

# A funny thing happened on the way to the 2010 Received Text by Xavier Rindfleisch

## Introduction

By a decree dated March 25, 2010 (Prot. 269/10/L) signed by Cardinal Antonio Cañizares Llovera, Prefect, and Archbishop J. Augustine DiNoia, OP, Secretary to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the Holy See confirmed that the *recognitio* (formal, official approval) had been granted to the revised English translation of the *Missale Romanum (editio typica tertia)*. Photos accompanying the story showed a smiling Pope Benedict XVI receiving a specially bound copy of this Missal from the *Vox Clara* Commission.

But subsequent events, rumors and leaks have prompted the question: just which translation was the Pope given?

At first, the answer seems obvious: the translation granted canonical approbation by the Bishops of the English-speaking world and submitted by them to the Holy See, right? The *Ordo Missae* had already been posted on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The chants for that translation had been posted on the website of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). At least one publishing house had produced a CD featuring an American Bishop reciting the Eucharistic Prayers in this translation, accompanied by a book with those texts.

But a surprise awaited us all. The 2008 ICEL text of the *Ordo Missae*, to which the bishops had granted their canonical approbation and the Holy See its *recognitio*, had been changed – and substantially changed! Though only the *Ordo Missae* of this 2010 translation is available online, rumors quickly spread that up to “10,000” changes had been made to the text of the entire Missal approved by the bishops.

## **Who changed the text? When? Why?**

Full disclosure: the author of this reflection is **not** a champion of the “old ICEL” of the 1974 U.S. Sacramentary **nor** of the subsequently rejected 1998 ICEL. He happily greeted the 1998 proposed ICEL Collects, Prayers Over the Offerings, Prayers After Communion and Prefaces as being, by and large, substantially more accurate and infinitely more elegant than the 1974 version. This author believes that had “the old ICEL” in their 1998 proposed translation not offered revised structures for the Introductory Rites, scores of “original texts,” inclusive language, and the already accepted ecumenical translations of the people’s parts (Gloria, Credo, Sanctus), but only a translation of the Latin, much of that Missal would have been acceptable or, at least, easily revised. So when word came that the 1998 text had been rejected and a

newer, even more faithful, more elegant translation was planned, this author, far from grieving, looked forward to what the newly-constituted ICEL would produce.

The final product, these many years later, approved by the bishops, fulfilled the promise: a precisely executed translation, taking into account virtually every nuance of the Latin text, and basing structural and vocabulary choices on a vast array of precedents in the worlds of classical, scriptural, patristic and medieval Latin. The translation is a scholarly and ecclesial *tour de force*. The Pope's words of praise in his address to the Bishops of Great Britain at Oscott College last month can fittingly be applied to it: "I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the contribution you have made, **with such painstaking care**, to the **collegial exercise of reviewing and approving** the texts" (September 19, emphasis added).

But this is not the translation that has now come down as the Received Text of 2010. This fact makes the Pope's praise of "painstaking care," not to mention "collegial exercise," sadly untrue, for whoever made the changes found in the 2010 text could not have been the Bishops of the English-speaking world.

Hence, our additional question: **Is someone trying to sabotage the reception of the new translation by making a series of changes that are sometimes gratuitous and often clumsy? And worse: changes that are mistranslations, clear violations of the directives both of *Liturgiam authenticam* and the *Ratio translationis*, and, in at least one instance, theologically erroneous?**

What follows is a "compendium" of 2010 materials, what has become known as the Received Text. Part I, Order of Mass and Part II, Some Collects have already appeared, at least in part, on this blog. Part III features Newly Leaked Texts.

## I. The Order of Mass

### Introductory Rites

The first revision made to the 2008 Order of Mass occurs in a rubric. Lest critiquing a relatively inconsequential element appear nitpicking, we suggest that the change is interesting in context: here and there throughout the 2010 text, there are odd and sometimes embarrassingly erroneous departures from accepted English usage.

The rubric states: *Episcopus, loco Dominus vobiscum, in hac prima salutatione, dicit: Pax vobis.* 2008 renders this: "In this first greeting, instead of *The Lord be with you*, a Bishop says: *Peace be with you.*" Why the 2010 change: "In this first greeting a Bishop, instead of *The Lord be with you*, says: *Peace be with you*?"

