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**Survey of Clergy:  
Views on the New Missal**

**April 2014**

# Introduction and Methodological Note

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This study has been commissioned by the Association of Catholic Priests (ACP) in order to ascertain the views of Irish clergy regarding the New Missal, introduced in November 2011.

The survey was conducted amongst a random sample of 191 priests by telephone between Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March and Friday April 11<sup>th</sup> 2014.

Respondents were chosen by systematic random sampling of the alphabetical list of all clergy in Ireland published in the Irish Catholic Directory 2014.

Respondents were guaranteed that responses would be aggregated and that individual responses would not be disclosed.

All clergy, diocesan and religious, who celebrate Mass publicly were included in the overall population to be sampled with the exception of the following categories: the incapacitated, the deaf, members of the ACP Leadership Team or working groups and those who have moved abroad since the publication of the directory.

There are approximately 4,300 clergy listed in the Irish Catholic Directory. It is estimated that 5 - 10% of these no longer celebrate Mass publicly in Ireland as they are either permanently incapacitated, have died or have moved abroad since the publication of the directory.

191 priests were surveyed, giving a confidence interval of 6.9. The non-response rate was approximately 11%. In consideration of the possibility of non-response bias (i.e. a shared motive for non-response likely to mean that non-respondents hold different views to respondents), almost half of those who declined to participate (10 persons) stated

that the reason for non-participation was busyness or unwillingness to participate in surveys per se. There is no basis to infer differing views between respondents and these non-respondents. A further 6 persons declined to participate by giving a variant of 'no comment' or 'would rather keep my views to myself'. Again, there is little basis for inferring a variance between this group and actual respondents. 4 persons declined to participate citing disagreement with the ACP policies. There is a likelihood of a variation between the views of this group and typical respondents but the potential impact on overall findings is low, given the number involved.

One person indicated a willingness to participate but not via telephone. In order to maintain consistency of methodology, the request for a written questionnaire was not complied with.

Results were assessed after 60 and 120 responses had been gathered. In both cases, results were within 2% of the ultimate findings.

Given the foregoing as well as the overall size of the sample and the systematic random sampling method, there can be a high degree of confidence in the findings.

Data was inputted to and analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics.

# Questionnaire

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Three questions were asked as follows:

Question 1: When celebrating Mass in public, do you

- (a) use all texts from the New Missal
- (b) use texts from both the 1973 Missal and the New Missal
- (c) use all texts from the 1973 Missal
- (d) none of these

Question 2: Which best describes your attitude to the New Missal? Are you

- (a) Very Satisfied with it?
- (b) Satisfied
- (c) Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- (d) Dissatisfied
- (e) Very Dissatisfied

Question 3: If given a choice, which of the following three options would you prefer....

- (a) Continue to use the New Missal, without any further changes being made.
- (b) Continue to use the New Missal on the understanding that a revised New Missal will be available within a few years.
- (c) Scrap the New Missal and return to the 1973 Missal, pending the publication of a revised New Missal.
- (d) none of the these

The complete questionnaire is included as Appendix A.

# Findings

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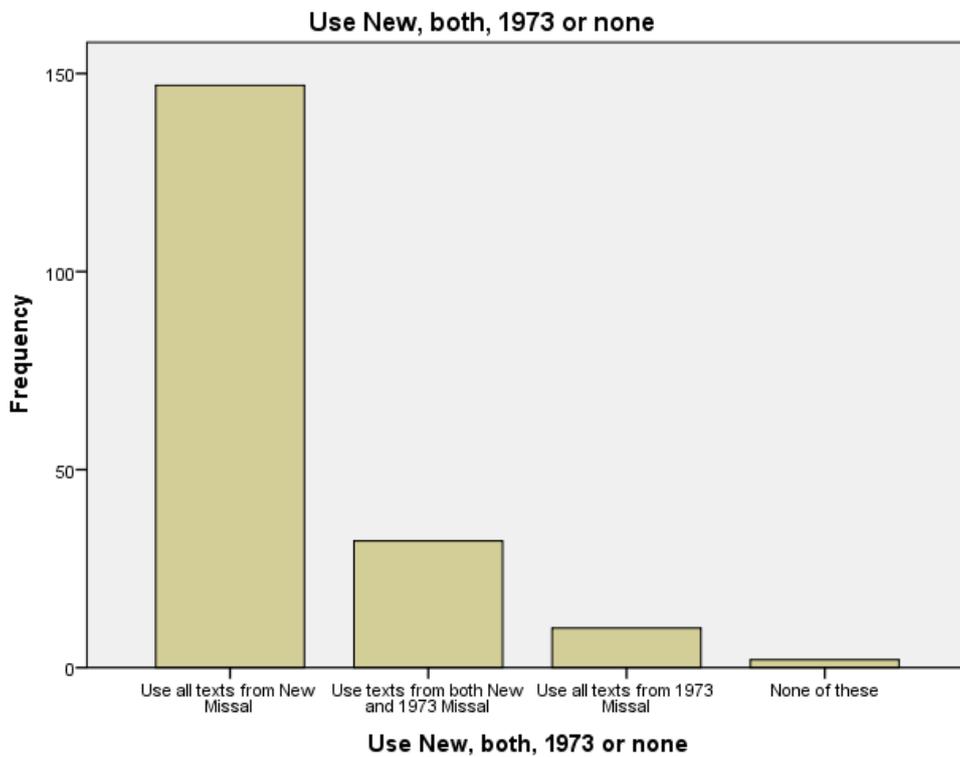
## Question 1

