

## Introductory Rite

Before speaking with you tonight, I want to say “Hi mom. Hi dad.” My hello was needed in an effort to show respect before I say hello to you. In fact saying hello has as many styles as there are people. For example, hi, howdy, good morning/evening, hello, Whatzup, Que Paso, Dude, What’s Happening, all denote ways in which we greet the other person who comes in our midst. In a crowd before the football, basketball, baseball, game we stand as a crowd and we sing the National Anthem. After the song, we are ready to “play ball.”

In the same way, as the crowd that gathers for a sporting event, we gather in this Church, St. Mark’s to witness and to celebrate the mystery of our faith, Christ’s presence among His people. Before we celebrate the Eucharist, we have an Introductory Rite. I am here to speak with you about the New Roman Missal and those changes made in the Introductory Rite.

Just to review there are four parts to the Liturgy. The Introductory Rite, the two main parts Liturgy of the Word, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Concluding Rite.

The Introductory Rite serves to get us the crowd ready for what is about to occur. We do not just plunge immediately into dialogue with God. Rather the celebration of our salvation begins more slowly. The Introductory Rite precedes the Liturgy of the Word. The celebrant calls us to ready ourselves for the Divine Action and Mission which we are about to hear, see, touch, smell, and taste. How much more intimate can our God be than to feed us with His Son at the Eucharist?

The whole purpose of the Introductory Rite is to form a worshipping community. It is made up of the Greeting, the Penitential rite, and the Gloria. These elements of the Introductory Rite lead up to the collect, or the Opening Prayer. This prayer is indispensable to the Introductory Rite. This is the point to which everything else leads, the point at which this crowd of people, who have just come from their homes or work or from shopping or partying or whatever, we are called to come together as a community. Wherever we have come from or whatever we have been doing we now come together now as the Body of Christ. We are no longer Don or Bill or Barbara or Les or Emma, or Paul or Betty. Instead we lose our individuality to find our common identity. All our preoccupations die away as we become aware of Jesus in whose presence we stand, and of those with whom we stand.

After a song of our faith, the priest greets us with a Trinitarian salutation. When the celebrant says, “The Lord be with You.” Instead of responding, “And also with you,” the new liturgy has seen fit to change our greeting toward the celebrant as a more true translation to the Latin of old of *Et cum spiritu tuo*.

Our hello is now more accurately translated as, “*And with your spirit.*” Such a change evokes the idea that we are not just gathering for some event. Rather we are here to experience a Spiritual Reality. Our hello back to the celebrant with your spirit calls the celebrant to also be ready for the Spirit’s movement among him as well. And with your spirit will be our new response whenever the celebrant tells us the Lord be with you.

The other changes to the Introductory Rite continue with the Penitential Act. For instance, when the celebrant begins with "I confess.....(added is I have *greatly* sinned) also like in the old Latin Mass we said Mea culpa, Mea culpa, Mea maxima culpa is now added after what I have failed to do (*through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore*)

When the Gloria is said, it too has been changed the new Gloria reads:

The Lord be with you will be and our response is And with your spirit is throughout the liturgy: before the Gospel, in the Preface Dialogue before the Eucharistic Prayer, at the Sign of Peace, and when we are dismissed.

I think we will conclude with just a quick practice:

The Lord be with You. And With Your Spirit. Thank you.