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### March Meeting of the Committee on the Liturgy

On March 13, 2006, the Committee on the Liturgy met in Washington D.C. to consider three major items.

Reverend Joseph Jensen, O.S.B. presented a summary of the work recently completed of the revision of the Psalter of the *New American Bible*. Father Jensen explained the history of this translation and the principles applied in its latest revision. A similar presentation was heard by the Committee in November, 2005 by Abbot Gregory Polan, O.S.B. on the revised Grail Psalter. Both Psalters are presently under consideration by the Ad-Hoc Committee for the Review of Scripture Translations. Once the Ad-Hoc Committee has completed its review, the Committee on the Liturgy will consider which of the translations to recommend for liturgical use. Of particular concern to the Committee is assuring that any translation used in the Liturgy is faithful to the principles of the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* and appropriate for singing by the gathered liturgical assembly.

The Committee also approved two action items for presentation to the June plenary meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Los Angeles, California.

**The first action item concerns USCCB adaptations to the *Order of Mass*.** Among the responsibilities assigned to Conferences of Bishops in the translation and adaptation of liturgical books are changes to the Latin typical edition which are born of “true cultural or pastoral necessity.” (*Liturgiam authenticam*, no. 22).

In 1970, the Bishop members of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved seven adaptations of the *Ordo Missae* from the 1969 *Missale Romanum* for use in the dioceses of the United States of America, all of which were subsequently confirmed by the Holy See.

In June, 2005, the Committee on the Liturgy presented for the first consideration of the members of the USCCB a similar list of adaptations. That item having been tabled pending the completion of the translation of the *Order of Mass*, the Committee carefully considered the views of the members and further studied the relevant liturgical, theological, and pastoral issues.

At its most recent meeting, the Committee endorsed the seven adaptations to the *Ordo Missae* of the *Missale Romanum*, *editio typica tertia*:

- ADAPTATION 1: The placement of the *Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water* as number 7b in the *Order of Mass*, instead of in Appendix II (as in the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia*, pages 1249-1252).
- ADAPTATION 2: Insertion of two alternative introductions to the penitential rite after nos. 4, 5, and 6 in the *Order of Mass*.
- ADAPTATION 3: Addition of seven additional formulae for the Penitential Rite, at no. 6 in the *Order of Mass* and addition of seven alternative formulas.
- ADAPTATION 4: Insertion of four alternate forms of introduction to the *Our Father*, to be included after no. 24 in the *Order of Mass*.
- ADAPTATION 5: Insertion of two alternate forms of the dismissal to be included after no. 144 in the *Order of Mass*.
- ADAPTATION 6: Insertion of a Prayer Over Already Blessed Water among the prayers of the *Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water*.
- ADAPTATION 7: Addition of the acclamation *Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again*. to the Memorial Acclamations at no. 91, et alia.

**The second action item concerns approval of the ICEL Translation of the *Order of Mass*.** In February, 2005, the International Committee on English in the Liturgy completed a draft edition of the *Order of Mass*, which was distributed to its member Conferences for comment. Following a consultation with the Latin Church members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, a panel discussion was held during the November, 2005 meeting of that body. At the conclusion of the panel discussion, the Committee on the Liturgy sent a list of fifty-four recommendations to the Mixed Commission.

In February, 2006, ICEL reviewed the comments of the USCCB and its other member Conferences and published a final (Gray Book) edition of the *Order of Mass*, which is presented to the Latin Church members of the USCCB for their canonical consideration. Approval of this item requires the positive vote of two-thirds of the Latin Church members of the USCCB and subsequent confirmation by the Holy See.

Having carefully reviewed the ICEL Gray Book, the Committee on the Liturgy intends to offer fifteen amendments to the ICEL text. This item requires approval by two-thirds of the Latin Church members of the USCCB and subsequent confirmation by the Holy See.

### **Special Process**

Finally, a special process for consideration of these action items by the plenary assembly of the USCCB was approved by the Administrative Committee in light of the complexity of the issues involved and in the interest of economy. Following a process previously approved by the USCCB in the course of its consideration of the *Lectionary for Masses with Children* in November, 2005, the modification and amendment processes will be conflated and that no formal amendments be accepted less than two weeks before the plenary meeting. All documentation will be distributed in print.

## **Timeline for Completion of the *Roman Missal***

### **1. How many stages are involved in this process?**

There are two stages in the consideration of the ICEL translation of the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia* by the USCCB: A "Green Book" Consultation and a Canonical Vote on the ICEL "Gray Book."

### **2. What is the Green Book Consultation?**

Members will first receive a "Green Book" for each of the parts of the *Roman Missal*, upon which they will be asked to comment. Diocesan Offices for Worship, Liturgical Commissions, Pastors and other experts might be consulted to provide advice on each of these segments. The Committee will provide the maximum amount of time possible for each consultation in order to facilitate such consultations. Once the consultation has been completed, the results will be reviewed by the Committee on the Liturgy, which will formulate its own recommendations. A report containing each of the suggestions received from the members of the USCCB and the recommendations of the Committee on the Liturgy will then be forwarded to ICEL.

