

The Revised Grail Psalter

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In 1963, William Collins first published the *Psalms*, an English translation of the French *Jerusalem Bible Psalter*. That psalter had originally been produced by a team that included the Jesuit liturgist-musician Joseph Gelineau, and Gelineau's psalm settings had been composed at the same time, in the 1950s. The idea behind the French translation was to produce a psalter which, as well as being faithful to the meaning of the Hebrew text, also reproduced the rhythmic characteristics of the Hebrew, a kind of sprung rhythm. The English translators attempted to do the same thing, with considerable success. As a result, Gelineau's "pulsed" tones, designed for use with the French version, can be easily used with the English translation. This small paperback has never been out of print since its first publication, though the cover has changed.

The translation had been produced under the auspices of the Ladies of the Grail (for many years based in Pinner, Middlesex, and now in Winchester) — hence the name "Grail Psalms". The community not only participated in the translation work but have benefitted from royalty income from the translation over the years.

Hot on the heels of that paperback came another one: the "Singing Version", masterminded by Dom A. Gregory Murray, in which he made a few minor alterations to the text which he thought improved the flow. Published by Fontana Books (then the paperback division of Collins) in 1966, this book also included in an appendix the melodies of all the Gelineau tones, with indications in the main text for which tone was used with which psalm. The text itself was pointed with accents to show where to change note in the tones.

The Grail Psalms were described as "a new translation", though they were not entirely new. The Grail had already published three collections of Gelineau's music settings with English texts, and these had already found their way into Catholic parishes and schools from 1955 onwards, though at this time, with the Latin Tridentine Missal still in use, they could not be used at Mass. They included antiphons by a number of English composers — as well as Gelineau himself, Dom Gregory Murray, Clifford Howell SJ, Guy Weitz and others — following the French example where a team of composers had provided antiphon settings. People were therefore already somewhat familiar with the texts of 74 of the psalms, and the Collins 1963 paperback now provided them with the remainder as well.

Within a few years of Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, a substantial selection of Gelineau psalms and antiphons appeared in the back of this country's first post-conciliar hymnbook designed for a vernacular Mass liturgy: *Praise the Lord* (1966). Before long, in the USA the hymnbook *Worship* had followed this example, and in fact the current edition of that book still contains a considerable number of Gelineau psalms, for the Americans have used them much more extensively than we ever did in the UK, even though their Lectionary psalm translation is from the North American Bible. By contrast, the 1972 revised and enlarged edition of *Praise the Lord* included only a few examples of Gelineau psalms — we had already moved on to other more user-friendly models using psalm tones by Laurence Bévenot, Gregory Murray

and many others, which use reciting note + termination rather than Gelineau's pulsed variety. When Geoffrey Boulton Smith came to compile his *Responsorial Psalm Book* (1980), he included a number of Gelineau psalm tones among the settings, something which was thought at the time to be rather old-fashioned!

When the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* was published in Rome in 1969, this first version of the Grail psalter, now known as **Grail I** for reasons which will become clear shortly, was selected for use as the translation for the Responsorial Psalms in the new *Lectionary*, published in the UK in 1970 (in two editions — Jerusalem Bible and RSV — with the same psalms in both). This is still the psalm translation in use in the UK and Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa today (the RSV edition disappeared in the aftermath of the publication of a new edition of the Lectionary in Rome in 1981). Grail I was also selected for use in the UK interim breviary entitled *The Prayer of the Church* (1970 — a translation of the French *La Prière du Temps Présent*), superseded in 1974 by *The Divine Office* (1974) which is still the official breviary for the UK, Ireland, and many other countries. The US equivalent (*Liturgy of the Hours*, 1975) also made use of Grail I, though with a considerable number of unacknowledged modifications.

The text of Grail I, then, has moulded the spirituality of generations of post-conciliar clergy and laity over five decades and has become part of the fabric of our prayer-lives.

