

A CRISIS OF RECEPTION:
THE CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY AND THE
DEBATE OVER THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE
ROMAN MISSAL

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CHAPTER FIVE: A Hermeneutic of the Receivers

In this chapter, we will develop the third of Ormond Rush's three-legged stool of interpretation, a "hermeneutic of the receivers." As noted in Chapter Two, a major feature of the conciliar texts is the juxtaposition of theses that are in tension with one another. We cannot arrive at an adequate interpretation of the texts simply by choosing sides in the Council's debates. We need to pay attention to how the Church has received these texts and has tried to resolve their tensions in actual practice.

In the previous two chapters, the scope of the analysis was fairly broad as we examined the history of the liturgical movement, the debates at the Second Vatican Council and the broad themes and tensions of the Constitution on the Liturgy. In this chapter, by contrast, my interpretive lens will become narrower. I will be focusing on how the reception of the Constitution guided those who played roles in the translation of the Roman Missal into English. To the extent that they were guided by the Constitution, *how* were they guided?

To answer that question, I will be focusing heavily on the documentary record. In the years after the Council, the Constitution inspired a series of documents aimed at guiding its interpretation. The revised Roman Missal itself, both the original Latin text and the subsequent vernacular translation, is also a text that helps us to understand how the Constitution was being interpreted. We also have the words and actions of key individuals in the process: popes, bishops, curial officials, theologians and translators. These, too, help shape our understanding of the Constitution.

In Part I of this chapter, I will look at how certain aspects of the Constitution were implemented in the period between 1963 and 1970. My focus will be on issues related to the use of the vernacular, the authority of episcopal conferences, and the development of norms for translation. Part II of the

chapter will examine the first English translation of the Roman Missal, which was issued in 1973. Part III will trace the increasingly contentious history of the second English translation of the Missal until its final rejection by the Congregation for Divine Worship in 2002.

I will argue that the first part of this history was characterized by a high degree of consensus among the various actors about what the Constitution envisioned. In particular, there was agreement between the Holy See and the episcopal conferences that: 1) the conferences were to be the primary actors in the translation process and 2) that a flexible approach to the translation would be needed to convey the meaning of the Latin texts in vernacular language.

The second period, by contrast, was characterized by increasing disagreement between the Holy See and the conferences about the meaning of the Constitution. The conferences, for their part, continued to believe that they were to be the primary actors in the translation process. They also continued to support an approach to translation that allowed for significant adaptation to Anglo-American cultural norms, such as the use of inclusive language and the composition of new liturgical texts. The Holy See, by contrast, became concerned with what they saw as threats to the “substantial unity” of the Roman Rite, and became increasingly willing to intervene aggressively in the translation process.

It is *not* the purpose of this chapter to assess which of the two positions that emerged in this later period is more faithful to the Constitution on the Liturgy. I will explore that question in the final chapter, where I will weave together the results of the analysis from Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Part I: Implementation of the Constitution 1963-1970

The motu proprio *Sacram Liturgiam*

The first major document issued to guide the reception of the Constitution was the motu proprio *Sacram Liturgiam*. Promulgated on January 25, 1964, it

was written to outline the elements of the Constitution that could be immediately implemented.¹⁰⁴ The document established a special commission to guide implementation of the liturgical reform, known as the Council for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (a.k.a. “the Consilium”). Pope Paul VI appointed Annibale Bugnini to be its Secretary. Its key tasks were 1) to coordinate the revision of the rites and liturgical books; 2) develop more detailed instructions regarding the implementation of the reform; and 3) apply the Constitution to specific questions raised by the episcopal conferences.¹⁰⁵

One element of the *motu proprio* caused immediate controversy. Section IX of the document stated that the vernacular translations of the liturgical texts were to be “proposed” by the episcopal conferences, while they were to be “reviewed and approved by the Holy See.” Bishops in a number of countries objected to this terminology because it was similar to language that had been explicitly rejected by the Council. Austrian Bishop Franz Zauner of Linz wrote:

We bishops and Council Fathers are distressed that so soon after the official approval of the Constitution, the Curia and parties within it are still insisting on centralization and resisting decentralization by every means at their disposal. Approval of biblical and liturgical texts in the vernacular has always been a prerogative of bishops...In the future, we bishops cannot be confident that this right will not be changed by the Curia, even though it has been clearly defined by the Council.¹⁰⁶

Bishop Zauner was not the only aggrieved party. Cardinal Joseph Frings, Archbishop of Cologne, offered similar criticisms of Article IX.¹⁰⁷ The French bishops, who had recently voted—almost unanimously—to allow the use of the

¹⁰⁴ Piero Marini, *A Challenging Reform: Realizing the Vision of the Liturgical Renewal 1963-1975* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2007), 19-21.

¹⁰⁵ Annibale Bugnini, 51.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁰⁷ Piero Marini, 24-25.

vernacular in the Ordinary of the Mass, were also incensed. The Consilium responded to this crisis by drafting 21 amendments to the *motu proprio*, which had not yet been published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*. One of the amendments changed Article IX to read that the episcopal conferences were to approve the translations and submit them to the Holy See for “approval, that is confirmation.”¹⁰⁸ This terminology was the same as that used in the Constitution. The inclusion of these amendments largely diffused the crisis, although it left unresolved the question of what specific norms would govern the Holy See’s process of confirmation.

The Three Instructions and the Reform of the Liturgy

In addition to *Sacram Liturgiam*, there are three other documents issued by the Holy See during this period that give important insight into its understanding of the Constitution. These were the three “instructions” for the implementation of the Constitution. The first, *Inter Oecumenici*, was issued in 1964. The second, *Tres Abhinc Annos*, was promulgated in 1967, and the third, *Liturgicae Instaurationes*, was released in 1970.

Although formally issued by the Congregation for Rites, *Inter Oecumenici* (IO hereafter) was the product of collaborative (and often confrontational) work between the Congregation and the Consilium.¹⁰⁹ It was officially promulgated on September 26, 1964. While the instruction discusses a wide range of issues related to the Constitution, three are of particular interest for our purposes. First, with respect to the use of the vernacular in the Mass, Article 57 of the instruction states that the “competent territorial ecclesiastical authority” may allow the use of the vernacular in the readings, the prayer of the faithful, the Ordinary of the Mass, the antiphons, and the acclamations and dialogue formulas. Those decisions must be “approved, that is confirmed, by the Holy

¹⁰⁸ Annibale Bugnini, 59.

¹⁰⁹ Marini, 1-8; 19-21.

See.” Missals for liturgical use should contain the Latin text and pastors should ensure that the faithful are able to say or sing the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin (IO 57).