### **3. What is the Gray Book for Canonical Vote?**

Once ICEL has reviewed the reactions to the "Green Book" from each of its member Conferences, a "Gray Book" will be presented to each of the Conferences of Bishops of the English-speaking world for their canonical vote. Each Conference of Bishops is free to emend the Gray Book, while keeping in mind the value of a single vernacular text for all English-speaking Catholics.

### **4. What happens once the Gray Book has been approved?**

Once the "Gray Book," emended to meet the particular needs of the USA, has secured approval by two-thirds of the Latin Church members of the USCCB, it will be submitted to the Holy See for the requisite confirmation.

### **5. What is the Timeline for this Process?**

According to present schedules, the last "Gray Book" of the *Roman Missal* will be presented by ICEL in October, 2007. A consultation on the Green Book of the Proper of Seasons was recently distributed to the Latin Church members of the USCCB. By mid-April the Bishops will receive a consultation on Order of Mass II (containing the Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation and Various Needs, Prefaces, and other ancillary texts). During the remainder of 2006, ICEL expects to issue consultation texts on the Commons, Ritual Masses, and Masses for Various Needs and Occasions.

### **6. How is the Roman Missal being divided up for this process?**

The parts of the Roman Missal, in the anticipated order of their completion are: Order of Mass I, Proper of Seasons, Order of Mass II, Commons, Ritual Masses, and Various Needs, Votive Masses, Masses for the Dead, Proper of Saints, and Appendix and Introductory Materials.

### **7. What are the respective roles of the ICEL, the Conferences, the Holy See?**

ICEL produces translations of the *Missale Romanum* for consideration by the Conferences. The Conferences then consider these texts twice: one for consultation (Green Book), and then for a canonical vote (Gray Book). Once the Conference has approved a text by a two-thirds vote of the Latin Church members, the Holy See reviews the approved text for consideration of the confirmation.

### **8. What does the Vox Clara Committee do?**

Vox Clara, a committee of senior Bishops from around the English-speaking world, is the primary advisor to the Holy See on English-language liturgical texts. Members from the United States are Cardinal Francis George, O.M.I., Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop Oscar Lipscomb and Archbishop Alfred Hughes.

## The Veiling of Images and Crosses

### **1. Does the new Missale Romanum allow for the veiling of statues and crosses?**

The *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia*, provides a rubric at the beginning of the texts for the Fifth Sunday of Lent, which allows that: “the practice of covering crosses and images in the Church from the Fifth Sunday of Lent is permitted, according to the judgment of the Conferences of Bishops. Crosses remain veiled until the end of the celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday; images remain veiled until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.”<sup>1</sup>

### **2. Have the Bishops of the United States expressed the judgment on this practice?**

Yes. On June 14, 2001, the Latin Church members of the USCCB approved an adaptation to number 318 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* which would allow for the veiling of crosses and images in this manner. On April 17, 2002, Cardinal Jorge Medina Estevez, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments wrote to Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, USCCB President (Prot. no. 1381/01/L), noting that this matter belonged more properly to the rubrics of the Fifth Sunday of Lent. While the decision of the USCCB will be included with this rubric when the *Roman Missal* is eventually published, the veiling of crosses and images may now take place at the discretion of the local pastor.

### **3. When may crosses and images be veiled?**

Crosses and images may be veiled on the Fifth Sunday of Lent. Crosses are unveiled following the Good Friday Liturgy, while images are unveiled before the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

### **3. Is the veiling of crosses and statues required?**

No. The veiling is offered as an option, at the discretion of the local pastor.

### **3. What is the reason for the veiling of crosses and images?**

The veiling of crosses and images is a sort of “fasting” from sacred depictions which represent the paschal glory of our salvation. Just as the Lenten fast concludes with the Paschal feast, so too, our fasting from the cross culminates in an adoration of the holy wood on which the sacrifice of Calvary was offered for our sins. Likewise, a fasting from the glorious images of the mysteries of faith and the saints in glory, culminates on the Easter night with a renewed appreciation of the glorious victory won by Christ, risen from the tomb to win for us eternal life.

### **4. Why are crosses unveiled after the Good Friday Liturgy?**

An important part of the Good Friday Liturgy is the veneration of the cross, which may include its unveiling. Once the cross to be venerated has been unveiled, it seems logical that all crosses would remain unveiled for the veneration of the faithful.

### **5. What do the veils look like?**

While liturgical law does not prescribe the form or color of such veils, they have traditionally been made of simple, lightweight purple cloth, without ornament.

### **6. Is it permissible to veil the crosses after the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday?**

Yes. The concluding rubrics which follow the text for the Mass of the Lord's Supper (no. 41) indicate that “at an opportune time the altar is stripped and, if it is possible, crosses are removed from the church. It is fitting that crosses which remain in the Church be veiled.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is an unofficial translation by the Secretariat for the Liturgy.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Paschale Solemnitas*, 1988 Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, no. 57.