One significant drawback became apparent in the second half of the 1970s, when a desire to use inclusive language in liturgical texts became an issue. This prompted the American publisher GIA, exclusive US agents for the Grail, to issue an inclusive language version in 1983. Known as **Grail II**, it was produced by two members of the team who had done the original 1963 translation. It removed all "horizontal" gender references (*man, mortal man, sons of men, fathers, brothers, etc*) and made other modifications including changing some references to God from third person to second person in order to avoid the use of the masculine pronouns *he, his, etc*, for God.

The Grail II version proved too strong for some stomachs and never achieved widespread acceptance. In addition, in 1990 the US Bishops issued guidelines for inclusive language and also subsequently approved a revised translation of their own North American Bible. GIA therefore commissioned an adaptation of Grail II, which appeared in 1993. It has been described as a "moderately inclusive" version of Grail I, but in fact it does what Grail II tried to do but rather better. The work was done by Augustinian scripture scholar Dianne Bergant, assisted by Passionist father Carroll Stuhlmüller and Robert Batastini of GIA. This version is known as **Grail III**, and is used in a number of hymnbooks and also in Liturgical Press's *Psallite* project. It is rather more palatable than Grail I from an inclusive-language perspective, but can occasionally be a little erratic in the application of its principles for revision. It received an *imprimatur* from the President of the US Catholic Conference of Bishops in September 1993, and is still in print in the UK as an inclusive language version dated 2004.

As early as 2004, Abbot Gregory Polan OSB of Conception Abbey, Missouri, at the request of the US Bishops and with the approval of the Ladies of the Grail, was working on yet another revision of Grail I, this time taking into account the principles enunciated in the controversial Vatican instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* (2001). Abbot Gregory is a scripture scholar, and he

and his team of monks went back to the Hebrew text of the psalms in order to render the translation more literally correct. In some instances Grail I had sacrificed accuracy for singability, and the translators had not taken account of the new Latin Vulgate translation in their work. Abbot Gregory's work proceeded over several years, in the course of which he travelled around the world seeking the help of various consultants (I spent a day with him at Worth Abbey in 2005 working through the first 40 psalms). He was also liaising with the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments in Rome, who proved difficult to work with, partly because of their lack of scholarship and partly because of a lack of understanding of the principles on which Abbot Gregory was working. (This was not the first time that the Congregation had failed to understand such matters: for years they had argued with the owners and translators responsible for the NRSV translation of scripture, generally recognised by scripture scholars to be the best version currently available. In the end the NRSV people gave up, and so a translation of scripture for a new English-speaking Lectionary is still to be found. With the removal of some CDW personnel in 2014, this may now once again prove possible.)

As well as a text, Abbot Gregory in the early stages also produced an *apparatus criticus* containing a version of Grail I showing the changes made, and textual notes explaining the rationale for every single change. Finally, after years of delicate back-and-forth negotiations with the Congregation, Abbot Gregory reached the conclusion of his labours, having achieved a version that was both scripturally correct and acceptable to the CDW. It would henceforth be known as **Grail IV**. That version was made available to a limited circle of consultants and others in November 2008 when it was sent off to Rome for the CDW's *recognitio*, which everyone assumed would be a simple formality. In the meantime, Rome gave permission to the Bishops of Kenya to incorporate Grail IV into their Divine Office, and that has now been extended to all the African conferences of bishops. Composers started to think about the new version.

In the fullness of time the *recognitio* was received in the USA, dated March 2010, accompanied by a text. To the consternation of Abbot Gregory and everyone else, this text proved to have been altered from the 2008 version sent to Rome. It contained well over 100 textual changes, but it took time to find them all because the CDW did not provide a list of the changes it had made to the "final" text. This 2010 version, "Revised Grail Psalms", henceforth to be known as **RGP**, was finally published at the beginning of 2011 in both pointed and un-pointed versions by GIA, who are now the exclusive publisher of the translation. They also issued a version that included the US ICEL Lectionary responses (not the same as the Lectionary responses used in the UK and Ireland) in anticipation of the US Bishops' approval of the psalm texts for liturgical use, which was promptly forthcoming. That approval meant that, although RGP does not yet appear in any published Lectionary, it can be used at Mass in the USA. Composers immediately set to work, producing a substantial number of settings over nearly four years at the time of writing. (The current author has completed a number himself, mostly commissioned by American parishes, but none have yet been published.) American publishers have been issuing quantities of printed collections and recordings.