Secondly, with respect to the vernacular translations themselves, Article 40 lays out the norms for their preparation. The basis of the translation—including the translation of the biblical pericopes—is the Latin liturgical text. Translations of the biblical pericopes may be revised, if warranted, in accordance with the original Greek or Hebrew text. The preparation of translations is to be entrusted to the liturgical commissions established by the national episcopal conferences. Experts in scripture, liturgy, music, biblical languages, Latin and the vernacular language should be consulted, “for the perfect translation into the language of the people must necessarily and properly fulfill many conditions at the same time.” Consultation among bishops of neighboring regions who have the same language is encouraged (IO 40).

Finally, with respect to the respective roles of the episcopal conferences and the Holy See in the approval of the translation, the instruction hews closely to Article 22 of the Constitution, but provides more procedural detail. The Apostolic See has the responsibility for revising and approving the rites and liturgical books, as well as to “approve, that is confirm” the acts and deliberations of the episcopal conferences (IO 21). The acts that are to be submitted for confirmation should contain the names of those taking part in the session, a report of the issues discussed, and the results of voting (IO 29). In cases where the acts concern the extension of the vernacular, they should also contain: 1) an indication of which parts of the liturgy are to be said in the vernacular; 2) two copies of the vernacular liturgical texts (one of which will be returned to the episcopal conference); and 3) a brief report concerning the criteria upon which the work of translation was based (IO 29).

Even prior to the promulgation of *Inter Oecumenici*, episcopal conferences had begun to submit their decisions with respect to the vernacular for

confirmation. By April 1965, 87 conferences had requested approval of texts in the vernacular.¹¹⁰ Almost immediately, however, the challenges of having a “bilingual” mass became apparent. That challenge was most evident in the preface to the Canon, which was still said in Latin even though the parts before and after it were now usually said in the vernacular. The Pope ultimately decided to allow the episcopal conferences to make their own decisions on the matter. Eventually all of the conferences opted for a vernacular preface.¹¹¹

The Pope’s decision focused attention on the last major island of Latin in the mass, the Roman Canon. By early 1967, requests for permission to use a vernacular canon had been submitted by the Netherlands, Jamaica, France and the United States. Here, too, the Pope ultimately decided to let the episcopal conferences make the decision.¹¹²

The rapid pace of liturgical change during this period led the Consilium to develop a second instruction, titled *Tres abhinc annos* (TAA hereafter), which was promulgated on May 4, 1967. The document focused primarily on the Mass and the Divine Office. With respect to the Mass, it allowed for a broader choice of texts and prayers and eliminated a number of genuflections, kissings of the altar, and signs of the cross over the gifts. The instruction also reconfirmed Pope Paul’s decision earlier in the year to allow the use of the vernacular in the Canon (TAA 28). The document made no changes, however, to the procedures for the approval of translations that had been laid out in IO.

During this same period, the Consilium had begun work on the revisions to the rites called for by the Constitution. The Consilium convened a number of study groups in 1964 to begin the work, which continued for the next six years. The most significant of the proposed changes was the inclusion of three new

¹¹⁰ Annibale Bugnini, 102.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 104.

¹¹² Ibid., 105-109.

Eucharistic Prayers in addition to the Roman Canon. The lectionary had been revised to include a broader range of New Testament readings, as well as readings from the Old Testament. There were also changes in the order of the Mass, such as the inclusion of a communal penitential rite at the beginning of Mass and the restoration of the prayer of the faithful and the responsorial Psalm. The results of this work were presented to the 1967 Synod of Bishops, which voted to support the proposed changes. The revised Roman Missal was approved by Paul VI on April 3, 1969, although it was not actually printed until May 17, 1970 because of some final changes requested by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.¹¹³

As this work was going on, the Consilium was receiving an increasing number of reports of liturgical abuses, including the use of unauthorized liturgical texts. Early in 1968, the Consilium communicated to the Secretary of State that it was preparing a “short but strongly worded instruction” to deal with areas of the liturgy that were subject to the greatest abuses; it was hoped that the instruction could bring these abuses to a “firm and unyielding halt.”¹¹⁴ The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Pope Paul himself supported the idea of a new instruction and asked that it include a number of specific elements. After several rounds of revision, the third Instruction, titled *Liturgicae instaurationes* (LI), was promulgated on September 5, 1970.¹¹⁵

LI begins by commending the work of the liturgical reform and notes that with the recent publication of the Roman Missal, a wide range of prayer forms are available to celebrants and communities. It cautions against “hasty, often ill-advised measures” and “new creations and additions” to the rites. At the same time, it states that it is local bishops who have primary responsibility for enforcing liturgical discipline. The document offers a number specific “principles and suggestions” as a way of “making the bishop's function more effective.” Many

¹¹³ James White, 138-139; Annibale Bugnini, 393.

¹¹⁴ Annibale Bugnini, 840.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 840-844

of the norms deal with unauthorized departures from the texts of the prayers or readings.

With respect to the translation process, Article 11 of LI states that the official liturgical books must be translated in their entirety and other books in use are suppressed. Any adaptations to these texts, including additional formularies, must be submitted by the episcopal conferences to the Holy See for approval. It cautions that translators should proceed “without haste” and that the language used be characterized by “grace, balance, elegance, and richness of style and language” (LI 11).

The publication of *Liturgicae Instaurationes* marked an end to an intensive period of activity within the Holy See to implement the liturgical reform called for by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. By 1970 the rites were being said almost entirely in the vernacular and the process of revising the rites had largely been completed. As part of Paul VI’s reform of the curia, the Consilium had been merged into a new Congregation for Divine Worship, whose leadership was largely drawn from that of the Consilium.¹¹⁶ Before we turn our attention to the actions of the episcopal conferences, however, we will need to consider one final document, one that would ultimately come to lie at the center of the controversy that is the focus of this study.

Comme le prévoit and the Norms for Translation of Liturgical Texts

Discussions regarding the norms for translation of liturgical texts were an important part of the Consilium’s work from the beginning. As early as October 1964, Cardinal Lercaro had written to the presidents of the episcopal conferences suggesting that conferences using the same language work together to produce a single translation.¹¹⁷ The cardinal’s suggestion was repeated by Pope

¹¹⁶ Marini, 141.

¹¹⁷ Bugnini, 233-234.