2008 represents standard English: the noun identifying the spoken text immediately precedes that text with an indication that the text is going to be changed. Then subject

and verb appear together. The 2010 Received Text separates subject from verb by a clause whose incipit, the contrast signal “instead of,” sets up a contrast of persons, not actions. The construction “a Bishop, instead of,” without a verb form, prepares for a contrast of persons, e.g. “a Bishop, instead of a priest or deacon.” To communicate a contrast of action, the text would have to be: “a Bishop, instead of saying *The Lord be with you*, says: *Peace be with you*.” Nor could this change have been introduced to approximate closer the Latin construction, as *Liturgiam authenticam* (57) directs for liturgical formulations, since 2010 transposes the Latin as much as 2008 does, but with a far less pleasing result.

Another rubric has undergone a similarly odd revision. Just before the Words of Consecration in each Eucharistic Prayer is the rubric: “Parum se inclinatur.” In 2008 (as in 1974 and 1998) this is: “He **bows** slightly.” Indeed, in Eucharistic Prayer I, before the *Supplices te rogamus*, “the rubric instructs, “*Inclinatus, iunctis manibus, prosequitur*, in both 2008 and 2010: “**Bowing**, with hands joined, he continues.” Inexplicably, in both consecrations of every Eucharistic Prayer, “He **bows** slightly” has been changed to, “He **bends** slightly.” **Bends?** Is this word ever used in a liturgical setting? One could cite, perhaps, the Anglican translation of the *Tantum ergo*, “Therefore, we before him bending,” but does not Catholic liturgical usage speak in such a case of a **profound bow**?

The first change to a spoken text occurs in the invitation to the Penitential Act. 2008 translates the Latin precisely, as *Liturgiam authenticam* directs, and pleasingly: *agnoscamus peccata nostra ut apti simus ad sacra mysteria celebranda* becomes “let us acknowledge our sins, **that** we may prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.” But 2010 changes this to: “let us acknowledge our sins, **and so** prepare ourselves.” **Ut** is **that**, not **and so**. Additionally, there is a departure from the Latin construction in the absolution “**of**” the priest (2010) which had been the absolution “**by**” the priest (2008).

The Latin: *Misereatur nostri omnipotens Deus et, dimissis peccatis nostris, perducatur nos ad vitam aeternam* is rendered in 2008, as per *Liturgiam authenticam* (57.a): “May almighty God have mercy on us and lead us, **with our sins forgiven**, to eternal life.” But 2010 takes no account of the subordinate clause in the Latin construction: “May almighty God have mercy on us, **forgive us our sins**, and bring us to everlasting life.”

Not only has *Liturgiam authenticam*'s directive that the subordinate clauses be translated into the receptor language been ignored, but “everlasting” has also been brought back from the 1974 ICEL, though elsewhere throughout the *Ordo Missae*, most notably at the Consecration, *aeterna* in its various cases is rendered “eternal.” ICEL, demonstrating that admirable precision mentioned above, explained to the bishops in 2006: “In view of the classic distinction between eternity and perpetuity, ‘everlasting’ has been replaced here by ‘eternal.’ (note 73, Order of Mass, 2006).

## Eucharistic Prayer I

As seen in [this grid comparison](#), *in primis* has been changed from “first of all” to “firstly.” This is no improvement of clarity and, in fact, an impoverishment of the pleasing rhythm of 2008: “which we offer you first of all / for your holy catholic Church.” One thinks of the tone-deafness evidenced in the revised Lectionary (1998) that, in the Pentecost Sequence, removed the “thou” of line 1 with no awareness, apparently, of how the removal of that one syllable destroyed the entire rhythm of the line, “Come, thou Holy Spirit, come!” became “Come, \_\_\_\_ Holy Spirit, come!”

The next to last line in the Memento is highly problematic: *tibique reddunt vota sua* is, in 2008, “**fulfilling their vows** to you” but, in 2010, “**paying their homage** to you.” This certainly flies in the face of *Liturgiam authenticam*’s clear directive (41), for “paying their homage” in no way corresponds to any English version of the scriptural origin of the phrase, namely Psalm 116:14, 18; Psalm 22:26; 50:14; 56:13; 61:9; 65:2; 66:13 (see note 60, Notes, *Ordo Missae*, 2006).