### Use of New Missal and/or 1973 Missal by Priests

When celebrating Mass in public, do you

- (a) use all texts from the New Missal
- (b) use texts from both the 1973 Missal and the New Missal
- (c) use all texts from the 1973 Missal
- (d) none of these

- 147 respondents (77%) use texts from the New Missal exclusively
- 32 respondents (17%) use a combination of texts from both the 1973 Missal and the New Missal.
- 10 respondents (5%) use all texts from the 1973 Missal.



**Use New, both, 1973 or none**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Use all texts from New Missal	147	77.0	77.0
Use texts from both New and 1973 Missal	32	16.8	16.8
Valid Use all texts from 1973 Missal	10	5.2	5.2
None of these	2	1.0	1.0
Total	191	100.0	100.0

## Question 2

### Satisfaction level/Attitudes to New Missal amongst Priests

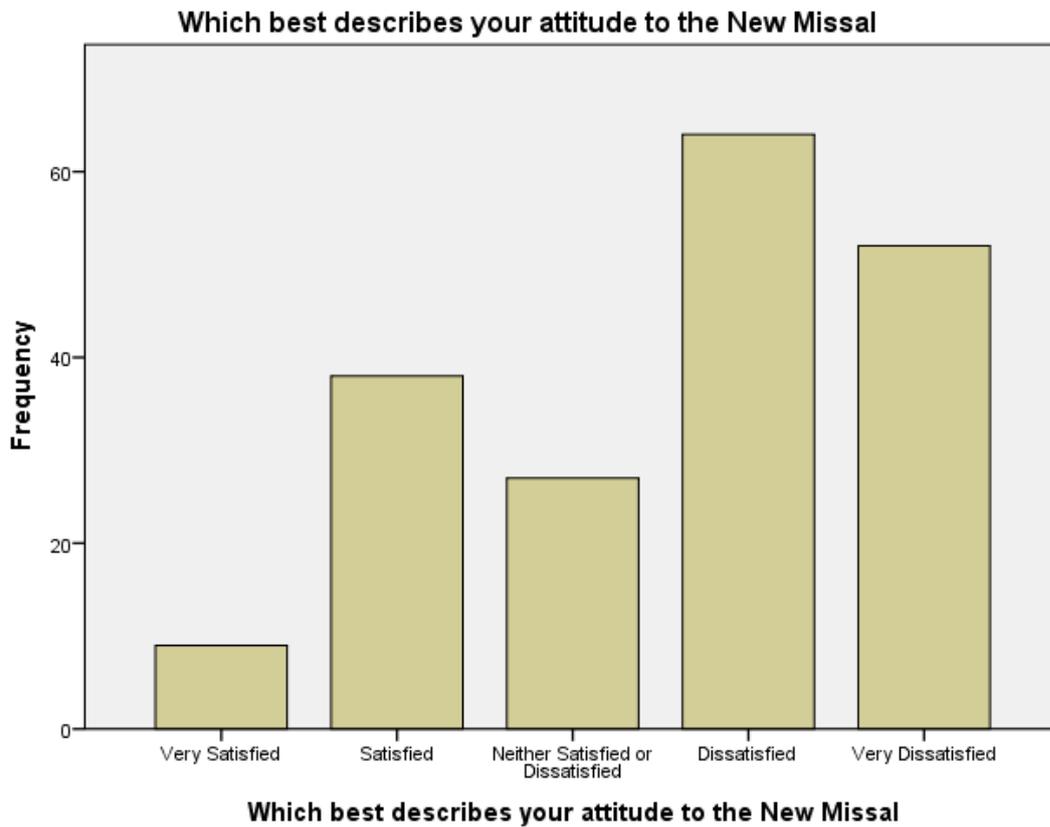
Respondents were asked to describe their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the New Missal.

