

# AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT

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***The Lord be with you (Dominus vobiscum).***

In the past we were used to saying ***And also with you.*** Now we will say ***And with your spirit,*** a more faithful translation of the Latin ***et cum spiritu tuo.***

Let's take a look at this, one of the most ancient dialogues in the history of the Sacred Liturgy (it dates to 215 A.D. in the West!) and try to understand its meaning.

This dialogue actually goes all the way back to the third century in the Eastern and Roman church and it is a dialogue which precedes every important liturgical action.

That means every time the priest is about to bless something, pray something, or proclaim something important, he turns to the people and says: ***The Lord be with you (Dominus vobiscum).***

It's an old prayer, whose origins lie in the Old Testament, like when Ruth used to go out to glean what was left of the corn. The owners of the field would greet the poor gleaners with "The Lord be with you," and they would respond to the generous farmers "The Lord bless you!" (Cf. Ruth 2:4)

It's not unlike the greeting of the angel to the Blessed Virgin at the Annunciation, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you." (Cf. Luke 1:28)

And it's a lot like what we say to each other every day when we take our leave: Good-bye, a phrase which originally meant God be with you, just a couple hundred years ago.

## And with your spirit.

And then there's the response, which in the new translation of the Mass is different than what we've been saying up to now. ***Et cum spiritu tuo, And with your spirit.***

Why "with your spirit?" **What spirit are we talking about?**

It's **the spirit which the Priest receives in ordination which allows him to sanctify, to preach, and to shepherd in the model of Christ Jesus.**

It's like the spirit received by the seventy wise men who helped Moses to govern the Israelites, or the spirit that descended upon the sons of Aaron.

It's the spirit which is a share in the fullness of the Priesthood received at the hands of the Bishop.

And so every time the Priest is about to act in the name of this Holy People, this Royal Priesthood, baptized in the Blood of the lamb, he turns to them with love and prays: The Lord be with you. And then reply, And with your spirit: the spirit you received in ordination to a priesthood which you now use to pray with us and for us in offering the sacrifice of Christ, acting in his person in this Sacred Liturgy.

**For the Celebration of Eucharist in the absence of a Priest the response to a lay person will be: "Blessed by God, forever." Why?** Because the spirit is given at Ordination – to bless and sanctify

"I will put  
my  
**SPIRIT**  
within you,  
and you  
shall  
**LIVE....**"

Ezekiel 37:14, NRSV