

Conceiving the Translating Task – Part Two

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As I'm sure you are aware, there are a lot of materials already available and in preparation for helping priests and parishes to prepare for this change in the liturgy. What I want to do with you now is a little bit different from an immediate preparation for implementation of the missal. I sort of conceive what I'm able to offer to you, from the perspective that I worked on, is more the theological background that stood behind this task, the reason why the Church has made this decision for the change, and also, I would say, I tried to share some of the complexity of the question, what we're dealing with in dealing with the Roman Missal and this ancient liturgical book of prayer, is a treasure developed during thousands of years, and it takes a lot of technical theological knowledge to deal with it in a competent way, and I've tried to share that with you in part.

One of the criticisms that I've heard of the new text is that this is undoing what the reforms of Vatican II have established – that in its spirit, it's a move backwards. I would share with you that I think it's just the opposite. The council, in its decree to celebrate the liturgy in vernacular languages, really hoped that the depth of the Latin missal could be made available to people in their own language. And I want to suggest to you that this time in the Church, despite all the difficulties that may be involved in implementing the new translation, is an occasion for us to deepen, in a whole new wave of effort, the intentions of the council in rendering the liturgy available in the vernacular. I think that it is very definitely reaching more deeply what the council intended by trying to make these rich texts available.

I suggested to you that that is going to be more work on the part of the priests, and more work on the part of the people. A better word for that is renewal. And I'm suggesting that this is a time of renewal for us all. For priests, it's a real opportunity for spiritual renewal in understanding each of the prayers that you will pray for the people as presider at the liturgy. In the examples I'll share with you, I want to offer some clues of how that work will be undertaken – how you would, in a sense, sit down and prepare for the celebration of Mass by a much deeper penetration of the nature of the prayers that we're praying.

I think that one of the most moving moments in the ordination of a priest is after the ordination, and after the priest has been vested, and then he comes before the bishop

again, and receives from the bishop's hands the bread and the wine with which the mysteries will be celebrated. The bishop says to the priest, something to this effect (I don't have it exactly memorized) – "Receive from the holy people of God the gifts to be offered at the altar." Know what you are doing, and imitate the mysteries you celebrate. And, priest to priest, I want to suggest that that's really the opportunity before us, and the work before us: know what you are doing, and imitate the mysteries you celebrate.

Some examples. I said yesterday that one of the things that will come out more clearly for us in the new translation are what technically are known as the rhetorical forms of the different prayers. By rhetorical forms, what is meant is something like, well... a sonnet is a rhetorical form. It has its rules; there are so many lines, and rhymes in its places. Well, each of the different prayers of the Mass has a specific rhetorical form, and I want to introduce you to some of those rhetorical forms, which will help you first of all as a priest to know how this prayer is meant to work because of the way it's structured, and consequently, hopefully, to pray it to greater effect.

I want to give you examples of the rhetorical forms of the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, the prayer after communion, and the prefaces, and I'll finish with part of the Eucharistic prayer. What I intend to do is to hear the old prayer, the prayer in the version we're using now, and the new prayer. An hour of this will not do it. But this is the kind of work that I think needs to be done, and can be done through the years, as I suggested – this isn't just done all at once. This is going to be the Church's language for years to come, and it will deepen, and deepen, and deepen in us.

First of all, for collects, what is the rhetorical form of a collect? There are basically two types of collects that occur, beginning in this way. First of all, an address to God, followed by "who": "O God, who..." did something, in the past. This "O God, who" remembers the wonderful deeds of God in the past, and then in its second step, based in that, says, "grant that..." such and such may happen now. That's a form. Very clear. And the form is based on... we are addressing God, who is remembered by us for what he has done. It's a naming of God that acknowledges that we know him as the God who has done this. And since that's the God we're talking to, we dare to ask now for our present, the following. And it concludes by "through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son," with the rest. You could say technically the rhetorical form is anamnesis, epiclesis, doxology. That is, remembering the past – anamnesis, epiclesis – asking for something now, doxology – the Trinitarian finish. That's one of the forms of the collects. The other form does not begin "O God, who" but just addresses God immediately by some title, usually "Almighty God," "Compassionate God," some title of God and immediately asks "Grant, we pray." And those two different kinds of rhetorical forms are used throughout the missal, in every opening prayer, but one or the other type tends to occur in a particular season or another.

