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Bishop Serratelli Addresses 2008 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

102 Dioceses sent delegates to the National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 14-18, 2008. The theme of the Meeting – co-sponsored by the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship and the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) – was To Worship in Spirit and Truth: Liturgy in the Shaping of Catholic Identity. Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Chairman of the Committee on Divine Worship, addressed the Meeting:

In May 2002, the publication of the *Missale Romanum* marked an historic moment in the life of the Church in our day. It gave an impetus to the great liturgical renewal set in motion when Vatican II issued *Sacrosanctum Concilium* as its first document. With Vatican II, there “began... the great work of renewal of the liturgical books of the Roman Rite. [This]... work... included their translation into vernacular languages, with the purpose of bringing about in the most diligent way that renewal of the sacred Liturgy...” (*Liturgiam authenticam*, nos. 1-2).

In the enthusiasm of the *aggiornamento*, translators set to work to produce translations that expressed the Latin missal in modes of expression appropriate to the vernacular languages. From 1969 until 2001, the instruction *Comme le prévoit* granted translators wide latitude in translations for the liturgy. Rather quickly in the English-speaking world, translators adopted dynamic equivalency as their approach to the texts. Simply stated, dynamic equivalency translates the concepts and ideas of a text, but not necessarily the literal words or expressions.

In light of the experience of almost forty years, the Church has revisited the question of how to best translate the texts of Sacred Scripture and the Liturgy. Many people had noticed the deficiency of dynamic equivalency. In 2001, the Holy See issued the instruction *Liturgiam authenticam* to guide translations both of the Scriptures and of liturgical texts. The new instruction did not deny the necessity of making the text accessible to the listener. But, it does refocus the attention of translators on the principle of unearthing the theological richness of the original texts. This needed balance keeps us from suffering an impoverishment of language in terms of our biblical and liturgical tradition.

Liturgiam authenticam espouses the theory of formal equivalency. Not just concepts, but words and expression are to be translated faithfully. This approach respects the wealth contained in the original text. In fact, the new instruction has as its stated purpose something wider than translation. It “envisions and seeks to prepare for a new

era of liturgical renewal, which is consonant with the qualities and the traditions of the particular Churches, but which safeguards also the faith and the unity of the whole Church of God” (*Liturgiam authenticam*, no. 7). From the very beginning, the translation of the third typical edition of the *Roman Missal* has followed the principles given in *Liturgiam authenticam*. [...]

Liturgical language is important for the life of the Church. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*. In liturgy, the words addressed to God and the words spoken to the people voice the Faith of the Church. They are not simply the expressions of one individual in one particular place at one time in history. The words used in liturgy also pass on the faith of the Church from one generation to the next. For this reason, the bishops take seriously their responsibility to provide for the faithful the translations of liturgical texts that are accurate and inspiring. Hence, the sometimes passionate discussion of words, phrases and syntax.

The liturgy is the source of the divine life given through the Church as the sacrament of salvation. As Pope Paul VI once said, it is also “the first school of the spiritual life, the first gift which we can give to the Christian people who believe and pray with us...” (*Address at the Closing of the Second Session of the Council*, December 4, 1963). Wisely, therefore, the Church does not leave the words used in liturgy to the theology or pastoral sensitivity of any individual celebrant. The words used in the prayers of the liturgy cannot be casual or improvised. They are freighted with too much meaning and tradition. [...]

The new translation keeps a... characteristic of the *Roman Missal*. In the new translation, there is a deliberate attempt to pass on the biblical references imbedded in the Roman Rite. [...] [I]n the newly translated [Collect for the First Sunday of Advent], we now pray for the resolve *to run forth with righteous deeds, to meet your Christ who is coming*. Running a race: the image is Pauline. In 1 Corinthians 9:24-26, Paul says: “Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.” Again in Galatians 2:2; 5:7 and Romans 9:16, Paul uses the same image. With the image of the race, Paul reminds us that the Christian life requires

discipline and personal effort. Hence, the new translation retains the image is more biblical.

Some prayers do more than weave biblical images into our liturgical prayer. Some prayers place on our lips the very words of the biblical texts themselves. A few examples will suffice. In Eucharistic Prayer III, we will no longer say: “From east to west, a perfect offering is made to the glory of your name.” Instead we pray the words of Malachi 1:11: “from the rising of the sun to its setting.” Nothing is lost in meaning. A sense of poetry is gained. In the Communion Rite, we now repeat the words of the humble and compassionate centurion of Matthew 8:8: “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof but only say the word...” Formal equivalency as a method of translation works. Unearthing the biblical allusions, images and words helps us to make the words of Scripture our own. The Word that God speaks to us in Revelation, we speak to him in prayer. [...]

When we frame our formal prayers in liturgy, the language of the street is not appropriate. The vocabulary of the person in the supermarket, in the gym or around the kitchen table should not be the standard for liturgical language. There is a difference between the language of public discourse used in a presidential address and the language we use in everyday conversation. It is the difference between our active vocabulary and our passive vocabulary. There are many words that we may not use every day, words such as *ignominy*, *penitence*, and *oblation*. Yet these words belong to our passive vocabulary. We can understand them. Rightly do the translations respect the difference and consistently maintain a noble style of speech befitting the Divine Liturgy.