2008’s exact translation, “Spouse of the same Virgin” has been changed to “her Spouse.” Why such a simplification, contrary to *Liturgiam authenticam*, in the one Eucharistic Prayer that maintains most exactly the formal stylized Latin of the Roman Rite? As ICEL responded in 2006 to the U.S. Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy: “[ICEL] has for the most part avoided using ‘same’ in cases like this where ‘idem’ is semantically redundant, since such a use can seem exaggeratedly formal. Here, however, where the style is celebratory, and ‘eiusdem’ occurs twice in consecutive lines, ‘same’ has been used to enrich the diction of the passage” (see Summary of ICEL Response to USCCB Recommendations, 2006). An excellent response and rationale.

The ending of the *Communicantes* is a problematic on several counts. The Latin, *quorum meritis precibusque concedas, ut in omnibus protectionis tuae muniamur auxilio* is precisely, and quite elegantly translated by 2008 as “through their merits and prayers grant that in all things we may be defended by your protecting help.” But 2010 reads: “we ask that through their merits and prayers, in all things we may be defended by your protecting help.” Even with the comma, one could miss what ‘in all things’ modifies. Once “**grant that**” (*concedas*) is replaced by “**we ask**” (not in the Latin), the line would have to be reconstructed: “we ask that through their merits and prayers we may be defended in all things by your protecting help.” The *concedas*, referring to God’s intervention, has completely disappeared – a frequent criticism of the “old ICEL” and a violation of the *Ratio translationis* (44).

One begins to wonder if the same hand is at work in these “corrections” as in the Mass readings of the revised Lectionary (1998): this butchering of English usage: “None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself” (Romans 14:7; Funeral Rite, New Testament reading 7); the thoughtless elimination of rhyme in the Pentecost Sequence: “O most blessed Light **divine**, Shine within these hearts of **yours**.”

Why does the Received Text of 2010 return to the 1974 ICEL for the translation of *Supra quae propitio* by specifying “these offerings,” when the Latin, and 2008’s “them,” clearly refer to “the holy Bread of eternal life and the Chalice of everlasting salvation”? Or the “once” before Abel’s offering, an addition to the Latin clearly excluded by *Liturgiam authenticam* (20)?

Far worse the changes made in 2010 to *Nobis quoque peccatoribus famulis tuis*. 2008 rendered this simply, straightforwardly, accurately, elegantly: “To us also, your sinful servants,” accompanied by the striking of the breast. This beautiful construction is utterly demolished by 2010’s entirely gratuitous and utterly clumsy: “To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners.”

It seems that no word, however simple, can escape 2010's gratuitous revisions: *Per quem haec omnia, Domine, semper bona creas, sanctificas, vivificas, benedixisti, et praestas nobis.* 2008 translates *creas* as any first year Latin student would, “create.”: “Through whom you continue to create all these good things, O Lord.” But 2010 changes this to the less specific – and rhythmically less pleasing – “make.” Why? On the other hand, 2008 translates *sanctificas* as “make holy,” for the sake of the rhythm, no doubt: “you make them holy, fill them with life, bless them, and bestow them upon us.” 2010 translates the Latin literally as “sanctify,” breaking the rhythm.

For some reason, the Latin’s clear rubric *et utrumque elevans*, “and elevating both” in 2008, becomes in 2010, “and raising both.”

An extensive and detailed critique of the 2010 revision of the *Per ipsum*, a truly disastrous combination of the 1974 ICEL and the new, has already [appeared on this blog](#). The Latin: *Per ipsum, et cum ipso, et in ipso, / est tibi Deo Patri omnipotenti, / in unitate Spiritus Sancti, / omnis honor et gloria / per omnia saecula saeculorum.* 2008 is precise: “Through him, and with him, and in him, / to you, O God, almighty Father, / in the unity of the Holy Spirit, / is all honor and glory, / forever and ever.” “Deo Patri” is dative, which 2008 got right but is now lost in 2010’s sudden switch to the vocative. The *Per ipsum* occurs in every Mass, usually chanted by priests who can or will chant nothing else. Please – somebody in Rome – intervene to save this disaster from becoming cast in stone – or published in the new Missal!

## II. Some Collects

Say what you want about the ICEL staff who produced the 1998 proposed translation, their work was never “secret.” Years ago, priests involved in a project that strongly (to put it charitably) critiqued the texts ICEL was preparing, asked to examine this work-in-process. Though the ICEL staff knew full well of these priests’ negative evaluation of everything ICEL was doing, ICEL courteously provided these critics with CDs of the Sacramentary in its various drafts.

Not so, the “new ICEL.” All is done in secrecy. Therefore, the Collect texts that follow are those that have appeared in the blogosphere, posted by people who claim to have seen the Received Text. We analyze them hoping against hope that the source is mistaken, but assured that, barring a last minute intervention, these are indeed the “final version.”

