

## Mass Parts 5/52: ***And with your Spirit***

Before the retranslation of the Mass in 2010, we were all used to saying (in English): “and also with you.” It sounded like a logical response to the greeting: “The Lord be with you.” The Latin original, however, reads “*et cum spiritu tuo.*”

*et* = and

*cum* = with *spiritu* = spirit

*tuo* = your

Other languages had already made this connection. The Spanish response was always “y con tu espíritu.” So why this odd response: “and with your spirit”? Because this is a formal greeting at the beginning of the celebration the sacred Eucharist. It is more than just a simple, “hey back at you,” or, “oh thanks, you too.”

The Spirit that is being referred to is the spirit of ordination present in the priest. Already, some people are hearing smacking's of clericalism, or another way to glorify the priest, or even worse, the priest trying to glorify himself. In my mind at least, it is the opposite. It is a reminder to me of the spirit of my ordination, not of me as a person. I have not earned this spirit, it was a gift. It is not me celebrating the Mass, I am standing in the place of Jesus Christ, the one and eternal high priest. My ordination marks my participation in the priesthood of Christ. Your response is a constant reminder of what I am trying to live up to.

Yet in our Catholic Faith, there is a reality of grace present in the words. We are declaring so much with this opening greeting:

- I hope that the Lord will be with you
- I acknowledge that the Lord is with you now
- I impart a blessing that the Lord is with you
- I impart a blessing that actually carries the Lord with it and really does give you the Spirit

Next Week: Penitential Rite

- *Father Scott Kopp*

