

# Father Michael DeAscanis talks about transitions, Latin Mass

One of the really interesting conversations I had during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis was with Father Michael DeAscanis, pastor of St. Agnes parish in Catonsville and St. William of York in West Baltimore. We talked for a story I did on the transition to the new translation of the Roman Missal, but got to delve into some big issues of Mass and Catholicism. Ordained in 2004, Father DeAscanis received his Civil Engineering degree from Johns Hopkins University before pursuing the life of the clergy. He had some interesting thoughts about the changes, which were just implemented this week, and how ready young people were for it. "I think young people are just always experiencing Mass in new ways and new forms, so this will be one more fresh experience for them," Father DeAscanis said. "The challenge for priests is to have humility to what the church has given and pray it just as the apostles accepted what Jesus gave them. I think it's a challenge for priests and adults in humility to accept it and pray it." At St. William of York, the daily Thursday Mass is celebrated in traditional Latin in an effort to educate young Catholics about the church's roots. "We double our morning Mass attendance," Father DeAscanis said. "People come from a distance. The more we understand the Traditional Mass, the more we understand the Mass we pray today. We need to understand the roots, the origin of the prayers we pray today." If you're studying the Traditional Mass or just delving into the new order of Mass because of these new translations, it deepens your appreciation of the prayer." St. William of York admits he was largely unfamiliar with the Traditional Mass, saying, "you can't take anything for granted. The prayers are very intentional. You focus on what you're saying in the readings, whereas in our common daily prayers you might get sloppy and go through the motions. There's no going through the motions with the Traditional Mass when you're not familiar with it."