Paul VI in an address to translators of liturgical texts on November 10, 1965. The Pope also suggested that the language used must “be within the grasp of all, even children and the uneducated,” but also “worthy of the noble realities it signifies, set apart from the everyday speech of the street and the marketplace.”¹¹⁸ Over the next two years, the Consilium issued short communications dealing with the translation of the Roman Canon and the *Graduale simplex*.¹¹⁹

Even as these communications were being issued, work was under way on a more comprehensive statement of principles to govern translation. This was ultimately published by the Consilium on January 26, 1969 under the French title *Comme le prévoit*, (CLP hereafter) although it was translated into six major languages. While Pope Paul reviewed its contents (and apparently made a few humorous corrections), it was published only in *Notitiae*, and never in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*. A Latin version of the document was never prepared.¹²⁰

The document begins by reviewing the approval process for the translations that had been detailed in the instructions prepared by the Consilium. It reiterates that it is the responsibility of the episcopal conferences to “prepare or review the translations, to approve them, and ‘after approval, that is confirmation, by the Holy See’ to promulgate them” (CLP 2). While the translations are the responsibility of the conference, the document suggests that it is desirable to “observe common principles of procedure...in order to make confirmation by the Apostolic See easier and to achieve greater unity of practice” (CLP 3).

It is worth pausing a moment to consider the import of this language, because it appears to tie the Holy See’s “confirmation” to some consideration of

¹¹⁸ Paul VI, “Address to translators of liturgical texts,” 10 November 1965, in International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 272-274.

¹¹⁹ Bugnini 235-236.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 236.

the content of the translation. As we saw in the previous chapter, the canonical precedents for the term “confirmed” that was used in Article 36 of the Constitution suggested that the Holy See’s review would be primarily procedural.¹²¹ The dispute over the terminology employed in *Sacram Liturgiam* suggested this interpretation as well. At the same time, it also seems clear that the members of the Consilium did not see the development of a common set of norms for translation as in any way a violation of the intent of the Constitution. With the benefit of hindsight, however, we can see that an important conceptual threshold is being crossed, if ever so modestly.

That this crossing was not more remarked upon at the time may be attributable to the flexible nature of the norms contained in *Comme le prévoit*. The document’s general principles for translation state that “it is not sufficient that a liturgical translation merely reproduce the expressions and ideas of the original text” (CLP 6). Rather, the translation must “faithfully communicate to a given people, and in their own language, that which the Church means by this given text originally intended to communicate to another people in another time” (CLP 6).

Accordingly, the instruction cautions against an excessively literal approach to translation. “The translator must always keep in mind that the ‘unit of meaning’ is not the individual word but the whole passage” (CLP 12). Paragraphs 11-19 specifically identify a number of cases where literal translation from the Latin may create problems in reception. Article 20 provides a good summary statement of the position of CLP’s drafters:

The prayer of the Church is always the prayer of some actual community assembled here and now. It is not sufficient that a formula handed down from some other time or region be translated verbatim, even if accurately, for liturgical use. The formula translated must become the genuine prayer of the congregation and in it each of its members should be able to find and express himself or herself (CLP 20).

¹²¹ See pages 50-55.

The document does display a moderate degree of caution in dealing with consecratory prayers, anaphoras, prefaces, and sacramental formulas. These should be translated “integrally and faithfully, without variations, omissions, or insertions” (CLP 33). Even here, however, the authors suggest that in cases dealing with ancient texts, some paraphrasing may be required to render certain Latin terms whose meaning does not adequately correspond to their vernacular equivalents (CLP33).

CLP also recommends that multiple countries that use a common language produce a single translation that can be used in all the countries. These countries should use a “mixed commission,” with experts drawn from all the countries involved (CLP 42).

The final paragraph of the document (CLP 43) states that “texts translated from another language are clearly not sufficient for the celebration of a fully renewed liturgy,” and suggests that new texts will be necessary. These new texts, however, should be based in some way on the traditional texts so that these new forms of prayer should, in the words of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, “grow organically from forms already in existence” (SC 23).

Part II: ICEL and the Translation of the 1970 Roman Missal

When the authors of *Comme le prévoit* wrote in 1969 of “mixed commissions,” they were not speaking theoretically. By that time, a number of such commissions had been in existence for several years.¹²² Some of the founders of what would become the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) began meeting in the fall of 1962 as the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy was being debated. A year later, in October 1963 a formal meeting of a number of bishops from English-speaking countries was held in Rome. This

¹²² Annibale Bugnini, 234.

group formed the nucleus of what became the “Episcopal Committee,” or central governing body of ICEL.¹²³

Over the next few years, the Episcopal Committee gradually developed a more robust structure for the governance and operation of the organization. Under a new constitution, the “Episcopal Committee” would provide governance, an “Advisory Committee” (composed of experts) would direct the work of translation and review the draft texts, and a professional staff known as the “Secretariat” would coordinate the day-to-day operations of the group.¹²⁴

One of ICEL’s first tasks was a public consultation on the appropriate style for vernacular liturgical texts, carried out in 1966 and 1967. ICEL’s first effort in this regard, a booklet titled *English for the Mass*, offered examples of different ways of translating some of the texts of the Ordinary. ICEL published 16,000 copies of the booklet in 1966 and received more than 4,000 replies revealing a wide range of opinions. A second booklet, featuring the collects and prefaces, was published in 1967.¹²⁵

That same year, the U.S. bishops petitioned Rome (under the provisions of Article 40 of the Constitution) to allow the canon to be said in the vernacular in the United States. Pope Paul granted his permission relatively quickly and ICEL was asked to have a translation ready by the end of the year. They released a draft text in October 1967. It generated extensive comments, both positive and negative, including praise from the editors of *Worship* and a blistering editorial

¹²³ Frederick McManus, “ICEL: The First Years,” in *Shaping English Liturgy*, ed. Peter Finn and James Schellman (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press), 433-444.

¹²⁴ Frederick McManus, 451-453.

¹²⁵ G.B. Harrison, “Personal Reminiscences of the First Years of ICEL,” in *Shaping English Liturgy*, ed. Peter Finn and James Schellman (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press), 464.

in the British Catholic newspaper *The Tablet*.¹²⁶ A revised version was issued and approved for use by the episcopal conferences in 1968.¹²⁷

Even as this work was being carried out, ICEL was preparing for what became a flood of newly revised liturgical books, among them the Roman Missal. Although the Commission had had access to some drafts as the process of revision moved forward, the final version of the Missal was not published until 1970.¹²⁸

While ICEL's first translation of the Missal, released in 1973, would eventually gain broad acceptance, some of its elements were—and remained—controversial.¹²⁹ In keeping with the spirit of *Comme le prévoit*, the translation took a flexible approach to rendering the Latin into English, particularly in the collects. The translation also made use of a number of English prayer texts developed by the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) for ecumenical use.¹³⁰ Since these were not designed to be translations from Roman Missal, the ICET prayers tended to have a looser relationship to the Latin text. Certain repetitions found in the Latin prayers, such as the “Laudámus te, Benedícimus te, Adorámus te, Glorificámus te,” from the Gloria were absent from the English texts. Even the title of the book had changed. While the 1570 *Missal Romanum* had been a single volume containing both the celebrant's prayers and the scripture readings, the 1970 Missal restored the tradition of a separate book of scripture readings, the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (Lectionary for Mass). For this

¹²⁶ Susan Benofy, “ICEL's Translation of the Roman Canon,” *Adoremus Bulletin*, July-August 1996, 3.