### First Sunday of Advent

Da, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus,  
hanc tuis fidelibus voluntatem,  
ut, Christo tuo venienti iustis operibus occurrentes,  
eius dexteræ sociati,  
regnum mereantur possidere caeleste.  
Per Dominum.

#### 1974 ICEL:

All-powerful God,  
increase our strength of will for doing good  
that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming  
and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven,  
where he lives and reigns...

#### 1998 Projected (rejected) ICEL:

Almighty God, strengthen the resolve of your faithful people  
to prepare for the coming of your Christ  
by works of justice and mercy,  
so that when we go forth to meet him  
he may call us to sit at his right hand  
and possess the kingdom of heaven.  
We ask this.

#### 2008 text:

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that your faithful may resolve to run forth with righteous deeds,  
to meet your Christ who is coming,  
so that gathered at his right hand  
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.  
Through our Lord.

#### 2010 Received Text:

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God,  
the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ  
with righteous deeds at his coming,  
so that, gathered at his right hand,  
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.  
Through our Lord.

This Collect is almost a “case study” in the problems with the Received Text. The clear dative, which is taken care of in 2008 by an alternative, but crystal clear English construction, is completely obscured in 2010. “Grant your” just does not work as an easily recognizable dative; it needs “to.” And the object of the request is removed too far from the verb, separated by the intercessory element, “we pray,” and further by the vocative, “almighty God.” Surely it has to be “to run forth with righteous deeds” and “to meet your Christ at his coming” as in 2008. Modifying phrases and clauses are stretched and awkwardly arranged. Who are “gathered at his right hand”? Who are “they” whom we are praying “may be worthy to possess”? One wants it to be “your faithful,” of course, but the way the sentence is constructed, the antecedent seems to be the “righteous deeds” who are gathered and who possess the kingdom!

### Christmas Mass in the Night

Deus, qui hanc sacratissimam noctem veri luminis  
fecisti illustratione clarescere,  
da, quaesumus, ut, cuius in terra mysteria lucis agnovimus,  
eius quoque gaudiis perfruamur in caelo.  
Qui tecum.

1974 ICEL:

Father,  
you make this holy night radiant  
with the splendor of Jesus Christ our light.  
We welcome him as Lord, the true light of the world.  
Bring us to eternal joy in the kingdom of heaven,  
where he lives and reigns . . .

1998 Projected (rejected) ICEL:

God our Creator,  
who made this most holy night radiant  
with the splendor of the one true light,  
grant in your mercy  
that, as we celebrate on earth the mystery of that light,  
we may also rejoice in its fullness in heaven.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ...

2008 ICEL text:

O God,  
who have made this most sacred night radiant  
with the splendor of the true Light,  
grant, we pray, that we who have known  
the mysteries of his light on earth  
may also feast on his joys in heaven.  
Who lives and reigns.

2010 Received Text:

O God,  
who have made this most sacred night radiant  
with the splendor of the true Light,  
grant, we pray, that we who have known  
the mysteries of his light on earth  
may also delight in his gladness in heaven.  
Who lives and reigns with you.

To be faithful to *Liturgiam authenticam* and the *Ratio translationis*, surely *gaudiis*, the plural of *gaudium*, must be rendered as “joys.” Nor is the singular “gladness” adequate for the richness denoted by the Latin. In fact, “gladness” is just plain erroneous: it is not Jesus’ personal gladness we hope to share, his personal state of being as it were, but the joys that are Jesus’ to bestow and that will bring about our gladness. Moreover, “mysteries” (plural) which we’ve known on earth are to be matched by “joys” (plural) to be enjoyed in heaven: these Latin parallel constructions are intentional and are to be preserved in the receptor language. In this Received Text, that parallelism is lost – a frequent criticism of the 1974 ICEL!

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Protector in te sperantium, Deus, sine quo nihil est validum,  
nihil sanctum, multiplica super nos misericordiam tuam,  
ut, te rectore, te duce, sic bonis transeuntibus nunc utamur,  
ut iam possimus inhaerere mansuris.  
Per Dominum.

1974 ICEL:

God our Father and protector,  
without you nothing is holy, nothing has value.  
Guide us to everlasting life  
by helping us to use wisely  
the blessings you have given to the world.  
We ask this through our Lord...

