

The New Mass Translation - An Opinion

I have one burning question for those in the Catholic Church who approved the new Mass translation. WHY? From what I've read about how it came about since 2001, it boils down to bickering and infighting and just plain politicking resulting in what we now have to swallow beginning in Advent 2011. It's like taking a pill that doesn't taste good, but compliance and conformity are paramount in the church. Even some bishops and many priests had real issues with the new Missal, but an Imperial Rome didn't listen. Some Catholics have said that their church ends in the parish. Now with the new missal, even our daily prayer is changed without any input from the local church.

Phrases such as 'consubstantial with the Father' instead of 'one in being with the Father' will now be thrust upon the congregation. Those supporting the new translation are elated that they will be able to catechize the laity as to what the words mean. Catechize? Why create a situation where the 'priest' needs to teach the laity about words that most folks never use? When were the people made part of the discussion about these changes? Wasn't the role of the laity broadened by the documents of Vatican II? Why create an archaic language that nobody understands when there are some very real issues like child abuse in the church. The silence and obfuscations of the hierarchy are now seeing the light of day with grand juries finding higher-ups culpable for the nefarious deeds of an abusive clergy?

So what's behind the new translation? Is it to create a gulf between the minister and the people? Is it about who's in charge? Is it an attempt to control and manipulate the local church at a time when the church **least** needs Rome to tell us how

to pray? Is it about creating a smokescreen to emphasize the need for us to understand the translation rather than understanding why some priests and bishops have been guilty of heinous crimes against our children?

I believe the people will see through the guise of 'asking Father' about the awkward words and complicated sentences. Father Anthony Ruff, a Benedictine monk, has spoken out against the translation. "The problem is not vocabulary, though critics will point out words like 'consubstantial,'" Father Ruff said in an interview. "The problem is syntax and word order. The sentences are too complicated, the pronouns are so far away from their antecedent you can't even tell what the pronoun refers to." Father Ruff said, "I fully support a retranslation. We need better texts that are more beautiful and more accurate, but we have to do it well."

When Our Lord was on earth with His people, they asked him to 'teach us how to pray.' He gave us the 'Our Father', not some arcane and unintelligible prayer only the temple priests would understand. It was a simple prayer of praise, reverence, hope, petition and forgiveness of sin. It was a prayer that all the people grasped immediately. My guess is that the people will eventually reject this new attempt to control and dominate. My prayer is that our struggling church will come to its senses before more people leave en masse.

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April 28, 2011