

An Advent of Change

by Fr. Mark Pavlik
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When Chris Deaver, our teaching parish seminarian, was first at St. Olaf, he commented that people at St. Olaf (including the pastor) refer to the Macy's store on Nicollet Mall as "Dayton's". I had to explain that for a long time it had been called Dayton's and that while it had not been Dayton's for a number of years, old habits die hard.

Change is hard. Everyone agrees on that. This weekend we will begin using the new translation of the Roman Missal. It will take time to learn, but I think it will be easier than people think. In fact, learning to say the new prayers will be an opportunity to think about what we are saying. I notice when I say Masses for a small group of four or five people, they cannot always say the responses, because they have done so long by rote and without the support of dozens of other people, they can't remember the words.

One of the things that converts to Catholicism find most daunting is learning all the responses and gestures at Mass. Those of us who grew up Catholic most likely do not remember learning the words of the Mass. Attending Mass over time, the words of the prayers just worked their way into our memory.

Just as many people look to make changes in their personal life on New Year's Day, we will begin these changes as the Church year starts anew on this first Sunday of Advent. This will be a good learning experience for all of us. With our materials and the things we have done in preparation, I am confident that the new words will be part of our vocabulary before long.

For those who missed the presentation last weekend, the 20-minute video on the changes to the new text of the Roman Missal will be shown following all Masses this weekend.