1998 Projected (rejected) ICEL:

O God,  
protector of those who hope in you,  
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy,  
enfold us in your gracious care and mercy,  
that with you as our ruler and guide,  
we may wisely use the gifts of this passing world  
and fix our hearts even now on those which last for ever.  
We ask this through our Lord...

2008 text:

O God,  
protector of those who hope in you,  
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy,  
lavish your mercy upon us:  
with you as ruler and guide  
may we so use the good things that pass away,  
that we may even now hold fast to those that endure.  
Through our Lord.

2010 Received Text:

O God,  
protector of those who hope in you,  
without whom nothing has value,  
nothing is holy,  
bestow in abundance your mercy upon us  
and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide,  
we may use the good things that pass in such a way  
as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure.  
Through our Lord.

This is perhaps the worst translation examined thus far: a summary of all the problems evident in the Received Text. The meaning of the original Latin has been changed by a mistranslation – a mistranslation, by the way, reinstated from the 1974 ICEL! The principal meaning of *validum* is “strong,” and so it has been rendered in every English translation of this prayer since the origin of English manuals of prayer! This 2010 version manages, at the same time, to violate another of the new translation principles, to maintain the Latin sentence structure wherever possible: 2008’s “nothing is.../ nothing is...,” not 2010’s “nothing has.../nothing is...”

“Bestow in abundance your mercy upon us”: This is reminiscent of the merriment caused by literal translations of foreign languages: e.g., “Throw me down the stairs my hat.” But even *Multiplica super nos misericordiam tuam* would come out right if the revisers had followed *Liturgiam authenticam* and the *Ratio translationis* and put any “expansion” at the end: “Bestow your mercy upon us in abundance,” to communicate *multiplica*, which really is not “bestow.” Granted, 1998’s “enfold us in your gracious care and mercy” is a paraphrase, but 2008’s “lavish” is closer to *multiplica* than “bestow.” Using “bestow” for *multiplica* violates a further directive of *Liturgiam authenticam* (51) and the *Ratio translationis* by limiting the rich vocabulary of the Collects. *Liturgiam authenticam* mentions specifically words found most commonly in the Prayers after Communion, e.g. *satiari*, *sumere*, *vegetari*, and *pasci*. Samples of such prayers from the Received Text, which have surfaced here and there in the blogosphere, show that the revisers have reduced the rich variety of the Latin to variants on the single English word “nourish.”

*Liturgiam authenticam* (20) forbids the addition of elements not found in the Latin; “grant” isn’t in the Latin. If the text were translated literally, as *Liturgiam authenticam* directs, the result is something like: “that, with you as our ruler and guide.” Be in noted that even 2008 omits, as 1998 did not, the *ut* that would provide both a smooth transition in English and a translation in accord with *Liturgiam authenticam*.

Then this: “the good things that pass in such a way.” According to any standard English usage, “in such a way” belongs back with “use” and has to be translated “so use” as in 2008, because it is simply too easy to confuse what “in such a way” is modifying . . . so far removed from the verb it is (as our revisers might put it!).

1998 tried to avoid “that . . . that . . . that” which shows up in the more literal translation of 2008; but “*ever* endure”? Surely this is an unacceptable redundancy: if something *endures*, isn’t it necessarily for ever? Thus “*ever*” is unnecessary in terms of meaning, and unhelpful in terms of rhythm. Read the last line without it and the rhythm is restored.

The inattention to, or even ignorance of English style that recurs in these Collects manifests itself in further gaffes throughout 2010 texts that have come to light here and there in the blogosphere. Specifically, there are recurring errors in the agreement of the pronoun with its antecedent, and a tendency to mistakenly invert “we” and “may” in subjunctive clauses

### III. Newly Leaked Texts

Most of the above material has already appeared in various postings on *Pray Tell*. But recently, here and there in the Catholic blogosphere, snippets of texts not heretofore seen have appeared that confirm the fears of those who ardently support the 2008 translation and hope for its successful reception. The following mistranslations lead, respectively, to a change in the meaning of the Latin (with an attendant misuse of English); a loss of the liturgical context established by the Latin of the Missal; a theological imprecision (to avoid a term whose harshness presumes forethought, which we cannot imagine happened here).

#### (1) Mistranslation: Changing the Meaning of the Original Latin/Incorrect English Usage

A particularly sad example, heretofore unpublished, of the Received Text going off the rails is the Preface of Easter I. The mistranslations and incorrect English of this Preface’s conclusion are especially lamentable, since this Preface conclusion is attached to all five Easter Prefaces, the two Ascension Prefaces, and the Pentecost Preface, for a total of **eight** Prefaces, meaning that this text will be heard almost daily for **all fifty days** of the Easter Season.

