

On the Revised Translation of the Mass
Bulletin Insert 7
“The *Gloria*”

The *Gloria* is a hymn known as the “*hymnus angelicus*,” or, “angelic hymn,” because its first words are what the angels sang in Luke 2:14 at the birth of Christ. The revised translation will sound more like the Gospel of Luke by beginning, “Glory to God in the highest and, on earth, peace to people of good will.”

It is appropriate that we pray these words as we *begin* Mass since it is because of Christ’s birth that we gather to celebrate His Memory in the Mass. The hymn is meant to be a five part praise of the three Persons of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The second section of the revised *Gloria* will more clearly place the movement in an upward direction. *We* praise, bless, adore, glorify and give thanks for the great glory of the heavenly, almighty, kingly *God* and *Father*. Five verbs of human action are followed by six attributes for God. Jesus, God’s Son, suffered five wounds in His humanity. His divinity surpassed those in the Resurrection.

In the third section about God the Son, “Only Begotten Son” is a reference to Hebrews 1:5, which sees Jesus as the fulfillment of Psalm 110 about the then forthcoming Messiah. “Lamb of God,” and, “You take away the sins of the world,” are references to the declaration of John the Baptist about Jesus in John 1:29. “At the right hand of the Father,” refers to Mark 16:19, which describes where He went after Jesus Ascended into heaven.

The fourth part of the *Gloria* – “with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father” – is brief because the Spirit is still with us and His work is yet incomplete. The conclusion of the hymn is the “Amen,” which is how the Bible ends in the Book of Revelation.