It appears that Rome's plan is for the RGP eventually to become the approved liturgical psalter for all liturgical books throughout the English-speaking world. As further evidence for this,

when the final text of the English translation of the 3rd Edition of the Roman Missal came back from Rome in 2010 (with not just hundreds but thousands of changes), it was noticed (first spotted by the present author) that wherever an entrance or communion antiphon used an actual psalm verse or verses, these had been changed to accord with the RGP translation.

This, however, is not the end of the story. In the middle of 2014 rumours started to circulate that the US Bishops were unhappy with RGP and wanted to reverse the changes introduced by the CDW and revert to the version of Grail IV which Abbot Gregory thought he had originally agreed with the Congregation in 2008. It was said that Rome, and more especially Archbishop Arthur Roche, would be sympathetic to such a request from the Conference. Accordingly, at their November 2014 meeting, the US Bishops did indeed approve such a motion. At the time of writing it was not known whether the bishops have asked for further changes to the psalter *in addition to* those introduced by the CDW. [See end of following paragraph for updated information on this.] It is known, for example, that the Bishops of England and Wales are unhappy with some aspects of RGP, especially rhythmical ones. We will examine some of these problems below. The US Bishops' official press release states: "The bishops also voted 167-34-2 to approve modifications to the 'Revised Grail Psalter' including improving the translation to facilitate easier proclamation and singing."

So, assuming that Rome grants *recognitio* to the US Bishops' changes, whatever they may prove to be, several major questions arise. Will all other countries already using RGP have to adopt the same changes (they have not modified Grail IV and probably cannot afford to)? Will other countries contemplating using RGP have to adopt the American revisions? Can other Conferences ask for different changes? Or will the English-speaking conferences work together on this (unlikely!)? Will psalmic antiphons in the latest Roman Missal also need to be amended (seems logical)? How will we know when we have really reached a final psalm text? [Since this article was written, it has been learned that the US Bishops' modifications would actually go further than simply reversing the CDW's changes to the 2008 version, but no details of the changes have yet been released.]

What all of this does is render the work of composers and publishers over the past three years subject to possible textual amendment, and both composers and publishers are therefore now in limbo until the situation becomes clearer. And as well as publishing large quantities of psalm settings, some composers and publishers have already started issuing settings and recordings of the Missal antiphons, so these too may be in jeopardy and have to be redone.

After that brief historical overview, let us now examine some of the characteristics of RGP, as it stands at present.

First of all, how different is RGP from Grail I? There are several ways of looking at this. One would be the *number of lines* that contain changes. The median score is 60%, which means that on average only 4 out of 10 lines remain unaltered. Often the changes are only slight, which means less discomfiture than a 60% figure might indicate. Some psalms have many changes — as much as 90+% of lines with one or more changes, while others have far fewer — as little as

30% of lines with one or more changes. There are no psalms with no changes at all. (Of course, a better indicator might be the percentage of *words* that are different, but who has time to do that?!)

Secondly, the arrangement of lines into stanzas can be different. For example, in Psalm 1, instead of Grail I's 3x6-line stanzas, the 18 lines are re-distributed in RGP into 6+5+3+4 lines. An additional consideration is those places where an extra line has been inserted (quite a lot) or omitted (rather less), or words have been transposed from one line to another. In about a dozen instances Grail I moved a line from one point in the psalm to another in an attempt to restore what was presumed to be the original order. RGP undoes all those transpositions too.