Which best describes your attitude to the New Missal?

Are you

- (a) Very Satisfied with it?
- (b) Satisfied
- (c) Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- (d) Dissatisfied
- (e) Very Dissatisfied

- 47 respondents (25%) were either Very Satisfied (4.7%) or Satisfied (19.9%) with it.
- 116 respondents (61%) were either Dissatisfied (33.5 %) or Very Dissatisfied (27.2%).
- 27 respondents (14%) were Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied.
- One person did not give a response.



**Which best describes your attitude to the New Missal**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Very Satisfied	9	4.7	4.7
	Satisfied	38	19.9	20.0
	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	27	14.1	14.2
	Dissatisfied	64	33.5	33.7
	Very Dissatisfied	52	27.2	27.4
	Total	190	99.5	100.0
Missing	System	1	.5	
Total		191	100.0	

### Question 3

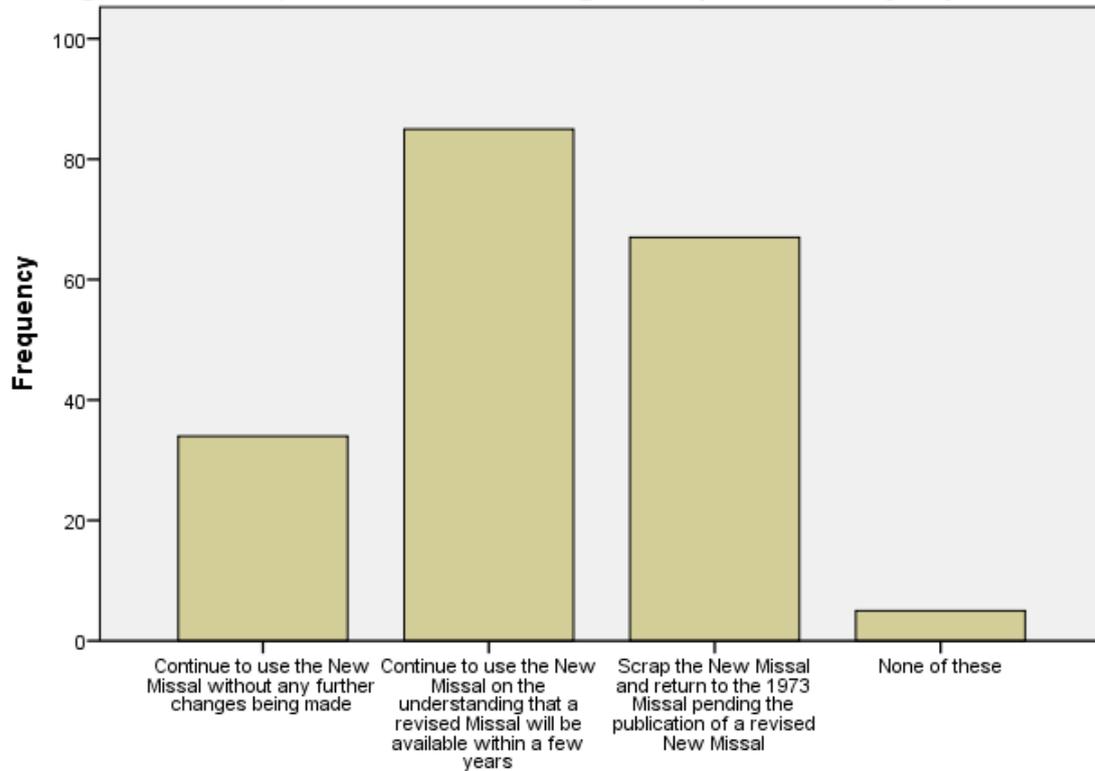
Preference for change or continued use of New Missal

If given a choice, which of the following three options would you prefer....