¹²⁷ G.B. Harrison, 465.

¹²⁸ John Page, “ICEL 1966-1989: Weaving the Words of our Common Christian Prayer,” in *Shaping English Liturgy*, eds. Peter Finn and James Schellman (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press), 475.

¹²⁹ John Wilkins, “Lost in Translation,” *Commonweal*, December 2, 2005, 15.

¹³⁰ Donald Gray, “Common Words and *Common Worship*: Praying Together and Apart,” in *Liturgical Renewal as a Way to Christian Unity*, eds. James Puglisi and Horace Allen (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2005), 30-31.

reason, ICEL elected to recover an ancient practice of terming the celebrant’s prayer book the “Sacramentary.”¹³¹

In order to better understand some of the reasons for the controversy, I want to look at one aspect of ICEL translation, the collects. Former ICEL Secretary John Page has written that the translation of the collects was one of the most challenging aspects of translating the Missal; it was difficult to render their compact Latin style into English.¹³² A 1998 article by the British historian Eamon Duffy offered a useful comparison of the original Latin, a more traditional translation (either based on Cranmer’s Book of Common Prayer or Duffy’s own translation), and the 1973 ICEL translation:¹³³

Date	Latin	Duffy	ICEL (1973)
11th Sunday in OT	Deus in te sperantium fortitude, invocationibus nostris adesto propitius, et, quia sine te nihil potest mortalis infirmatis, gratiae tua praesta semper auxilium, ut, in exsequendis mandates tuis, et voluntate tibi in actione placemus	O God, the strength of all them who put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because though the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may please thee, both in will and deed.	Almighty God, our hope and our strength, without you we falter. Help us to follow Christ and live according to your will.

¹³¹ John Page, “The Process of Revision of the Sacramentary 1981-98,” in *Liturgy for the New Millenium*, eds. Mark Francis and Keith Pecklers (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 4, n3.

¹³² John Page, “ICEL 1966-1989: Weaving the Words of our Common Christian Prayer,” 476.

¹³³ Eamon Duffy, “Rewriting the Liturgy: The Theological Implications of Translation,” *Beyond the Prosaic* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 97-126.

12th Sunday in OT	Sancti nomini tui, Domine, timorem partiter at amorem fac nos habere perpetuum quia numquam tua gubernatione destituis, quo in soliditate tuae dilectionis instituis.	Grant us, Lord, not only a constant fear of your Holy Name, but also a constant love of it, for you leave no one without your guidance whom you have firmly established in your love.	Father, guide and protector of your people, grant us an unfailing respect for your name, and keep us always in your love.
30th Sunday in OT	Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, da nobis fidei, spei et caritatis augmentum, et, ut mereamur assequi quod promittis, fac nos amare quod praecipis.	Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope and charity; and, that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command.	Almighty and ever-living God, strengthen our faith, hope and love. May we do with loving hearts what you ask of us and come to share the life you promise

In looking at ICEL translations, we can see the principles of *Comme le prévoit* at work. As Page notes, the style is “sparse and direct both in vocabulary and syntax.”¹³⁴ The vocabulary is within the grasp of most listeners. In the first and third prayer, the long Latin sentences have been broken up into two sentences to aid in proclamation. The Latin has been translated somewhat freely, although most of the key concepts present in the original prayers are present in the translations.

The question, of course, is whether anything has been “lost in translation.” In looking at these three collects, Duffy argues strongly that this is the case. With respect to the first collect, for example, he observes that the original prayer places very strong emphasis on God’s grace, an emphasis that has been watered down in the translation:

¹³⁴ John Page, “ICEL 1966-1989: Weaving the Words of our Common Christian Prayer,” 476.

“The stern insistence of the original that without God ‘mortal frailty can do nothing’-‘nihil potest mortalis infirmatis’ becomes the feeble ‘without you we falter’. Grace is no longer even mentioned, the strong phrase ‘auxilium gratiae’ becoming simply ‘help us’, while the reference to the following of the commandments has been edited out, being replaced by a phrase about ‘following Christ’ which has no warrant in the original.¹³⁵

One need not accept Duffy’s charge that the translated prayers are “semi-Pelagian” to grant the substance of some of his arguments. Compared to the originals, all three translations exhibit a subtle shift that places more emphasis on the human response to God’s grace. While the use of less formal language obviously reflects a desire to render the prayers in simple modern English, it also arguably shrinks the conceptual distance between God and the community gathered in prayer. Whether this is a good thing or not depends on one’s theological point of view, but there is no question that it is a theological decision and not one driven solely by the imperatives of the translation process.

One aspect of the 1973 Missal that did not receive as much attention at the time was its inclusion of alternative prayer texts for Sundays and some feast days. The desire for texts originally composed in English was part of the original charter of ICEL’s Advisory Committee. Norms for the composition of new texts are also contained in Article 43 of *Comme le prévoit* (CLP 43). While these texts did, as adaptations to the rite, receive a higher level of scrutiny in Rome (the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith requested changes to seven of the prayers), the Congregation for Divine Worship confirmed them.¹³⁶

The relative ease with which the alternative prayers were approved is indicative of the Holy See’s general attitude toward the translation as a whole. Despite the controversy over various issues, Rome did not ultimately seek any significant changes to the text. In 1972, a letter was sent to Paul VI complaining

¹³⁵ Eamon Duffy, 111.

¹³⁶ Margaret Mary Kelleher, “New Prayer Texts in the Revised Sacramentary,” *Liturgy for the New Millennium*, eds Mark Francis and Keith Pecklers (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 78-79.

that the translations being prepared by a number of national episcopal conferences contained serious doctrinal problems. Among the signatories of the letter were two members of the International Theological Commission, Joseph Ratzinger and Jorge Medina Estévez. The Pope received the letter, but did not take action to prevent the translations from being confirmed.¹³⁷ As we will see, both Ratzinger and Medina would later be in positions that would allow them to shape the direction of future translations of the liturgical books.