Thirdly, the psalter uses the Hebrew numbering, which most of the time is one higher than the Septuagint numbering that we currently use. So Psalm 22, *The Lord is my shepherd*, is Psalm 23. Here is a useful chart (Fig 1):

Fig 1

<i>Greek Septuagint and New Latin Vulgate Numbering</i>	<i>Hebrew Numbering</i>
1-8	1-8
9	9 and 10
10-112	11-113
113	114 and 115
114	116:1-9
115	116:10-19
116-145	117-146
146	147:1-11
147	147:12-20
148-150	148-150

Probably the major change that will be noticed by everyone is the many rhythmic differences between RGP and Grail I. In Grail I, the sprung rhythm would have 2, 3 or 4 subsidiary syllables between each main accent. In general, RGP is much wordier than Grail I, with many more subsidiary syllables between main accents. Occasionally there can be as many as 5 or even 6 subsidiary syllables, and although this does not happen frequently, it happens often enough to be uncomfortable. Where large numbers of subsidiary syllables occur at the beginning of a line, before the first main accent, they present a real problem, and this is a fairly frequent occurrence. Sometimes, perversely, the number of syllables/stresses in an individual line is smaller than in Grail I — often the line affected is an additional line which was not in Grail I.

Fig 2 — additional syllables

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 4</i> ³ O men, how long will your hearts be closed, will you love what is futile and seek what is false?</p> <p><i>Ps 116</i> ¹ Alleluia!</p> <p>O praise the Lord, all you nations, acclaim him all you peoples!</p> <p>² Strong is his love for us; he is faithful for ever.</p>	<p><i>Ps 4</i> ³ Children of man, how long will my glory be dishonored, will you love what is futile and seek what is false?</p> <p><i>Ps 117</i> ¹ O praise the LORD, all you nations; acclaim him, all you peoples!</p> <p>² For his merciful love has prevailed over us; and the LORD's faithfulness endures forever.</p> <p>Alleluia!</p>

Fig 3 — fewer syllables

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 21</i> ¹² Do not leave me alone in my distress; Come close, there is none else to help.</p>	<p><i>Ps 22</i> ¹² Stay not far from me; trouble is near, and there is no one to help.</p>

Fig 4 — stress pattern wrecked

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 26</i> ¹¹ Instruct me, Lord, in your way; on an even path lead me. When they lie in ambush ¹² protect me from my enemy's greed. False witnesses rise against me, breathing out fury.</p>	<p><i>Ps 27</i> ¹¹ Instruct me, LORD, in your way; on an even path lead me because of my enemies. ¹² Do not leave me to the will of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, and they breathe out violence.</p>

The reason that all this has happened is very simple: Conception Abbey had never used the Gelineau tones to sing the text of Grail I, so they had no concept of what Grail I feels like rhythmically. Instead, they use their own (rather bland) reciting note + termination psalm tones. This, more than anything else, is responsible for the alien rhythmic feel of the new translation. It is very easy to misunderstand the stresses in a line if you never use pulsed tones. It is in fact quite difficult to use Gelineau tones with many of the psalms in their new version. In my working session with him, I had to explain to Abbot Gregory that if he made one particular change to *The Lord is my shepherd*, this would mean that nobody would be able to use Gelineau's tone anymore. This was news to him, as he was not familiar with it! Although he took my point on board, the final version not only contains that amended line (³ *he revives my soul*) but several others which make it impossible to use the Gelineau setting. (See Fig 13, below.) There are many

other examples where the number of stresses in a line is inconsistent, either more stresses than usual or occasionally fewer.

Fig 5

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 117</i> ¹ Alleluia!</p> <p>Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end. *</p> <p>² Let the sons of Israel say: “His love has no end.” **</p> <p>³ Let the sons of Aaron say: “His love has no end.” **</p> <p>* <i>Singing Version (1966):</i> for his love endures for ever.</p> <p>** <i>Singing Version (1966):</i> ‘His love endures for ever.’</p> <p>¹⁰ The nations all encompassed me; in the Lord’s name I crushed them.</p> <p>¹¹ They compassed me, compassed me about; in the Lord’s name I crushed them.</p> <p>¹² They compassed me about like bees; they blazed like a fire among thorns. In the Lord’s name I crushed them.</p>	<p><i>Ps 118</i></p> <p>¹ Give praise to the LORD, for he is good; his mercy endures forever.</p> <p>² Let the house of Israel say, “His mercy endures forever.”</p> <p>³ Let the house of Aaron say, “His mercy endures forever.”</p> <p>¹⁰ The nations all encircled me; in the name of the LORD I cut them off.</p> <p>¹¹ They encircled me all around; in the name of the LORD I cut them off.</p> <p>¹² They encircled me about like bees; they blazed like a fire among thorns. In the name of the LORD I cut them off.</p>

