslein. **To register for the Victoria workshop:** contact the Cathedral at 250-388-5571 or [standrewscathedral@gmail.com](mailto:standrewscathedral@gmail.com). Bernadette holds a License in Sacred Theology with Specialization in Pastoral Catechetics from the Institut Catholique de Paris, and an Associateship Diploma in performance in piano from the Royal Conservatory of Toronto.

### Situation of Christians in Muslim Countries

From time to time I have mentioned the suffering of Christians in the Middle East and other Muslim countries where to be Christian truly means that you must make a great sacrifice and where there is a rising tide of violence on the part of Muslim extremists against Christians. In Iraq there used to be about a million Christians; today fewer than 200,000 remain. You may remember the siege on Oct. 3, 2010, of the Syrian Catholic Cathedral in Baghdad when 52 people were murdered. The number of Assyrian Christians has declined from 100,000 in the 1970's to less than 15,000. Palestinian Christians in Jerusalem have declined from 53% of the population to less than 2% today. Christians in Bethlehem have declined from 85% of the population in 1948 to 12% in 2009. Many governments in the Middle East, including the Israeli one, are making it more difficult for Christians even though a number of them have constitutions which defend the right to freedom of thought and religious practice within certain limitations.

I invite you to pray for both these Christians but also for our Muslim sisters and brothers that we may return to the peaceful coexistence which had existed for centuries in most of those countries. Let us remember the Golden Rule: "In everything, do to others what you have them do to you (Matthew 7:12)."

Shalom.

*fr Rolf, OP*