For example, let's take some examples of the "O God, who" forms. They show up especially on solemnities, because we will remember the solemnity. Let's go for the Christmas midnight Mass. The present prayer of the Christmas midnight Mass reads like this:

Father, you made 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 with you and the Holy Spirit...."

"Father," it begins, which as I suggested to you, is not in the Latin – none of the opening prayers begin with this title. But this prayer is a direct statement. "Father, you made this holy night radiant with the splendor of Jesus Christ, our Lord." The rhetorical form, if you will, is telling God something. Now, the rhetorical form doesn't want to tell God something. It wants to call upon God as the "God who." Watch how it goes:

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, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever...

That's one long sentence. People have said, "We can't have long sentences." When it's a long sentence, you just pause at the right places. We speak in long sentences all the time. And the whole prayer holds tightly together, in the logic of "O God, who made this most sacred night radiant with the splendor of your light, grant" – grant? Grant what? "Grant that we who have known the mysteries of his light on earth may also delight in his gladness in heaven."

Let's try another one. Epiphany. The present prayer reads:

Father, you revealed your Son to the nations by the guidance of a star.

Direct statement to God.

Lead us to your glory in heaven by the light of faith.

A request, not tightly connected with the direct statement to God. Let's hear it in the new version:

O God, who on this day revealed your only-begotten Son to the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we who know you already by faith may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son...

... and so forth. This is what I mean by higher register. But here, the prayer has clearly caught many of the allusions to the feast of the Epiphany, which the present version only gives a nod to. And you notice the technical term which I spent so much time on which occurs around these feasts of the mystery of the Lord's birth.

O God, who on this day revealed your only-begotten Son to the nations...

Only-begotten Son is always a term that expresses the eternal reality and eternal divinity of the Son.

...now revealed to the nations by the guidance of a star...

Since that's the God whom we are speaking to, the prayer dares to ask with deference,

Grant, in your mercy, that we who know you already by faith may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory.

All a sort of reference to seeing the child before us, and revealed in his reality. Let's hear the old one again.

Father, you revealed your Son to the nations by the guidance of a star. Lead us to your glory in heaven by the light of faith.

You can live with that – we have done so. There's much more, I think, in the new translation.

Let's try Easter Day. "God our Father" – see how often this word Father occurs in the prayers? It's never in the Latin –

God our Father, by raising Christ your Son, you conquered the power of death, and opened for us the way to eternal life. Let our celebration today raise us up and renew our lives by the Spirit that is within us.

Here's the new version.

O God, who on this day through your only-begotten Son have conquered death, and unlocked for us the path to eternity, grant, we pray, that we who keep the solemnity of the Lord's resurrection may through the renewal brought by your Spirit rise up in the light of life.

I think as a priest, preparation for the liturgy requires of us that we follow this prayer, and that we understand its logic. When we understand its logic, we will pray it well. I think also, and it's always been envisioned and always been done in the Church – subject for preaching is not only the scriptural texts, but the texts of the liturgy, and it won't hurt at all on a feast to take a line from an opening prayer, or often from a preface,

I want to suggest to you, and share with the people those lines so that when they hear them in prayer, they're learning this new language of prayer.

Very interesting, too, is that on virtually all of the saints' feasts, the model "O God, who" is used for the saint's feast because we are remembering the God who did such-and-such for a particular saint in question. Let's look at Saint Benedict. *[laughter]* The present version of Saint Benedict's Day reads:

God our Father, you made Saint Benedict an outstanding guide to teach men how to live in your service. Grant that by preferring your love to everything else, we may walk in the way of your commandments.

O God, who made the abbot Saint Benedict an outstanding master in the school of divine service, grant, we pray, that putting nothing before love of you, we may hasten with a loving heart in the way of your commands.

A prayer that has clearly found the allusions to the rule of Saint Benedict that are in the Latin prayer, all of which fail to come across in the English we have now. You may have noticed, people are asking about inclusive language being solved; this prayer, by simply following the Latin closely, has eliminated the two places in the prayer – "God our Father", and "teach men how to live" – neither of which is in the Latin.

So, there's lots more like that. That's just a sampling of the opening prayers.