Another set of problems have to do with words and idioms. American English and British English are not the same. Thus in Psalm 33:6 Grail I has *Look towards him and be radiant*. RGP’s Psalm 34:6 has *Look toward him and be radiant* with no ‘s’. It may be only a small point, but it will feel unnatural. A rather more noticeable example would be Psalm 46:3 in Grail I: *For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear*. Psalm 47:3 in RGP gives *For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome* which will simply make British people laugh.

A small selection of further bizarre examples that will make also people laugh, or cringe, or not understand:

- 25:14a *The LORD’s secret is for those who fear him*
[Grail I, 24:14a *The Lord’s friendship is for those who revere him*]
- 27:4e-f *to gaze on the beauty of the LORD,*
to inquire at his temple.
[Grail I, 26:4e-f *to savour the sweetness of the Lord,*
to behold his temple.]
- 116B:11 *And when I said in my alarm,*
“These people are all liars.”

[Grail I, 115:11 *And when I said in my alarm:*
“No man can be trusted.”]

Systematic changes in RGP include:

transgressions replaces *offences* throughout

O LORD replaces *Lord* throughout and *O LORD, my God* replaces *Lord God* throughout, with some consequent rhythmic difficulties

my soul often replaces *I* or *me*

American usage is to spell *for ever* as one word: *forever*

Following recent publishing practice, the translated tetragrammaton (YHVH) is printed as LORD with capitals and small capitals. This had already happened in Grail III and is continued in printed versions of RGP (curiously, the digital versions have upper and lower case). Some will appreciate the change, others will object to the “noise factor” bringing the reader up short.

Clearly a lot of the changes have been made to bring the English closer to the Hebrew, following *Liturgiam Authenticam’s* insistence on formal equivalence (literal translation) instead of dynamic equivalence (translating the units of meaning), and it has to be said that in an average of 13 instances per 10 psalms the revision has made additional changes which are actually improvements on Grail I. Against that must be set an average of 12 instances per 10 psalms where word changes have been made which seem unnecessary and even perverse.

Fig 6 — improvements

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<i>Ps 4</i> 8 You have put into my heart a greater joy than they have from abundance of corn and new wine.	<i>Ps 4</i> 8 You have put into my heart a greater joy than abundance of grain and new wine can provide.
<i>Ps 21</i> 7 But I am a worm and no man, the butt of men, laughing-stock of the people	<i>Ps 22</i> 7 But I am a worm and no man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

Fig 7 — unnecessary word changes

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<i>Ps 18:10cd</i> The decrees of the Lord are truth and all of them just.	<i>Ps 19:10cd</i> The judgments of the LORD are true; they are, all of them, just.
<i>Ps 24 — second line</i> 18 See my affliction and my toil and take all my sins away.	<i>Ps 25 — second line</i> 18 See my lowliness and suffering, and take away all my sins.

Some further examples of different kinds of changes and difficulties.

Fig 8

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 41</i> ⁵ These things will I remember as I pour out my soul: how I would lead the rejoicing crowd into the house of God, amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving, the throng wild with joy.</p>	<p><i>Ps 42</i> ⁵ These things will I remember as I pour out my soul: For I would go to the place of your wondrous tent, all the way to the house of God, amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving, the throng keeping joyful festival.</p>

