

**Sermon – Father Bradley Neely**  
**17<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time: July 24,**  
**2011**

I'm going to deliver a sermon today, in the sense that it is about a specific topic. Between now and the end of November, I'll be breaking us into the changes coming with the use of the New Roman Missal, starting the first Sunday in Advent.

Here is a beautiful truth:

***The Mass: "Where eternity intersects with time."***

"The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy states:

The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; it is also the source from which all its power flows.

For the goal of apostolic endeavor is that all who are made children of God by faith and Baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his church, to take part in the sacrifice and to eat the Lord's Supper." (10)

The new order of Mass following Vatican II allowed for more coherence between what is happening with the presider and what is happening with the assembly. [This is not to take anything away from the sanctity and efficaciousness of the Latin Mass celebrated in the previous centuries in the Church]. With the newly reordered Mass, we are coming upon the 3<sup>rd</sup> English translation to be used since its inception in 1970. Why?

The new translation goes *yet* further

in capturing "the sense of the receiving language"--- that being Latin.

The Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship states: "The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Roman Missal is *closest* to the original Latin" of the reordered Mass. The priest's of Idaho attended a seminar in February of this year that outlined the new changes. Today, I have pulled some of the information from that seminar.

Following the Latin more closely makes for a more dynamic translation. For example, currently, the simple form of the Memorial Acclamation reads:

Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.

The new translation will read:  
*"We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again."*  
Quite a difference.

What we will find, also, is that the original Latin is organically more gender inclusive than our current English translation. For example: the Opening Prayer for Christmas Day Mass is currently:  
"Lord God, we praise you for creating man, and still more for restoring him in Christ. Your Son shared our weakness: may we share his glory, for he lives and reigns with you.

This prayer was written by Leo I, who served as Pope from 440 to 461AD. The upcoming translation, follows Pope Leo's original more closely:

“O God, who wonderfully created  
the dignity of human nature  
and still more wonderfully restored it,  
grant, we pray,  
that we may share in the divinity of Christ,  
who humbled himself  
to share in our humanity,  
Who lives and reigns.....”

Again, quite a difference.

The original Latin of the New Mass  
that refers to God, specifically,  
uses the masculine pronoun.

As can be expected,  
concerns have been raised,  
including the perception that:  
\*the new translations seem “thick and  
dense,”

\*the sentences are long,  
\*there is strange vocabulary,  
\*Latin is a dead language, *and*  
\*we are losing the sense of Vatican II.

There is no doubt  
that the translations are different.  
But following the original Latin  
of the reordered Mass more closely  
actually “takes us back”  
to the fullness of Vatican II---  
rather than losing a sense of it.  
This language is richer  
in biblical and theological depths,  
and it *does* employ broader vocabulary.

One important thing to happen  
with this new translation,  
[which is not particularly evident to people  
unless they are bilingual],  
is that the new translation  
takes the English speaking world  
closer to the translations  
already in use by other languages.  
The priests in Idaho  
who celebrate Mass in Spanish  
say that the new English translation  
is very close to the Spanish translation

they have been using all along.  
I caught a glimpse of a TV interview  
of an Eastern Canadian recently,  
who stated that our the translation  
is now very close  
to the French Missal  
already in use in Eastern Canada.

The concern that Latin  
is a dead language is a misnomer,  
as Latin is still used  
as a *source language* for the Church.  
So it is not, to date, dead.

With the existence  
of so many languages in the Universal  
Church,  
translating *once* from Latin into each  
language

brings with it a continuity  
that cannot be duplicated  
if translations travel  
through two or more languages.

This is also a protection for  
a good number of our prayers  
coming from early centuries in the church,  
composed originally in Latin.  
Staying as close as possible  
to the original meaning  
protects the Church’s theology.  
If translations get too far from the original,  
the theology can actually change.

The use of language in our liturgies  
is of utmost importance,  
because as I have mentioned before,  
within the Mass, every word counts.  
There are no extraneous words.  
There are no words included  
just to fill time or space.  
***Every word does count.***

In conclusion, it would be good  
to revisit the statement  
from “The Constitution on the Sacred  
Liturgy,”  
finalized on December 04, 1963:

The liturgy [what we do as we gather to worship] is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; it is also the source from which all its power flows.”  
[*All things flow into the Mass, and flow out from the Mass, because Jesus is the center of the Mass, as He is the center of everything*].  
“For the goal of apostolic endeavor is that all who are made children of God by faith and Baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his church, to take part in the sacrifice and to eat the Lord’s Supper.” (10)

[***When we consider the Passover event in Egypt, where a lamb was sacrificed, and the blood of the lamb was spread over the doorpost, saving the family as the Angel of Death passed-over, and when we consider the Last Supper, when Christ was the sacrificial lamb, whose blood would save us for eternal life, in both cases, the command of God was to “eat the lamb”***].  
When we gather at Mass, we are “to take part in the sacrifice and to eat the Lord’s Supper.”

Again, ***The Mass is “where eternity intersects with time.”***