Let's move on to the rhetorical form of the prayer over the gifts. These are beautiful prayers, and I think they come out much more strongly in the new translation. The rhetorical form is a little more simple than the complicated structure "O God, who.... grant that... through our Lord Jesus Christ." But, here's what to watch for always in the prayer over the gifts, that there is always reference to the gifts that have been brought – we're talking to the bread and wine that the people have brought and placed in the hands of the priest, and that he has prepared on the altar – and that we stand at this critical moment where now we're about to go deeply into this prayer whereby these gifts will be transformed into the Body and Blood of the Lord, so the prayer always has the form of reference to the gifts we have brought, and therefore, the logic of the single sentence is that we pray that we may be purified and transformed by the transformation of the gifts. So watch that in single sentence format.

We can go to some of the Sundays of the year to find this happening. As you know, we use the Sunday prayers on ferial weekdays; these prayers occur quite often. This is the 9th Sunday of the year:

Lord, as we gather to offer our gifts confident in your love, make us holy by sharing your life within us, and by this Eucharist, forgive us our sins."

Here's the new prayer.

Trusting in your compassion, O Lord, we come eagerly with our offerings to your sacred altar, that through the purifying action of your grace, we may be cleansed by the very mysteries we serve.

It's what I'm calling elevated style – there's more to catch in that – stronger images, really beautiful, I think, “come eagerly with our offerings to your sacred altar.”

To the 11th Sunday of the year. The present version:

Lord God, in this bread and wine, you give us food for body and spirit. May the Eucharist renew our strength, and bring us health of mind and body.

The new version:

O God, who in the offerings presented here, nourish with food and renew with your Sacrament the twofold needs of human nature, grant, we pray, that the sustenance they provide may not fail us in body or in spirit.

I was thinking maybe I'll be shooting myself in the foot by using a complicated example like this, huh? This is a complicated prayer. The new translation does not back away from complicated prayers. The text is there to be penetrated, and it won't always be penetrated in a first hearing or a second hearing. But the meaning is deep, and the Church carries its deep understanding of the mysteries in its liturgical bones.

Let's try it again, and see if I can't say some good things about this difficult prayer. “O God, who” – so we're speaking that “O God, who” which is such a strong rhetorical device in the Latin liturgy; this is the God that we know –

O God, who in the offerings presented here, nourish with food and renew with your Sacrament the twofold needs of human nature...

We're talking about bread and wine on two levels. What's bread and wine for? It's for eating! It's for the body! But in this sacrament, bread and wine is also for the other part of our nature, the spiritual part of our nature. So since God has arranged things in that way, that's the God whom we address. And since that's the God we address, we pray that the sustenance they provide, this food that works on two levels, the sustenance they provide, may not fail us in body and spirit. So again,

O God, who in the offerings presented here, nourish with food and renew with your Sacrament the twofold needs of human nature, grant, we pray, that the sustenance they provide may not fail us in body or in spirit.

I want to try the 15th Sunday of the year.

Lord, accept the gifts of your church. May this Eucharist help us grown in holiness and faith.

That's the present version. It's structured on two, I would say from a poetic point of view, two blunt statements. Not really in the spirit of the elegance that the Latin liturgy is capable of in its spirit. Again,

Lord, accept the gifts of your church. May this Eucharist help us grown in holiness and faith.

Here's the new version.

Look upon the offerings of the church, O Lord, as she makes her prayer to you. And grant that, when consumed by those who believe, they may bring us ever greater holiness.

Holiness, together in a much tighter version, all the parts of the prayer.

I want to do one more difficult prayer, and then move on to another rhetorical form. This is the 16th Sunday of the year. It may be difficult for us already in English, or we just wonder what the reference is. You'll remember it – it comes around every 16th week of the year.

Lord, bring us closer to salvation through these gifts we bring in your honor. Accept the perfect sacrifice you have given us. Bless it as you blessed the gifts of Abel. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

The new version, I would say, as I suggested of the other, does not shy away from the difficulty.

O God, who in one perfect sacrifice brought to completion the varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful servants, and make it holy as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honor of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all.