- (a) Continue to use the New Missal, without any further changes being made.
- (b) Continue to use the New Missal on the understanding that a revised New Missal will be available within a few years.
- (c) Scrap the New Missal and return to the 1973 Missal, pending the publication of a revised New Missal.
- (d) none of the these

- 34 respondents (18%) favour continued use of the New Missal with no change.
- 152 (80%) favour the replacement of the New Missal, either immediately (35%) or as soon as a revised Missal becomes available (45%).

**If given a choice, which of the following three options would you prefer?**



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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Continue to use the New Missal without any further changes being made	34	17.8	17.8
Continue to use the New Missal on the understanding that a revised Missal will be available within a few years	85	44.5	44.5
Scrap the New Missal and return to the 1973 Missal pending the publication of a revised New Missal	67	35.1	35.1
None of these	5	2.6	2.6
Total	191	100.0	100.0

## Crosstabulation

A Crosstabulation was employed to investigate the interrelation between satisfaction levels and desire for change.

None of those who are 'Very Satisfied' with the New Missal would like to see a change to the Missal. Of those who are 'Satisfied' with the New Missal, over half would like to see a revised Missal become available within a few years. Whilst 61% are either 'Dissatisfied' or 'Very Dissatisfied' with the New Missal, a larger number (80%) want to see it replaced, including a large majority (81%) of those who said that they were 'Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied' with it.

Which best describes your attitude to the New Missal \* If given a choice, which of the following three options would you prefer?

Crosstabulation

Count

		If given a choice, which of the following three options would you prefer?				Total
		Continue to use the New Missal without any further changes being made	Continue to use the New Missal on the understanding that a revised Missal will be available within a few years	Scrap the New Missal and return to the 1973 Missal pending the publication of a revised New Missal	None of these	
Which best describes your attitude to the New Missal	Very Satisfied	9	0	0	0	9
	Satisfied	18	19	1	0	38
	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	4	15	7	1	27
	Dissatisfied	2	39	22	1	64
	Very Dissatisfied	1	11	37	3	52
Total		34	84	67	5	190

# Conclusion

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77% of clergy surveyed use the New Missal exclusively, 17% combine the New and 1973 Missals whilst 5% use the 1973 Missal exclusively.

25% of respondents are either Very Satisfied (4.7%) or Satisfied (19.9%) with the New Missal whilst over 60% are either Dissatisfied (33.5%) or Very Dissatisfied (27.2%) but there is a heavier concentration at the extremity of the Dissatisfied option than that of Satisfied.

The survey demonstrates high levels of dissatisfaction with the New Missal amongst Irish clergy and a clear desire amongst 80% of respondents for the preparation of a revised Missal.

# Appendix A – Questionnaire & Script

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Hello Fr Jones. My name is Cxxx Bxxxx from Saunders Research Services – we are contacting clergy with a brief three question survey about the New Missal on behalf of the Association of Catholic Priests. The survey takes less than one minute. Your participation is voluntary and all responses will be aggregated to guarantee anonymity. Are you happy to proceed with the three questions?

- (No) Thank you for taking the call.(EXIT)
- OR
- (Yes): Great, thank you. The survey is being conducted according to the ethical guidelines of the Sociological Association of Ireland. You may terminate the survey and withdraw your participation at any stage. I'll proceed

First Question, When celebrating Mass in public, do you

- (a) use all texts from the New Missal
- (b) use texts from both the 1973 Missal and the New Missal
- (c) use all texts from the 1973 Missal
- (d) none of these

Thank you

Question 2 - Which best describes your attitude to the New Missal?

Are you

- (a) Very Satisfied with it?
- (b) Satisfied
- (c) Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- (d) Dissatisfied
- (e) Very Dissatisfied

Thank You

Finally, Question 3 - If given a choice, which of the following three options would you prefer....

- (a) Continue to use the New Missal, without any further changes being made.
- (b) Continue to use the New Missal on the understanding that a revised New Missal will be available within a few years.
- (c) Scrap the New Missal and return to the 1973 Missal, pending the publication of a revised New Missal.
- (d) none of the these

That concludes the survey, Father. Thank you for your time and assistance.

**Survey designed and overseen by Joe Saunders B.A., M.A.**

[info@joesaunders.ie](mailto:info@joesaunders.ie) [www.joesaunders.ie](http://www.joesaunders.ie)