Vere dignum et iustum est, aequum et salutare:  
Te quidem, Domine, omni tempore confiteri,  
sed in hac potissimum nocte (die) gloriosus praedicare,  
**cum** Pascha nostrum **immolatus est** Christus . . .

Quapropter, **profusis** paschalibus gaudiis,  
totus in orbe terrarum mundus exsultat.  
**Sed et** supernae virtutes atque angelicae potestates  
hymnum gloriae tuae concinunt, **sine fine dicentes**.

2008 text:

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
at all times to praise you, O Lord,  
but (on this night / on this day, in this **season**)  
above all to proclaim you yet more gloriously,  
**since** Christ our Passover **has been sacrificed** . . .

Therefore, **overflowing** with paschal joy,  
**the whole world** exults with your praises;  
the heavenly powers **also and** the angelic hosts  
sing together the hymn of your glory  
and acclaim without end:

2010 Received Text:

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
at all times to acclaim you, O Lord,  
but (on this night / on this day / in this **time**) above all  
to laud you yet more gloriously,  
**when** Christ our Passover **has been sacrificed** . . .

And so, **overcome** with paschal joy,  
**every land, every people** exults in your praise  
**and even** the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts,  
sing together the **unending hymn** of your glory  
as they acclaim:

- 1) Is there a term more commonly associated with the Roman Catholic liturgy, pre- or post-Vatican II, than the word “season”? Surely, “the Christmas Season,” “the Lenten Season,” the “Easter Season” are terms the Catholic faithful readily recognize. What but gratuitous whimsy could prompt the change from the two syllable (rhythmically and musically pleasing) “season” to “time”? Leave aside the fact that, in its lack of ambiguity, “time” could be taken to mean “in this time of Mass,” especially when compounded with the revisers’ next unfortunate construction: “when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.”

- 2) The latter phrase is problematic on two counts. It is to be presumed that the 2008 translators opted for “since” as a translation for *cum* to introduce a purpose clause rather than a temporal clause. Virtually every pre-Vatican II English translation renders *immolatus est* as “was sacrificed,” precisely to indicate that we are celebrating an event which took place in the past, yet is rendered sacramentally present in and through the Church’s liturgical celebration. Because of the uniqueness of the English language “was” communicates this once-for-all-but-continuing sense, whereas “has been” makes the time of this once-for-all event too specific.
- 3) No matter which verb is used, the very structure of the 2010 text is incorrect. When the clause is introduced by “since,” as in 2008, it can be separated from “night/day/season.” But once the clause is introduced by “when” (and 2010 consistently changed “when” to “on which” in the Proper *Communicantes*), it has to follow “night/day/time” immediately: “at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, / but above all to laud you yet more gloriously (on this night / on this day / in this time) / when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.”
- 4) “Laud,” though a lovely and “sacral” English word is an odd choice for *praedicare*, since it is obviously a cognate of *laudare*. “Proclaim,” on the other hand, is a standard translation for *praedicare*. It would be interesting to compare how the 2008 translators and the 2010 revisers rendered *collaudare, benedicere et praedicare* in the Preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary I. The 2010 choices *there* would help us to determine whether the translation *here* is purposeful or, once again, gratuitous.
- 5) *Profusis* is definitely and precisely “overflowing,” thus “overflowing with paschal joys.” *Profusis* simply does not mean “overcome.” This renders the text unintentionally comical: “overcome with paschal joy” has the sense of “swooning away” or even “taking to one’s couch with the vapors.” Indeed, the text could be misread as an imperative, i.e., as asking God to conquer the universe – even the angels! – with paschal joy. Finally, why the singular for *gaudiis*?
- 6) *totus in orbe terrarum mundus*, which 2008 renders simply, “the whole world” might deserve some enhancement. The pre-Vatican II Finberg-O’Connell Missal read: “Therefore it is that the whole round world exults with overflowing joy.” Perhaps the old spiritual has eliminated the possibility of something like “the whole wide world in every land,” but surely “every land, every people” cannot stand! Is this not a glaring example of the very abuse *Liturgiam authenticam* (20) inveighs against most strongly: “While it is permissible to arrange the wording, the syntax and the style in such a way as to prepare a flowing vernacular text suitable to the rhythm of popular prayer, 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.”
- 7) *Sed et* could be, as in 2008 “also and,” joining in a pleasant sounding combination “the heavenly powers” and “the angelic hosts” (Finberg-O’Connell: “the heavenly Virtues likewise, and the angelic Powers together”), but **in no way could *Set et* here be rendered as “even.”** Again, this produces an unintentional comic effect:

“**even** the heavenly Powers” rejoice at Christ’s resurrection? Even *they*? As if we wouldn’t have expected the heavenly Powers to be happy about that event, and they are rejoicing almost grudgingly, by way of exception, or in spite of their inclination, nature or better instincts. Ridiculous. No, given the frequency with which this text will occur over the course of fifty days, more than ridiculous: disastrous!

- 8) Finally, in the 2008 text, *hymnum gloriae tuae* is translated according to *Liturgiam authenticam*’s directions, “the hymn of your glory.” There simply is no Latin word for “unending” attached to “hymn.” *Sine fine*, on the other hand, literally “without end,” attaches to *dicentes*, literally “saying,” though 2008’s “acclaim” is a pleasing way to cover both “singing” and “saying” without adding to the English text parentheses that do not appear in the Latin. Read the 2008 text again, and savor its musicality (even when read): “sing together the hymn of your glory / and acclaim without end.” Now try 2010: “sing together the unending hymn of your glory / as they acclaim.” It clunks along toward an unrhythmic stop.

## (2) Mistranslation: Loss of Liturgical Context

In presenting some of the new texts of the *Ordo Missae*, attention was called to the strengthening of Scriptural references or allusions in the revised translation. For example, in translating the *Domine, non sum dignus* before Holy Communion, those who prepared the 2008 translation – “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof” – rightly pointed out the reference to the centurion’s response to Jesus in Luke 7:6-7, a reference completely lost in the 1974 version, “Lord, I am not worthy to receive you.”

Though the Neo-Vulgate is now the standard Latin Biblical text for the Catholic Church, the 2002 *Missale Romanum* has sometimes retained antiphon texts in the older Vulgate Latin, or even, as did the *Missale Romanum* 1962, older Latin versions, because of the liturgical context. This situation is provided for in *Liturgiam authenticam* (38) and in the *Ratio translationis*. When the Latin of the Missal is jettisoned for the Neo-Vulgate or an English translation based on the Hebrew text, the Church’s traditional reading of that Psalm verse within the liturgical context of feast or season is lost.

One glaring example among several is the Entrance Antiphon for Tuesday of Holy Week. This is the week in which the Lectionary readings culminate in Judas’ betrayal and set the stage for the Paschal Triduum.

Latin Original cf. Psalm 26:12 (Vulgate numbering):  
Ne **tradideris me**, Domine, in animas **persequentium** me:  
quoniam insurrexerunt in me testes iniqui,  
et mentita est iniquitas sibi.

2008 text:

**Do not hand me over**, Lord, to the will of **those who pursue** me,  
for unjust witnesses have risen against me  
and wickedness has lied to itself.

2010 Received Text:

**Do not leave me** to the will of my **foes**, O Lord,  
for false witnesses rise up against me,  
and they breathe out violence.

Note that the Communion Antiphon of this Mass, with its reference to “handing over,” intentionally “matches” the Entrance Antiphon, providing a “sung parenthesis,” as it were, around the liturgy: “God did not spare his own Son, **but handed him over** for us all.” (Romans 8:32)

That “match” and “context” are completely missed by a translation based neither on the Vulgate or Neo-Vulgate, both of which read: “**Ne tradideris me,**” **Do not hand me over** (Psalm 26:12).

Rather, the Received Text has adopted the still unpublished Revised (Conception Abbey) Grail Psalter, which the Congregation for Divine Worship and the *Vox Clara* Commission assured us would maintain or restore the Christological references in the Psalter and conform both to the Neo-Vulgate and *Liturgiam authenticam*. That clearly has not happened in this instance! And yet this Revised (Conception Abbey) Grail Psalter, already being used in the new English language *Liturgy of the Hours for Africa* (Pauline Editions), has received the Congregation's *recognitio*. How?

### (3) Mistranslation: Theological Imprecision

Our final example, from the Collect of the Holy Thursday Mass of Chrism, shows how a mistranslation introduced into the Received Text of 2010 has led to what we shall charitably term “a theological imprecision.”