That's a prayer that when it comes around, you could stop in your homily, and say, "Let's think about this prayer, because a great deal about our Eucharist and its mystery is said in this prayer. "O God, who in one perfect sacrifice brought to completion the varied offerings of the law..." Human beings have made offerings through the millennia. We're about to make an offering now. But in the one offering of Jesus Christ, all the offerings that have ever been made have been brought to perfection. So, since that's the God who you are, we ask, we pray that [you] "...accept... this sacrifice from your faithful servants." We're doing now what has been done through millennia, and we're offering it now, just as the son of Adam, Abel, offered a sacrifice. We're offering a sacrifice now, and there's a whole bunch of us here offering the sacrifice. May what each offers to the

majesty of your name be profitable for all the world. You don't really get that in one hearing, but it can be got, okay? *[laughter]* It can be got! And the church's prayers go there. The Church's prayers pull us up to thoughts like that.

I'll read it once more and see if my explanation helps.

O God, who in one perfect sacrifice brought to completion the varied offerings of the law, accept, we pray, this sacrifice from your faithful servants, and make it holy as you blessed the gifts of Abel, so that what each has offered to the honor of your majesty may benefit the salvation of all.

Let me just read one more prayer over the offerings, and then move on. For the feast of the Ascension, the prayer over the offerings in the current version reads:

Lord, receive our offering as we celebrate the Ascension of Christ, your Son. May his gifts help us rise with him to the joys of heaven, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.

In the new version:

We offer sacrifice now, in supplication, O Lord, to honor the wondrous Ascension of your Son. Grant, we pray, that through this most holy exchange, we may rise up to the heavenly realms.

The present version actually has confused the gifts – it says may his gifts help us rise with him to the joys of heaven, may Christ's gifts help us rise with him. But what the prayer specifically says in Latin is "May this holy exchange of gifts" cause us to rise with him to heaven. We bring bread and wine; God, in his mercy, transforms the bread and wine as a gift to us. This is the feast of the Ascension; may that exchange cause us to rise with him. Again:

We offer sacrifice now, in supplication, O Lord, to honor the wondrous Ascension of your Son. Grant, we pray, that through this most holy exchange, we may rise up to the heavenly realms, through Christ our Lord.

Let's move on to the rhetorical form of prayer after communion. Again, much tighter in the new version following the original Latin rhetorical form, which is simply this: Some version of "replenished by sacred gifts, we pray, O Lord, that they remain fruitful." That's the basic line. But again, it's a one-sentence kind of thing. Most of the prayers we pray now in the present version just begin by stating to God that we have received gifts and then asking for what we want. But it's more elegant, more nuanced, if you will, to let the two hang together. We have just finished this whole Communion rite, and it is concluding with this particular prayer.

Let's begin with December 21. The present version reads,

Lord, help us to serve you, that we may be brought to salvation. May this Eucharist be our constant protection.

Several statements, each short sentences. The new version:

Lord, may participation in this divine mystery provide enduring protection for your people, so that being subject to your glorious majesty in dedicated service, they may know abundant health in mind and body.” It’s a richer prayer; the language is more noble.

On the feast of the Epiphany:

Father, guide us by your light. Help us to recognize Christ in this Eucharist, and welcome him with love.

In the new version:

Go before us, O Lord, always and everywhere, that we may perceive with clear sight and revere with true affection the mystery in which you have willed us to participate.

This prayer catches the scriptural allusions to being led by a star, and it connects it with the mysteries we have just celebrated. Let me read the old one again.

Father, guide us by your light. Help us to recognize Christ in this Eucharist, and welcome him with love.

Again, this being led by a star, this image of being led by a star, in the new version. “Go before us, O Lord” – in the star –

Go before us, O Lord, always and everywhere, that we may perceive with clear sight and revere with true affection the mystery in which you have willed us to participate.

This language has in mind the three magi, who were led, went, saw, revered, and what the Eucharist we have just celebrated has done all that to us, we pray. We pray that in the Eucharist we have received, that same adoration of the magi may take place.

Sunday of the first week of Lent:

Father, you increase our faith and hope. You deepen our love in this communion. Help us to live by your word, and to seek Christ, our bread of life.

Those were two sentences, side by side. The connections between the two parts, not especially clear. In the new version:

Renewed now with heavenly bread that nourishes faith, inspires hope, and deepens charity, we pray, O Lord, that we may learn to hunger for Christ, the true and living bread, and strive to live by every word which comes to us from your mouth.

It's echoing the gospel on the first Sunday of Lent, and the temptations of Jesus. All those scriptural allusions fail to be represented in the prayer that we now use.

Let's finish this rhetorical form with Pentecost. The present version reads:

Father, may the food we receive in the Eucharist help our eternal redemption. Keep within us the vigor of your Spirit, and protect the gifts you have given to your Church.