Part III: The Translation of the 1975 Roman Missal

By the late 1970s, ICEL had completed translations of all the major liturgical books that had been revised and issued by Rome. In the interim, Rome had begun to issue revised versions of the typical editions, including a revised version of the Roman Missal, which was issued in 1975. In 1977, the episcopal board of ICEL approved a plan to revise all of the liturgical books which was expected to take many years.¹³⁸

As with the previous missal translation, the work of revision began with the distribution of consultation books, which were sent to bishops and other stakeholders. The first, issued in 1982, focused on the presidential prayers and the second, issued in 1986, focused on the Order of the Mass. Two important findings from the consultations were a desire for a more elevated style of language (particularly in the collects) and a concern about making changes to familiar texts said by the assembly.¹³⁹

ICEL incorporated this feedback as it prepared new translations. Considerations of space prevent us from examining a wide range of texts, but we use an example we are already familiar with, namely the three collects reviewed

¹³⁷ John Wilkins, 15.

¹³⁸ John Page, "The Process of Revision of the Sacramentary, 1981-98," 4-5.

¹³⁹ John Page, "The Process of Revision of the Sacramentary," 6-8

on Page 84. The chart below compares the original Latin with the 1973 Missal and the 1997 text prepared by ICEL for consideration by the episcopal conferences:¹⁴⁰

Date	Latin	ICEL (1973)	ICEL (1997)
11th Sunday in OT	Deus in te sperantium fortitude, invocationibus nostris adesto propitius, et, quia sine te nihil potest mortalis infirmatis, gratiae tua praesta semper auxilium, ut, in exsequendis mandates tuis, et voluntate tibi in actione placemus	Almighty God, our hope and our strength, without you we falter. Help us to follow Christ and live according to your will.	O God, the strength of all who hope in you, accept our earnest prayer. And since without you we are weak and certain to fail, grant us always the help of your grace, that in following your commands we may please you in desire and deed.
12th Sunday in OT	Sancti nomini tui, Domine, timorem partiter at amorem fac nos habere perpetuum quia numquam tua gubernatione destituis, quo in soliditate tuae dilectionis instituis.	Father, guide and protector of your people, grant us an unfailing respect for your name, and keep us always in your love.	Lord God, teach us to hold your holy name both in awe and in lasting affection, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you establish in your steadfast love.
30th Sunday in OT	Omnipotens sempiternae Deus, da nobis fidei, spei et caritatis augmentum, et, ut mereamur assequi quod promittis, fac nos amare quod praecipis.	Almighty and ever-living God, strengthen our faith, hope and love. May we do with loving hearts what you ask of us and come to share the life you promise	God of holiness, increase within us your gifts of faith, hope and love, and enable us to cherish whatever you command, that we may come to possess all that you promise.

¹⁴⁰ Texts taken from ICEL, *The Sacramentary: Volume One-Sundays and Feasts*, 1997.

As is obvious from these examples, the 1997 translations hew more closely to the original Latin than the 1973 versions. The 1997 translation of the collect for the 11th Sunday in Ordinary Time, for example, preserves the original text's emphasis on the weakness of human will and the need for God's grace. At the same time, the prayer is still broken up into multiple sentences to aid in proclamation. While "voluntate" would often be translated by the word "will," translating it as "desire" allows for the use of alliteration in the closing of the prayer. This example, as well as others taken from the revised Sacramentary, suggests that ICEL had taken its directions from the Episcopal Board seriously. As we will see, however, the proposed changes were not enough to quiet the Commission's increasingly vocal critics.

Changes in Rome

Over the same period that ICEL was beginning the process of revision, there were events in Rome that would ultimately have a profound impact on the outcome of the Commission's work. Pope John Paul II, who had been elected in 1978, had brought a different perspective to the chair of Peter with respect to a number of liturgical issues. In 1988, the pope issued an apostolic letter, *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, marking the 25th anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. In that letter, the pope made an observation about the process of translation:

The Bishops' Conferences have had the weighty responsibility of preparing the translations of the liturgical books. Immediate need occasionally led to the use of provisional translations, approved ad interim. But now the time has come to reflect upon certain difficulties that have subsequently emerged, to remedy certain defects or inaccuracies, to complete partial translations, to compose or approve chants to be used in the Liturgy, to ensure respect for the texts approved and lastly to publish liturgical books

in a form that both testifies to the stability achieved and is worthy of the mystery being celebrated.¹⁴¹

The changes in Rome were not only related to the liturgy. A different understanding of the appropriate relationship between the Holy See and the national episcopal conferences was increasingly in evidence. In 1988, the Congregation for Bishops issued a draft analysis of the theological status of episcopal conferences that took a highly restrictive view of their role. While the document lacked the status associated with a formal papal or curial text, it was nevertheless revealing of the attitude of some curial officials toward the conferences.¹⁴²

It was also during the early years of John Paul II's pontificate that the revised Code of Canon Law was finally promulgated in 1983. Canon 838 of the Code lays out the responsibilities of the Apostolic See and the national episcopal conferences with respect to the regulation of the liturgy:

Can. 838 §1. The direction of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church which resides in the Apostolic See and, according to the norm of law, the diocesan bishop.

§2. It is for the Apostolic See to order the sacred liturgy of the universal Church, publish liturgical books and review their translations in vernacular languages, and exercise vigilance that liturgical regulations are observed faithfully everywhere.

§3. It pertains to the conferences of bishops to prepare and publish, after the prior review of the Holy See, translations of liturgical books in vernacular languages, adapted appropriately within the limits defined in the liturgical books themselves.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Pope John Paul II, *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, December 4, 1988, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_04121988_vicesimus-quintus-annus_en.html [accessed February 12, 2008].

¹⁴² Joseph Komonchak, "The Roman Working Paper on Episcopal Conferences," *Episcopal Conferences: Historical, Canonical, and Theological Studies*, ed. Thomas J Reese (Washington, DC:Georgetown University Press, 1989).

¹⁴³ CIC 838:1-3.

We can see in this codification of the procedures for preparation and approval of the translations an obvious shift in tone and language from the immediate post-conciliar period. As we saw in Part I of this chapter, after the initial dispute over the language in *Sacram Liturgiam*, the subsequent documents issued during the pontificate of Paul VI all used the “approved, that is confirmed” language taken directly from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. In the 1983 Code, the language outlining the prerogatives of the Apostolic See is stronger than it is in the Constitution, while the equivalent language for the episcopal conferences is clearly weaker.