Deus, qui Unigenitum Filium tuum unxisti Spiritu Sancto  
Christumque Dominum **constituisti**

1974 ICEL:

Father,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
you anointed your only Son Messiah and Lord of creation

1998 Projected (rejected) ICEL:

God of mercy,  
who anointed your only Son with the Holy Spirit  
and **appointed** him Christ and Lord

2008 text:

O God, who anointed your Only Begotten Son with the Holy Spirit and **established** him as Christ and Lord

2010 Received Text:

O God, who anointed your Only Begotten Son with the Holy Spirit and **made** him Christ and Lord

The 1974 text is ambiguous; the 1998 text, while not exact, is at least theologically correct. But the 2010 is just plain erroneous. The Only Begotten Son **was always** Christ and Lord. His baptism and the descent of (anointing with) the Holy Spirit did not “make” him these (*fecisti* would have been chosen in that case), but “constituted” him Christ and Lord. 2008’s translation of *constituisti* as “established” is precisely correct: these events at the Jordan River “confirmed” or “revealed” the reality of who Jesus already was and always had been. In fact, the 2010 text can be construed as expressing the theological error known as “Adoptionism,” the belief that Jesus is more the “adopted” Son of God than the Son of God by nature. *Genitum non factum . . . ante omnia saecula*.

## Conclusion

So, something did indeed happen on the way to the 2010 Received Text. But as even this very cursory analysis, based on only the few texts that have been allowed to be previewed or have leaked out, reveals, there really is nothing funny about it. On the contrary, how sad if, having waited so long and (at least for some of us) having defended so staunchly the project of providing an accurate and elegant English translation of the *Missale Romanum*, we were to find that someone took the 2008 text to which the bishops had given their canonical approbation and made . . . well, let’s ask them: **how many more “corrections” are there besides those that appear here? How many gaffes even more awful than the mistranslations and English misconstructions we’ve set forth here? How many more deviations from the official documents in obedience to which the 2008 translators labored so faithfully and so long?**

Let us ask those in authority in the local Churches and in Rome: **How did this happen? How did something this flawed (2010) happen to something that fine (2008)? How did it get so far, i.e., into the hands of the Pope? And what happens now?**

For surely, if the revised translation is published with the multitude of “issues” set forth here, someone with access to the 2008 translation will prepare an extensive, detailed, and undoubtedly embarrassing comparison. Thus another question: **Why not fix the problems now, before the costly and definitive work of typesetting, printing and binding begins?** Such revelations **after** publication will make an

already “tough sell,” as “the opposition” assures us this new translation will be, even more difficult, if not impossible.

Can the Congregation, excluding those responsible for the so many ill-advised “revisions” documented here, forget about face-saving and humbly correct those “revisions” in consultation with the original 2008 translators, whose Latin skills and English style are head and shoulders above the revisers, in order to guarantee the English-speaking Church that has waited so long a meticulously accurate and truly elegant translation?

Let us ask the revisers again: **Who are you? Where are you? Why did you do this? When? On whose authority?**

Do not those of us who have supported the 2008 translation have a right to know?

More importantly, do not the bishops who followed the appointed process in excruciating detail before granting their canonical approbation have a right to know whose personal judgment trumped their episcopal authority and why?

One final, supremely important, almost poignant question: **Does the Pope know what the revisers have done to the “product” and the “process,”** the great and good Pope, probably the most scholarly and liturgically astute Pontiff since his namesake Benedict XIV, Pope Benedict XVI, whom we saw in the photographs happily receiving the white leather bound Missal with gilt edges and fancy ribbons?

If he does not know, will anyone dare tell him that the Missal he received with such obvious delight was, in fact, **not** the one prepared “with painstaking care” by the bishops, whose “collegial exercise of reviewing and approving the texts” was, at some point, trumped by anonymous revisers?

Who will it be that tells him all this?

Perhaps those Bishops – perhaps only one Bishop – who, reading this and being aghast at what has happened – will set aside any fear of repercussion or unpopularity in the National Conference or in the Roman Curia, any fear of forfeiting future titles, appointments, even a red hat, and instead take seriously before God the charge of *Liturgiam authenticam* (70)? This, after all, only makes specific the obligations assumed in general at episcopal ordination: **“As regards the examination and approbation of the texts, each individual Bishop must regard this duty as a direct, solemn and personal fiduciary responsibility.”**

The Holy Father to whom you swore allegiance, the Holy People of God to whom you swore lifelong sacrificial service, and the God who searches our hearts, deserve nothing less.