Fig 9

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 62</i> ² O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water. ³ So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory. ⁴ For your love is better than life, my lips will speak your praise. ⁵ So I will bless you all my life, in your name I will lift up my hands. ⁶ My soul shall be filled as with a banquet, my mouth shall praise you with joy. ⁷ On my bed I remember you. On you I muse through the night ⁸ for you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice. ⁹ My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.</p>	<p><i>Ps 63</i> ² O God, you are my God; at dawn I seek you; for you my soul is thirsting. For you my flesh is pining, like a dry, weary land without water. ³ I have come before you in the sanctuary, to behold your strength and your glory. ⁴ Your loving mercy is better than life; my lips will speak your praise. ⁵ I will bless you all my life; in your name I will lift up my hands. ⁶ My soul shall be filled as with a banquet; with joyful lips, my mouth shall praise you. ⁷ When I remember you upon my bed, I muse on you through the watches of the night. ⁸ For you have been my strength; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice. ⁹ My soul clings fast to you; your right hand upholds me.</p>

Fig 10

Grail I (1963)	RGP (2010)
<p><i>Ps 97</i></p> <p>¹ Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation.</p> <p>² The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations.</p> <p>³ He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel.</p> <p>All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.</p> <p>⁴ Shout to the Lord, all the earth, ring out your joy.</p> <p>⁵ Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp with the sound of music.</p> <p>⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord.</p>	<p><i>Ps 98</i></p> <p>¹ <i>A Psalm.</i></p> <p>O sing a new song to the LORD, for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation.</p> <p>² The LORD has made known his salvation, has shown his deliverance to the nations.</p> <p>³ He has remembered his merciful love and his truth for the house of Israel.</p> <p>All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.</p> <p>⁴ Shout to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song, and sing out your praise.</p> <p>⁵ Sing psalms to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of song.</p> <p>⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn, raise a shout before the King, the LORD.</p>

Fig 11 — Ps 11:11-17

Grail I (1963)	Grail II (1983)	Grail III (1993)
<p>¹¹ God is the shield that protects me, who saves the upright of heart.</p> <p>¹² God is a just judge slow to anger; but he threatens the wicked every day,</p> <p>¹³ men who will not repent. * * *</p> <p>God will sharpen his sword; he has braced his bow and taken aim.</p> <p>¹⁴ For them he has prepared deadly weapons; he barbs his arrows with fire.</p> <p>¹⁵ Here is one who is pregnant with malice, conceives evil and brings forth lies.</p> <p>¹⁶ He digs a pitfall, digs it deep; and in the trap he has made he will fall.</p> <p>¹⁷ His malice will recoil on himself; on his own head his violence will fall.</p>	<p>¹¹ God is the shield that protects me, who saves the upright of heart.</p> <p>¹² God is a just judge slow to anger; but he threatens the wicked every day,</p> <p>¹³ all those who will not repent. * * * * *</p> <p>God will sharpen his sword; he has braced his bow and taken aim.</p> <p>¹⁴ For them he has prepared deadly weapons; he barbs his arrows with fire.</p> <p>¹⁵ Here are enemies pregnant with malice, who conceive evil and bring forth lies.</p> <p>¹⁶ They dig a pitfall, dig it deep; and in the trap they have made they will fall.</p> <p>¹⁷ Their malice will recoil on themselves; on their own heads their violence will fall.</p>	<p>¹¹ God is the shield that protects me, who saves the upright of heart.</p> <p>¹² God is a just judge slow to anger; but threatening the wicked every day,</p> <p>¹³ all those who will not repent. * * * * *</p> <p>God will sharpen his sword; bend the bow and take aim.</p> <p>¹⁴ For them God prepared deadly weapons; arrows barbed with fire.</p> <p>¹⁵ Here are enemies pregnant with malice, who conceive evil and bring forth lies.</p> <p>¹⁶ They dig a pitfall, dig it deep; and in the trap they have made they will fall.</p> <p>¹⁷ Their malice will recoil on themselves; on their own heads their violence will fall.</p>
<p>Grail IV (2005 draft)</p>	<p>Grail IV (Nov 2008 final text) and RGP (2010)</p>	
<p>¹¹ God is a shield before me, who saves the upright of heart.</p> <p>¹² A righteous judge is God, and a God who threatens every day.</p> <p>¹³ If one does not repent, God will sharpen his sword; he bends his bow and takes aim.</p> <p>¹⁴ For him he has prepared deadly weapons; he barbs his arrows with fire.</p> <p>¹⁵ Here is one who conceives</p>	<p>¹¹ God is a shield before me, who saves the upright of heart.</p> <p>¹² God is a judge, just and powerful and patient, not exercising anger every day.</p> <p>¹³ Against someone who does not repent, God will sharpen his sword; he bends his bow and makes ready.</p> <p>¹⁴ For such a one he prepares deadly weapons; he barbs his arrows with fire.</p> <p>¹⁵ Here is one who conceives</p>	

