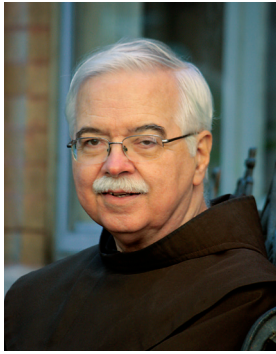


By Pat McCloskey, OFM



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Father Pat welcomes your questions!

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Material is grouped thematically under headings such as forgiveness, Jesus, moral issues, prayer, saints, redemption, sacraments, Scripture—and many more!

For All? For Many?

We have been told for years that Jesus died to save all people. In the Mass, we are told that he came to save “many.” Which is correct?

Jesus died to save all people. Anyone who says otherwise is guilty of material heresy—and I don’t say that lightly! Genuine heresy requires explicitly denying something the Catholic Church has formally defined as necessary for the faith. In Colossians 3:11, St. Paul wrote, “Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all” (see also 1 Tm 2:6; Rom 3:28; 8:32; 14:10; Col 1:20; and 1 Cor 15:28). Some translations render “all and in all” as “everything in all of you.”

I suspect the problem that some people have with saying “all” is that they think this wording affirms that all people are, in fact, guaranteed that they will be saved. Salvation is a gift that can be refused. Saying “all” does not deny that. Whoever thinks that here “many” means less than “all” should be ready to explain whom the saving death of Jesus excludes.

It is true that the official English translation of the Roman Missal’s third edition uses the expression *many* at the consecration of the Mass. Before that Missal was promulgated, Cardinal Francis Arinze, then prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, stated that this changed wording did not deny that Jesus died to save all people.

The incarnation of Jesus, which we celebrate in a special way this month, was for the benefit of the entire human family, a point that Matthew emphasizes by including the story of the Magi in his Gospel’s infancy narrative.



Why the Push for a Latin Mass?

There seems to be a push to return to the Latin Mass and all its implications. Our parish has become very divided when this was imposed on us with refusal of Communion in the hand, reintroduction of Communion rails, and traditional hymns replaced by Latin ones. Our bishop seems to favor these changes. People are leaving our parish.

Are there no Masses in English or some language other than Latin in your parish? If so, that is clearly grounds for a complaint to your bishop. The Mass is not the priest’s Mass or the bishop’s Mass, but rather the Church’s Mass.

Some people have painted themselves into a corner on the issue of Masses in Latin—my way or the highway! There is a Latin text for the latest revision of the Roman Missal. It sounds as though the Mass being celebrated is the one authorized by the Council of Trent.

I think the decisions in the 1980s by St. John Paul II and later by Pope Benedict XVI to extend the use of the Tridentine Mass were well-intentioned but very ill-advised. Under no circumstances can those decisions be considered infallible.

The Church is the living, breathing body of Christ. It has the right to adapt its liturgy as it considers best. Often those who reject Mass in any language other than Latin are appealing to a “Golden Age” of faith that, in fact, never existed.

I hope you can find good Masses in English close to you.

Secreta.

MUnera, quæsumus Dñmine! oblata sanctifica: et corda nostra sancti Spiritus illustratione emunda. Per Dñm in unitate ejusdem Spiritus sancti Deus.

Praefatio. Qui ascēdens. **Communicantes.** et Hanc igitur. **ut supra.** fol. 185.

Communio. Act. 2. Factus est repente de coelo sonus tamquam adveniētis spiritus vehemētis, ubi erant sedētes, allelūja: et replēti sunt omnes Spiritu sancto, loquētes Magnalia Dei, allelūja, allelūja.

Sample of Latin missal