



AMERICA | SPECIAL CONTENT

PREVIEW EDITION

Change of any sort is often accompanied by tension. The practical changes many Catholics experienced as a result of the liturgical reforms of Vatican II and the more recent Mass translations are no exception.

In David Gibson's article, he spoke with Daniela Zsupan-Jerome, a professor of pastoral theology at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. She notes that "liturgy is not just sacred; it's also something Christians relate to at a gut level as much as on an intellectual plane. So there will always be sharp and visceral disagreements."

Recent developments in communications and the accompanying spread of viral videos and images have

only served to increase our awareness to these "sharp and visceral disagreements." These disagreements occur at all levels: local parishes, college campuses, and even at the highest levels of church leadership, as recent letters between Pope Francis and Cardinal Sarah have revealed.

In his article, **America** contributor Gregory Hillis, reminds us that discussions about the liturgical reform present an opportunity. They need not become a wedge that divides us, but can become an occasion to engage the liturgy in a new way and learn more about this essential component of our lives as Catholics.

Stories



Pope Francis says with magisterial authority: the Vatican II liturgical reform is 'irreversible'

BY GERARD O'CONNELL
AUG. 24, 2017



A close look at Vatican II's newly proclaimed Constitution on Sacred Liturgy

BY WILLIAM J. LEONARD, S.J.
DEC. 21, 1963

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LITURGICAL TRANSLATIONS TIMELINE

VATICAN II LITURGICAL SHIFTS ARE IRREVERSIBLE

Pope Francis declares with “magisterial authority” that the liturgical reforms of Vatican II are irreversible and that they are ongoing.

AUG 24
2017

SEPT 9
2017

MAGNUM PRINCIPIUM

Pope Francis issues a *motu proprio* that shifts the power and oversight of liturgical translations away from the centralized control of the Vatican and back toward bishops conferences.

UPDATED TRANSLATIONS

The English-speaking bishops approve an updated ICEL translation that follows the literal equivalence translation philosophy set forth in *Liturgiam Authenticam*.

2008

2011

UPDATED TRANSLATION IMPLEMENTED

The new English translation of the Mass, including a large number of Vox Clara revisions, is implemented in parishes across the United States.

LITURGIAM AUTHENTICAM

The Congregation for Divine Worship overturns ICEL’s strategy of dynamic translation, with its equivalence of meaning between the English and Latin texts, and instructs them to revise the translations to create equivalence between individual words.

2001

2002

VOX CLARA

The Vatican establishes a special committee of cardinals and bishops to oversee and supervise ICEL’s work on translations. Some local bishops argue that this move was contrary to the renewals of Vatican II.

DYNAMIC TRANSLATIONS

After many years of work, new updated translations, often referred to as “dynamic translations” because they capture meaning coherence, not just Latin word to English word coherence, are approved by the English-speaking bishops and sent to the Vatican for final approval.

1998

JUN
1998

TRANSLATION APPROVAL STALLS

The ICEL translations are shelved by the Vatican. No approval is given and the committee is told to adopt a different translation philosophy. Oversight for translation, which had previously been in the local bishops conferences, starts to move back toward the Vatican.

NEW MASS TRANSLATION

The International Commission on English in the Liturgy or ICEL (a commission of bishops from English speaking countries) worked to translate the liturgical texts released by the Vatican following the council. After several quick rounds of critiques and changes the official English translations were published in 1973, and a second edition incorporating minor changes appeared in 1975.

1973

1980s

UPDATED TRANSLATIONS

With the 1973 translations in active use, ICEL began to work on updating the translations taking into account critiques and concerns from scholars, theologians and many who considered the 1973 translations rushed.

COMME LE PRÉVOIT

Known by its original French title, Pope Paul VI issued a series of guidelines for translators who are working on liturgical texts in the wake of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

1969

1963

SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963. The Second Vatican Council sought to renew Catholic liturgy in order that “all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of

the liturgy.” The document would lead to some dramatic changes in the way Catholics celebrated the Eucharist, among these changes, the encouragement of Mass in the “vernacular,” or local languages.

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