

“Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.”

The Concluding Rites, Welcoming the Third Edition of the Roman Missal

Current Text:

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: **Go in the peace of Christ.**

Or: **The Mass is ended, go in peace.**

Or: Go in peace **to love and serve the Lord.**

People: Thanks be to God.

Revised Text:

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with your spirit.**

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

Or: **Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.**

Or: **Go in peace,
glorifying the Lord by your life.**

Or: **Go in peace.**

People: Thanks be to God.

After the Priest has recited or sung the Prayer after Communion, we arrive at the Concluding Rites. For the last time during the Mass, the Priest says, “The Lord be with you,” and we respond, “And with your spirit.”

Then comes the final blessing (sometimes preceded by a prayer or three-fold solemn blessing on special occasions, or by the pontifical blessing if a Bishop is celebrant): “May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

Following our response of “Amen” to the final blessing, Mass is concluded with the dismissal, said or sung by the Priest (or a Deacon, if one is present). With the new Missal, our three current dismissal formulas will be replaced by four options.

The first corresponds to the actual Latin dismissal, which is familiar to many: “*Ite, missa est.*” In fact, this is where the word “Mass” comes from - “*missa est*” - which at its most fundamental level means “it is sent” or “it is the dismissal.” More than a mere declaration that it is time to leave, this has the function of emphasizing our Christian call to “mission” (a word with the same Latin origins).

Pope Benedict XVI spoke of this in *Sacramentum Caritatis*, the Apostolic Exhortation he released in 2007 as a follow-up to the 2005 Synod of Bishops on the Holy Eucharist. He said our participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy should translate into a life in imitation of Christ, such that from the Sacred Liturgy should spring forth the “missionary nature of the Church.” He wrote that it would be helpful to “provide new texts” for the final blessing “in order to make this connection clear” (no. 51). Therefore, the Holy Father himself selected the three other dismissal formulas that we shall receive, and they were added to the Latin text of the *Missal*.

Our response at the dismissal remains the same: “Thanks be to God.” What else can we do except give thanks to God? He has provided us with an inestimable gift in the Holy Mass, and a means by which He draws us and the entire world into closer communion with Him.