The Gathering Storm

The 1990s were a period of significant progress with respect to the revision of the new Sacramentary. Between 1993 and 1996, ICEL presented its member episcopal conferences with revised versions of several sections. The bishops themselves had requested that the text be broken down in this fashion, to avoid the challenges involved in voting on hundreds of pages of text at a single time.¹⁴⁴

The decade was also characterized, however, by growing tension between the Holy See on the one hand and ICEL and the episcopal conferences on the other. One source of this tension was the emergence of grassroots organizations in the United States who were critical of ICEL’s approach to translation. The organization *Adoremus*, founded by the Jesuit priest Joseph Fessio, led an effort to convince the bishops to reject the texts of the Order of the Mass that were presented to them by ICEL in 1995. The effort failed, but the text only obtained the necessary two-thirds vote with seven votes to spare.¹⁴⁵

ICEL’s critics, both inside and outside the Holy See, tended to focus on three major issues. The issue that received the most publicity was inclusive

¹⁴⁴ John Page, “The Process of Revision of the Sacramentary,” 15-16.

¹⁴⁵ Thomas Reary, “ICEL Texts Face Resistance,” *Adoremus Bulletin*, November 1995, 1.

language.¹⁴⁶ As early as 1975, the Advisory Committee of ICEL had recommended that future translations “avoid words which ignore the place of women in the Christian community altogether or which seem to relegate women to a secondary role.”¹⁴⁷ ICEL continued to refine its approach to this over the years and many of the texts developed in the 1980s and 90s made use of inclusive language in various ways. During this period, the Commission’s general approach had been to employ inclusive language where the scriptural or liturgical text clearly refers to all human beings and to reduce the use of masculine pronouns for God where possible.¹⁴⁸ ICEL developed an inclusive-language version of the Psalter which was published in 1995 with the imprimatur of Cardinal William Keeler. The Holy See later ordered that the imprimatur be withdrawn, partly due to concerns that the Psalter’s thoroughgoing use of inclusive language complicated a Christological reading of some of the Psalms.¹⁴⁹

A second point of dispute between the Holy See and ICEL was over the Commission’s general approach to translation. ICEL continued to take its bearings from *Comme le prévoit*, which allowed for a more flexible approach to translating the Latin. The Congregation for Divine Worship, by contrast, was increasingly inclined to demand literal translations, particularly of words it deemed doctrinally important. One of the reasons cited by the CDW for its 1997 rejection of ICEL’s proposed translation of the Rite of Ordination was that it translated the Latin term *presbyteri* as “presbyters” rather than priests and *universo clero* as “all who are called to your service.”¹⁵⁰ This marked the first time

¹⁴⁶ John Page, “The Process of Revision of the Sacramentary,” 12; Kenneth Whitehead, “How Inclusive Language Came to the Liturgy,” *Adoremus Bulletin*, April 1998, 3.

¹⁴⁷ J. Frank Henderson, “ICEL and Inclusive Language,” *Shaping English Liturgy*, eds. Peter C Finn, James M. Schellman (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press, 1990), 262.

¹⁴⁸ J. Frank Henderson, 275.

¹⁴⁹ Ronald D. Witherup, “ICEL and Liturgical Translations,” *America*, 183(10), October 7, 2000.

¹⁵⁰ Jorge Cardinal Medina Estévez to President Bishop Anthony Pilla, September 20, 1997, http://www.adoremus.org/98-01_cdwletter.htm [accessed May 9, 2006].

that the Congregation had actually withheld confirmation from an English translation of a rite.¹⁵¹

There was a final point of controversy that initially received less publicity but became increasingly important over time. This was the issue of original texts in the vernacular. As noted earlier, *Comme le prévoit* had suggested that original texts would be necessary for a fully reformed liturgy (CLP 43) and alternative collects had been included in the 1973 Sacramentary.¹⁵² During the preparation of the revised Sacramentary, ICEL had circulated draft texts for consideration by the Episcopal Board and other stakeholders and a collection of originally composed collects, prayers over the gifts, and prayers for other occasions were included in the final version approved by the episcopal conferences.¹⁵³

Voices in Rome, however, were growing more critical of the use of original texts. In 1994, the CDW issued *Varietates Legitimae*, the Fourth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, which dealt with inculturation of the liturgy. While the document did not deal specifically with the issue of original texts, its provisions on adaptations to the liturgy (VL 63-69) were subsequently interpreted by the Congregation for Divine Worship to mean that mixed commissions such as ICEL should not prepare original texts as part of the process of translating the typical editions. Cardinal Jorge Medina, Prefect of the CDW, would later argue that the inclusion of such a large number of new texts posed a danger to the “substantial unity of the Roman Rite.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ Edward Foley, “The Abuse of Power,” *America*, October 14, 2002, 9.

¹⁵² H. Kathleen Hughes, “Original Texts: Beginnings, Present Projects, Guidelines,” *Shaping English Liturgy*, eds. Peter Finn and James Schellmann (Washington, DC: Pastoral Press, 1999), 233.

¹⁵³ Margaret Mary Kelleher, “New Prayer Texts in the Revised Sacramentary,” *Liturgy for the New Millennium*, eds. Mark Francis and Keith Pecklers (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 77-96.

¹⁵⁴ Cardinal Jorge Medina Estévez, “On the ICEL Controversy,” *America*, May 13, 2000.

Disputes over these issues led the Congregation to become much more aggressive in its willingness to reject decisions made by the national episcopal conferences. In addition to its rejection of the Psalter in 1995 and the Ordination Rite in 1997, the CDW had also withdrawn its approval (originally granted in 1992) of a USCCB decision to allow the use of the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The NRSV, like the Psalter, made use of inclusive language.¹⁵⁵ The CDW was also showing an increasing tendency to want to review the smallest details of the proposed translations. Its rejection of the Ordination Rite was accompanied by a detailed list of 114 separate observations and went so far as to suggest a “complete change of translators on this project and that a new, independent and definitive English version be made afresh from the Latin texts.”¹⁵⁶

By the end of the decade, ICEL was defending not only its translations, but its very existence. In June of 1998, the Episcopal Board, meeting in Washington, DC, received an ultimatum from its American representative, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago. George stated that the ongoing conflict with Rome was leading to a loss of confidence in the commission on the part of the U.S. bishops. ICEL needed to change its approach to preparing translations. Otherwise, the U.S. bishops would develop their own.¹⁵⁷

The pressure was coming from Rome as well. On October 29, 1999, Cardinal Medina sent a letter to Taylor stating that “the Mixed Commission in its present form is not in a position to render to the Bishops, to the Holy See and to the English-speaking faithful an adequate level of service.”¹⁵⁸ In addition to raising concerns about ICEL’s approach to translation and its involvement in the

¹⁵⁵ Edward Foley, “The Abuse of Power,” *America*, October 14, 2002, 9.