<p>iniquity; pregnant with malice, he gives birth to lies.</p> <p>¹⁶ He digs a pitfall, and bores it deep; and in the trap he has made he will fall.</p> <p>¹⁷ His malice will recoil on his head; on the crown of his own head his violence will fall.</p>	<p>iniquity; pregnant with malice, he gives birth to lies.</p> <p>¹⁶ He digs a pit and bores it deep; and in the trap he has made he falls.</p> <p>¹⁷ His malice recoils on his head; on his own skull his violence falls.</p>	
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Fig 12 — Ps 1

Grail I / II / III (1963 / 1983 / 1993)	Grail IV (March 2005 draft)	Grail IV (Nov 2008 final text)	RGP (March 2010)
<p>⁵ When the wicked are judged they shall not stand, nor find room among those who are just;</p> <p>⁶ for the Lord guards the way of the just but the way of the wicked leads to doom.</p>	<p>⁵ When the wicked are judged they shall not stand, nor will sinners in the council of the righteous;</p> <p>⁶ the LORD is mindful of the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.</p>	<p>⁵ When the wícked are júdged they shall not rise, nor shall sínners in the cóuncil of the ríghteous;</p> <p>⁶ for the LORD knóws the wáy of the ríghteous, but the wáy of the wícked will pérish.</p>	<p>⁵ When the wicked are judged they shall not rise, nor shall sinners in the council of the just;</p> <p>⁶ for the LORD knows the way of the just, but the way of the wicked will perish.</p>

Finally, a comparison of the whole of Ps 22/23 (Fig 13).

Fig 13 — Ps 22(23)

Grail I (1963) / Grail II (1983)	Grail III (1993)	Grail IV (2005 draft)	Grail IV (Nov 2008) / RGP (2010)
<p>¹ The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.</p> <p>² Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me,</p> <p>³ to revive my drooping spirit.</p> <p>He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.</p> <p>⁴ If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.</p> <p>⁵ You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.</p> <p>⁶ Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.</p>	<p>¹ LORD, you are my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.</p> <p>² Fresh and green are the pastures where you give me repose. Near restful waters you lead me,</p> <p>³ to revive my drooping spirit.</p> <p>You guide me along the right path; You are true to your name.</p> <p>⁴ If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.</p> <p>⁵ You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.</p> <p>⁶ Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the LORD's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.</p>	<p>¹ My shepherd is the LORD; there is nothing I shall want.</p> <p>² Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me,</p> <p>³ he revives my soul.</p> <p>He guides me along the right path, for the sake of his name.</p> <p>⁴ If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.</p> <p>⁵ You have prepared a table before me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.</p> <p>⁶ Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the LORD'S own house shall I dwell for length of days, [unending].</p>	<p>¹ <i>A Psalm of David.</i></p> <p>The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.</p> <p>² Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me;</p> <p>³ he revives my soul.</p> <p>He guides me along the right path, for the sake of his name.</p> <p>⁴ Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death, no evil would I fear, for you are with me. Your crook and your staff will give me comfort.</p> <p>⁵ You have prepared a table before me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.</p> <p>⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. In the LORD's own house shall I dwell for length of days unending.</p>

It seems that we still have some way to go before we reach a psalm translation which is acceptable to all parties. In the meantime, other rumours on the grapevine say that the Bishops of England and Wales would be quite happy to continue to use Grail I, rather than switching to a version of RGP. I respectfully suggest that they might also take a look at the possibility of using a cleaned-up version of Grail III.

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