In his June 23, 2008 letter granting the *recognitio* of *Ordo Missae I*, Cardinal Arinze made an extremely important point about the present moment in terms of the new texts and their use in the liturgy. He said, “The granting now of the *recognitio* to this crucial section of the *Roman Missal* will provide time for pastoral preparation for the priests, deacons, and for the appropriate catechesis of the lay faithful.” Since this new phase of liturgical renewal is not simply about changing words, but changing hearts, there is a need for proper catechesis before the new texts are

put into use. The goal is “full, active, conscious participation in the liturgy.”

Therefore, on at least five fronts, work is already being done to make available material that will facilitate this proper catechesis. First, the USCCB’s Committee on Divine Worship has posted some initial material on its website to help in catechesis. Second, the Conference itself is forming a joint committee to make available needed materials. Third, an international group called the “Leeds Group” is working to provide material that then can be adapted and used by each national conference. Fourth, the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions is working together with its members to provide materials especially helpful to diocesan liturgy directors and heads of offices. (I cannot emphasize enough how important this work is and how needed and appreciated.) Fifth, musicians and translators have also been working together since the *Ordo Missae I* received the *recognitio*. ICEL has had two consultations, one in Washington and one in Chicago with a very talented, international group. Much work has been done. Much work still will be done with the texts that we will soon be using in liturgy. All this work is necessary to help priests,

deacons, religious and laity to appreciate and cherish the new Missal. The process that has guided this work continues to involve scholars, laity and clergy, on an international and national level. This is just what one would want so that our new translations open to us the richness of the *Roman Missal* and serve as an authentic expression of the faith of the Church at prayer. [...]

In conclusion, it is important to remember that this is a moment of organic growth within the liturgical renewal of the Church. As Pope John Paul II said on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*: “The time has come to renew that spirit which inspired the Church at the moment when the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was... promulgated,... The seed was sown;... the seed has sprouted...” (*Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, no. 23). In a word, the acceptance of the new Missal is “a moment to sink our roots deeper into the soil of tradition handed on in the Roman Rite” (*ibid.*).

The full text is available at:

www.USCCB.org/liturgy/missalformation.

Presentations During the 2008 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

On October 15, 2008, the annual National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions in Milwaukee, Wisconsin held a Study Day, in which three excellent presentations were given by experts in various liturgical fields. Sr. Mary Bendyna, RSM, Ph.D. spoke on the recent CARA research about Mass attendance and participation in the liturgical life of the Church. Rev. Robert Barron, S.T.D. analyzed the various parts of the Eucharist and showed how the liturgy shapes and forms each of us. Finally, Rev. Michael Joncas explored the importance of evangelization, catechesis and mystagogy for the future of Catholic worship in the United States. The following evening, Bishop Blase Cupich of Rapid City, South Dakota pulled together all of the various presentations and broadened the discussion in a study night session. All the presentations will be posted on the website of the FDLC (www.FDLC.org).

The most powerful part of the meeting was the serious and profitable discussion on catechesis for the reception of the new translation of the *Roman Missal*. Joan Workmaster, Chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee on *Roman Missal* Formation, reported on the projected plans for the development of resources. Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Chairman of the Committee on Divine Worship, was present for the entire Meeting, and spoke on the translation of the *Roman Missal*. Msgr. Anthony Sherman, Executive Director of the Secretariat of Divine Worship, reported on the present state of the review of the “Gray Books” by the Conference of Bishops. During the week there was input and dialogue between the members and the chair and staff of the Committee. Two “white papers” and two outlines of projected papers were reviewed, and numerous suggestions were given regarding the process for the successful implementation of the translation, which will include catechetical formation for both clergy and the lay faithful. Every effort was made to see how the FDLC and the Committee can work together to help dioceses in the implementation of the new translation.

Two Liturgical Texts in Spanish Receive *Recognitio* from the Holy See

During the week of September 21-28, 2008, a delegation of the Committee on Divine Worship traveled to Rome to consult with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on a variety of liturgical matters affecting the United States. Bishop Arthur Serratelli, Committee Chairman, was accompanied by Bishop Octavio Cisneros, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Hispanics and the Liturgy, and Sister Doris Mary Turek, SSND, Multicultural Specialist of the Secretariat of Divine Worship. The visit was most cordial and provided an opportunity for the representatives of the Committee to meet with staff members of the Congregation, notably Rev. Anthony Ward, Undersecretary, and Msgr. Juan Manuel Sierra López, an official of the Congregation with expertise in Spanish-language liturgical texts. The visit also created an opportunity for personal interaction which will be of great benefit in future contacts with the Congregation.

As a result of fruitful discussions and a review several editorial changes made to the document, Francis Cardinal Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation, granted the *recognitio* for two liturgical texts in Spanish: the *Ritual para el Bautismo de los Niños* (Rite of Baptism of Children) and the *Ritual del Matrimonio* (Rite of Marriage). The Latin Church members of the USCCB, meeting in plenary assembly in November 2004, approved the Baptism and Marriage rites in Spanish. Spanish-speaking Catholics will now have one Spanish-language version of these rites for Marriage and the Baptism of Children approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America. Once publication issues have been addressed, a decree will be issued indicating the effective dates of the new ritual texts.

Subscription Renewals for 2009 Newsletter

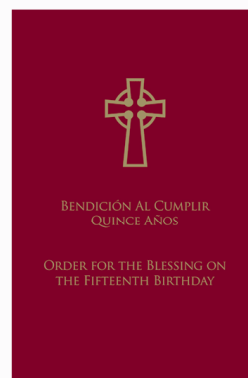
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