¹⁵⁶ Jorge Cardinal Medina Estévez to President Bishop Anthony Pilla, September 20, 1997, http://www.adoremus.org/98-01_cdwletter.htm [accessed May 9, 2006].

¹⁵⁷ John Wilkins, 16.

¹⁵⁸ Jorge Cardinal Medina Estévez to Bishop Maurice Taylor, October 26, 1999, <http://www.adoremus.org/2-00-medinaletter.html> [accessed May 9, 2006].

development of original texts, the letter also directed the Commission to revise its statutes to give the Holy See greater oversight of the organization. It was a harbinger of things to come.

A New Instruction

On March 21, 2001, the CDW issued a document titled *Liturgiam authenticam* (LA hereafter), the Fifth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The focus of the instruction was the use of vernacular languages in the books of the Roman Rite. The document was in many ways a compendium of the concerns that the CDW had been raising about ICEL and its translations.

What draws together the document's desiderata is an underlying concern with "the integrity and the unity of the Roman Rite" (LA 4). The work of inculturation (which includes the process of translation) "is not therefore to be considered an avenue for the creation of new varieties or families of rites" (LA 5). Any adaptations introduced for cultural or pastoral reasons therefore become part of the Roman Rite (LA 5).

A significant portion of LA deals with norms for liturgical translations. Article 8 makes clear that LA's norms are to be substituted for all previous norms, with the exception of those contained in the 1994 instruction *Varietates Legitimae*. While *Comme le prévoit* is not mentioned by name, it is clear that the former instruction will no longer serve as a reference point for translations (LA 8).

In contrast to *Comme le prévoit*, LA embraces a more literal approach to translation. While it is permissible to arrange syntax and wording to prepare a flowing vernacular text, "the original text, insofar as possible, must be translated integrally and in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content, and without paraphrases or glosses" (LA, 20).

LA also argues that translations must exhibit a “sacred style” (LA 27). Liturgical texts “should be free of an overly servile adherence to prevailing modes of expression” (LA 27) and are properly characterized by a certain manner of expression “that differs from that found in everyday speech” (LA 59).

LA applies these principles to a number of issues that had arisen in the course of debates over the English-language translations. It requires that the people’s response *et cum spiritu tuo* be translated “and with your spirit” rather than the “and also with you” currently in use in the English translation. Similarly, the phrase *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maximum culpa* in the Confiteor is to be translated literally rather than the “through my own fault” currently in use (LA 56).

The instruction also spends a fair amount of time discussing inclusive language. While not ruling out inclusive language *tout court*, the document places significant restrictions on its use. In referring to God or to the individual persons of the Trinity, the use of masculine language is to be retained. Care is to be taken that the term “Son of Man” be rendered literally and consistently, even in cases where its meaning is to refer to human beings in general rather than Jesus Christ in particular (LA 31).

In addition to providing these norms for translations, LA also provides detailed instructions for their preparation. The document devotes a significant amount of space to explaining the practice of requiring a *recognitio* for translations:

This practice of seeking the *recognitio* from the Apostolic See for all translations of liturgical books accords the necessary assurance of the authenticity of the translation and its correspondence with the original texts. This practice both expresses and effects a bond of communion between the successor of blessed Peter and his brothers in the Episcopate. Furthermore, this *recognitio* is not a mere formality, but is rather an exercise of the power of governance, which is absolutely necessary (in the absence of which the act of the Conference of Bishops entirely in no way attains legal force); and modifications—even substantial ones—may be introduced by means of it. (LA, 80)

The authority of the Holy See also extends to the governance of “mixed commissions” such as ICEL. The Instruction states that these commissions are established by the Congregation at the request of the participating bishops’ conferences and are governed by statutes approved by the Apostolic See (LA, 93). The commissions are to limit themselves to the translation of the *editiones typicae* and refrain from addressing “theoretical questions” or from composing original texts (LA, 98). All the principal collaborators of any commission who are not Bishops require a *nihil obstat* granted by the Congregation.

The promulgation of *Liturgiam authenticam* provoked a flood of commentary. Bishop Donald Trautman of Erie, the former chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Liturgy published a strongly worded critique of LA in *America* criticizing both its approach to translation (particularly its demand for literal translations and its rejection of inclusive language) and its weakening of the authority of the national episcopal conferences.¹⁵⁹ A later commentary published in *Worship* in 2004 by the liturgical scholar Peter Jefferey (who described his personal liturgical tastes as “as conservative as one can get without rejecting Vatican II”) argued that LA was “the most ignorant statement on liturgy ever issued by a modern Vatican congregation.”¹⁶⁰ Jefferey criticized what he saw as the document’s ahistorical understanding of the Roman Rite. Critics of ICEL, on the other hand, were pleased with the document. Anthony Ward, a British liturgist who had served on the staff of the CDW, argued that it was necessary for the Holy See to regulate mixed commissions such as ICEL because they were not under the direct control of a single bishop or bishops’ conference.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Donald Trautman, “The Quest for Authentic Liturgy,” *America*, October 22, 2001.

¹⁶⁰ Peter Jeffery, *Translating Tradition: A Chant Historian Reads Liturgiam Authenticam* (Collegville: The Liturgical Press, 2005), 17 and 98-100.

¹⁶¹ Anthony Ward, “The Instruction ‘Liturgiam Authenticam’: Some Particulars,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 116 (2002), 204.

Liturgiam authenticam marked a decisive turning point in the ongoing struggle over the translation of the Roman Missal and the future of ICEL. Four months after the document was promulgated, the CDW established a new committee of cardinals and bishops known as *Vox Clara* to advise it on issues related to English-language translation. Three months later, in October 2001, the presidents of ICEL episcopal conferences met with Cardinal Medina in Rome. Accounts of the meeting suggest it was contentious, but the result was an agreement that would lead to the dismissal of John Page. Over the next year, Bishop Maurice Taylor would resign as chairman of ICEL's episcopal board and be replaced by Bishop Arthur Roche of Leeds. Cardinal Medina, for his part, left the CDW, to be replaced by Cardinal Francis Arinze, who would ultimately play a key part in the restructuring of ICEL along the lines proposed by *Liturgiam authenticam*.¹⁶²

The final—albeit not unexpected—blow fell on March 16, 2002, when the Congregation for Divine Worship formally rejected the Sacramentary that had been approved by the episcopal conferences.¹⁶³ While the detailed comments accompanying the letter dealt with a range of issues, it was clear that these were animated by the same overarching concerns that had been at the center of the debate between the CDW and ICEL: original texts, inclusive language, and overall approach to translation.