The new version:

O God, who bestow heavenly gifts upon your Church, safeguard, we pray, the grace you have given us, that the gifts of the Holy Spirit poured out upon her may retain all its force, and that this spiritual food may gain her abundance of eternal redemption.

This prayer clearly connects the food just received from the sacrament with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The present version didn't try to capture it, and it's a beautiful connection. Again,

...that the gifts of the Holy Spirit poured out upon her may retain all its force, and that this spiritual food may gain her abundance of eternal redemption.

As opposed to "...protect the gifts you have given your church." Again, the address "Father," which is in our present version, God is not addressed with that title in this rhetorical form.

[I've been] trying to demonstrate, in a sense, the work that needs to be done to get into the prayer, and to understand why. I'd like to go on to the rhetorical form of the premise. I think one of the great strengths of the missal of Paul VI are the prefaces. And I think...there are some 90 prefaces, as opposed to nine prefaces in the missal of Trent. It's just one of the great strengths of the liturgical renewal, the variety of the prefaces. And I think the prefaces come off much more strongly in the new version and will strengthen virtually every celebration of the Eucharist and certainly the big feasts.

The rhetorical form of the preface – which is certainly represented in our present version, but it comes off more tightly in the new version – a preface is always in three steps, three forms. The first part takes up immediately from the preface dialogue, the last line, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." "It is right and just" will be the new response there. A preface picks up that very sentence – it is truly right and just – and

builds in a crescendo of titles to God the Father, finishing with the phrase “through Christ our Lord.” The second part of the preface, which is always variable and particular to the preface, connects the Christ our Lord with the particular reason that we’re giving thanks, and in our present versions, that connection is not explicit. It just becomes the next sentence. But the connector word – in English, it’s the simple addition of the word, but I think it makes an enormous difference – it says “Through Christ our Lord, *for* he...” such and such. And that “for” connector is meant to be the very precise reason that we’re giving you thanks and praise now, in this Eucharist that is about to be celebrated. “For” Christ did this, which is why we’re giving you thanks and praise through him. And therefore – that’s the third part of the prayer. Therefore, we ask that our praise be joined to the praise of saints and angels in heaven. That’s the third part of the preface, which leads into the Holy, Holy, Holy.

Let’s take some examples of that. The first preface for Sunday. The present version finishes like this: “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.” “It is right to give him thanks and praise.” “Father, all-powerful and ever-living God...” All our prefaces begin with the word “Father.” In the Latin, the word “Father” always occurs in this first part of the prayer, but not as the first word. It occurs, as I said, as a crescendo of titles. You’ll hear the difference.

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Next sentence, next part.

Through his cross and resurrection, he freed us from sin and death, and called us to the glory that has made us a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart. Everywhere we proclaim your mighty works, for you have called us out of darkness into your own wonderful light.

Another sentence still.

And so, with all the choirs of angels in heaven, we proclaim your glory and join in their unending hymn...

In the new version, you’ll notice the difference, which is a standard difference in all the beginnings, all of it holds together much more tightly.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord, for through his paschal mystery...

There’s the reason why it’s right to give him thanks and praise.

...for through his paschal mystery, he accomplished the marvelous deed by which he has freed us from the yoke of sin and death, summoning us to the glory of being now called a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for your own possession, to proclaim everywhere your mighty works, for you have called us out of darkness into your own wonderful light.

That was one long sentence, but properly proclaimed, what you've done is you've said it is truly right and just, Lord God, Almighty Father, to give you thanks, for Christ did *all* this. That's the way the liturgy talks! "He did this and this and this and this and this and this!" And then – watch the finish –

... And so, with angels and archangels, with thrones and dominions, and with all the hosts and powers of heaven, as we sing the hymn of your glory without end, we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy Lord...

There are about nine different endings of the prefaces, and a number of those endings mention the ranks of the angels. I've heard it said, "But we don't know the ranks of the angels," to which the answer is, "because they're not named in the liturgy." If you don't name the ranks of the angels in the liturgy, you haven't anything to talk about. Check out the five brief paragraphs in the Catechism that talk about the ranks of the angels. Beautiful paragraphs, and why it's worth naming them from time to time. Not all the preface endings do that, but some do. I read you already the very exuberant ending of the preface for Easter which I think is very beautiful, and so overcome with paschal joy –

... every land, every nation exults in your glory, and even the hosts of heaven praise you...

