

# #Occupychurch- Start of an American faith revolution?

✖ When I tackled the ramifications of the new Roman Missal translation, I pondered what it would mean for ex-Catholics or “fallaway Catholics.” Of course, there has been a split amongst Catholics who *do* attend church about the translations, which were implemented last week after months of preparations. It took a gigantic amount of effort and the kinks are still being worked out. If the people who have been hearing this for a while think it’s tough, just imagine those people who are returning will think. A co-worker of mine said they wouldn’t notice a difference because they’ve been away for so long. I beg to differ. People raised in the church don’t forget what it’s like. It’s embedded in your psyche. I don’t have anything to back this up, but I’d imagine many former Catholics who go to other church services notice what’s not like their Catholic Mass experience, no matter how many times they attend. So, when the Catholic Mass is different, what happens next? Let’s talk numbers — wait, wait, don’t click away yet, this will get interesting. America ranks in the top five countries in terms of number of Catholics. One in three Americans were raised Catholic. According to the Pew Research Center, about one-third of people raised in the Catholic Church are no longer part of the faith. When people say Hispanics are the future of the Catholic Church in America, they’re not kidding. Forty-six percent of foreign-born Americans are Catholics. According to a 2008 Pew study, “Latinos, who already account for roughly one-in-three adult Catholics overall, may account for an even larger share of U.S. Catholics in the future. For while Latinos represent roughly one-in-eight U.S. Catholics age 70 and older (12%), they account for nearly half of all Catholics ages 18-29 (45%).” Spanish Masses in the U.S. were unaffected by the Roman Missal translation for English speakers. I’m not breaking new ground here, but the Catholic Church has a lot of work cut out for it in America. Think about it: The Catholic Church has to stop people from leaving the church, retain what it currently has amidst a big shift in Roman Missal translation, attempt to bring new people to the church while integrating vital Hispanics into parish life. It’ll be a challenge to integrate many Hispanics in English-speaking Masses implementing the new translation too. So, all of this brings me to #occupychurch. The hashtag is gaining steam on Twitter among

youth ministers and ministry leaders. Of course, it's a clever play on the Occupy Wall Street crowd, a would-be revolution, and its prevalence on social networks. Can an #occupychurch movement really start? How does a 2000-year-old institution with unchanging truths convince people its counter-cultural enough to create a faith revolution? As an observer and reporter, I'm watching this with interest to see if something tangible manifests itself without being ironic. How do you push past the hashtag and into the real world given all the challenges facing the American Catholic Church right now? Is it possible for American Catholics to #occupychurch once again?