With respect to original texts, the CDW insisted that “the texts newly composed by the Mixed Commission be excluded from the Missal,” because of concerns that a proliferation of new texts could “hinder the meditation of the faithful and their pastors on the riches already found in the prayers of the Roman Liturgy.”¹⁶⁴ With respect to inclusive language, the Congregation objected to a

¹⁶² John Wilkins, 20.

¹⁶³ Jorge Cardinal Medina Estévez to President of the Conference of Bishops of the United States, March 16, 2002, <http://www.adoremus.org/CDW-ICELtrans.html> [accessed May 9, 2006].

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 5

number of instances of its use, such as translating the *Suscipiat Dominus* to read “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of *God’s* name, for our good, and the good of all the Church.”¹⁶⁵

The overarching concern of the CDW, however, was with ICEL’s philosophy of translation. The CDW favored a more literal approach, even on questions of grammatical structure. The comments argued, for example, that relative clauses found in the original Latin should be retained in English because “the relative clause acknowledges God’s greatness, while the independent clause strongly conveys the impression that one is explaining something about God to God.”¹⁶⁶ The Congregation also objected to the proposed English translations of a number of specific words, such as using “presbyter” instead of “priest” and “cup” instead of “chalice.”¹⁶⁷

With the restructuring of ICEL, many of those who had been most critical of the proposed Sacramentary were now in a position to implement these recommendations. Beginning in 2004, revised versions of the various components of the Missal were sent to the episcopal conferences consultation and ultimately for approval. As of this writing, the Order of Mass and the Proper of Seasons have been reviewed and approved by the conferences, while the remaining sections are still in “green book” form and are being reviewed.¹⁶⁸

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to develop what Ormond Rush calls a “hermeneutic of the receivers” of the Constitution on the Liturgy. We focused primarily on how the Constitution was received with respect to the preparation of a vernacular translation of the Roman Missal. To the extent that the various

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 5.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 7-8.

¹⁶⁸ See <http://www.icelweb.org/news.htm> for the current status of the various books of the Missal.

actors in the translation process were guided by the Constitution, *how* were they guided? In what follows, I will not be attempting to evaluate the congruence of the interpretations that emerged with my reading of the Constitution itself. That will be the task of the final chapter. Here, my objective is merely to review certain aspects of the Constitution's reception and highlight the key issues and themes that emerged.

The two issues that have been at the heart of this study have been the *process* by which translations are developed and the *content* of those translations. As we have seen, divergent understandings of what the Constitution required (or allowed) with respect to these issues emerged gradually in the post-conciliar period. I want to deal with each of them in turn, beginning with process and then moving to content.

In the years immediately after the Constitution was promulgated, few of its principles were more strongly defended than the idea that episcopal conferences were to exercise real authority over the use of the vernacular in general and the process of translation in particular. We saw this in the initial controversy over the confirmation of translations that erupted after the first version of *Sacram Liturgiam* was published. We also saw it in the three instructions, each of which provided a broader scope of authority to the conferences to extend the use of the vernacular. Even toward the end of the decade, when concerns about liturgical abuse were increasing, the final instruction from this period-- *Liturgicae Instaurationes*—made clear that its aim is to assist the local bishops in curbing the abuses.

It is true that the Holy See expressed itself on multiple occasions about the norms that were to be used in preparing translations. The fact that so much effort was put into the development of a document like *Comme le prévoit* strongly suggests that the Holy See did not see the confirmation process as purely procedural. The document is clearly intended, however, to give a significant degree of flexibility to the episcopal conferences and their chosen translators.

The Holy See also exercised restraint during the process of translating the 1970 Missal. The CDW did recommend revisions to ICEL's initial translation of the Roman Canon. It did not, however, deny confirmation to the final version of the Missal (now divided into a "Sacramentary" and "Lectionary"), despite the controversies that emerged over some of its elements.

The pontificate of John Paul II was associated with a much more vigorous exercise of papal authority in this area. The 1983 Code of Canon Law, in speaking of the authority of the Holy See, used the term "review" rather than the phrase "approve, that is confirm" that had been used in the Constitution and the post-conciliar instructions. Over time, progressively less deference was given to the decisions of the episcopal conferences. By the late 1990s, the Congregation for Divine Worship was regularly refusing to confirm key decisions of the conferences and was seeking more authority over ICEL itself. In 2001, the CDW issued a new instruction, *Liturgiam authenticam*, which imposed new requirements on "mixed commissions" such as ICEL. In 2002, the Congregation rejected ICEL Sacramentary and demanded extensive revisions. The contrast of this period with the period initially after the Council is quite striking.

With respect to the content of the translations, we see a similar shift. The 1969 document *Comme le prévoit* recommended an approach to translation that has often been termed "dynamic equivalence." This approach focuses on communicating the underlying meaning of a text rather than offering a literal translation of it. It suggested that a literal translation of the Latin was inadvisable in some cases and stated that the composition of new texts would be necessary to support the goals of liturgical reform. *Comme le prévoit* strongly emphasized the Constitution's call for adapting the liturgy to culture (SC 38).

Here, again, the pontificate of John Paul II ultimately brought about a significant change in approach. The Pope's 1988 Apostolic Letter *Vicesimus Quintus Annus* suggested an increased level of concern on the part of the Holy See about translations of the liturgical books. During the 1990s, the

Congregation for Divine Worship offered comments on a number of ICEL texts that indicated that it was moving away from dynamic equivalence in favor of a more literal approach. This movement was decisively confirmed with the promulgation of *Liturgiam authenticam*. Whereas *Comme le prévoit* had emphasized those elements of the Constitution on the Liturgy dealing with inculturation, the authors of *Liturgiam authenticam* took their bearings from a different part of Article 38, the sentence dealing with the need to preserve the “substantial unity” of the Roman Rite. This concern also animated the Congregation’s concern with the use of originally composed texts.

Having reviewed this history, we are forced to ask why these marked changes in papal and curial policy took place. Were they, as ICEL’s critics have suggested, a necessary corrective to misreadings of the Constitution that took hold in the wake of the Council? Or is it the Congregation for Divine Worship that has distorted the Constitution, abrogating through curial fiat norms that were clearly established by the Council Fathers? Or does the truth lie somewhere in between and, if so, where? Answering this question will be the task of the final chapter.