For the resurrection of the body of a human being, even the angels are singing. That's a great finish.

Listen to this preface for Advent: The present first Advent that we have is this:

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Period. Next sentence.

When he humbled himself to come among us as a man, he fulfilled the plan you formed long ago and opened for us the way to salvation.

Next sentence.

Now we watch for the day, hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours, when Christ the Lord will come again in his glory. And so, with all the choirs of

angels in heaven, we proclaim your glory and join in their unending hymn of praise...

The new version:

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord, for he assumed at his first coming the lowliness of human flesh, and so fulfilled the design you formed long ago and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, so that when he comes again in glory and majesty, and all is at last made manifest, we who watch for that day may inherit the great promise in which we now dare to hope. And so with angels and archangels, and thrones and dominions, and with all the hosts and powers of heaven, as we sing the hymn of your glory without end, we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy...

One more, the Feast of the Transfiguration. A text that is, well... as deep as the Transfiguration itself, which is a deep mystery.

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord. He revealed his glory to the disciples to strengthen them for the scandal of the cross. His glory shone from a body like our own, to show that the Church, which is the body of Christ, would one day share his glory. In our unending joy we echo on earth the song of angels in heaven, as they praise your glory forever....

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord, for he revealed his glory in the presence of chosen witnesses, and filled with the greatest splendor that bodily form which he shares with all humanity, that the scandal of the cross might be removed from the hearts of his disciples, and that he might show how, in the body of the whole Church, is to be fulfilled was so wonderfully shone forth first in its head. And so with the powers of heaven, we worship you constantly on earth, before your majesty without end, we acclaim: Holy, holy, holy...

I hope you can begin to feel and work at feeling and appreciating that connector, that connecting word “for” because without that word, what we have is statements placed side by side. But when we say here “it is right to give you thanks through Christ our Lord, for he revealed his glory in the presence of chosen witnesses,” the difference between that and saying “through Christ our Lord,” period, “he revealed his glory to chosen witnesses...” Just rhetorically, what you’re doing is telling God something, whereas, with the connecting word, it’s still part of the address to God. We’re giving you

thanks *because* Christ revealed his glory in the presence of chosen witnesses...and so forth.

One more thing. The rhetorical form of the Eucharistic prayer is obviously much more complicated. The question, and I would think it could be a workshop in its own right... You know, the General Instruction articulates, I believe, nine different parts to the Eucharistic Prayer, and to pray the Eucharistic prayer well, the priest-presider needs to know each of those parts and what's happening with the logic of those different parts of the Eucharistic prayer. And that's something in which we could all renew ourselves, in understanding them. But I want to read to you the opening of Eucharistic Prayer III, which is the probably the prayer we tend to use most often.

Bishop Trautman, in his article in... I think it was in *U.S. Catholic*, but he also said it in *America*... it was counting the words and said "It's one sentence of 72 words," and that's true. But I want to argue that we speak in sentences with more than 72 words all the time. I can do it right now, while I'm speaking to you, continuing with one sentence, which holds together with relative clauses, that are designed to help you, however complex the thought, *[laughter]* to simply follow the idea that I'm presenting to you in the history of our language. It can be done. *[more laughter and applause]* But if I had said all that, just read it off to you as a single sentence, it just doesn't make any sense at all. And the opening of Eucharistic Prayer III wants to be – wants to be – one long sentence, so that there is tied together the whole history of the world, if you will, from its creation to this moment of our offering this sacrifice. And as it ties the whole history of the world to this moment of our offering our sacrifice, then we will really understand why, *therefore* – which is the next word – we ask for the Holy Spirit to come upon the gifts to transform them.

Let me just read the beginning of the Eucharistic prayer, through the first epiclesis. We have just finished singing "Holy, Holy, Holy." And the prayer picks up on that "holy."

You are indeed holy, O Lord, and all you have created rightly gives you praise, for through your son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by the power and working of the Holy Spirit, you give life to all things and make them holy, and you never cease to gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting, a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name. Therefore, O Lord, we humbly implore you, by this same Spirit, graciously make holy these gifts we have brought to you for consecration, that they may become the Body and Blood of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose command we celebrate these mysteries.

[Questions follow.]