

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

CARDINAL TELLS ANGLICANS: BE MINDFUL OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In a July 22 address to Anglicans at their Lambeth Conference, Ivan Cardinal Dias, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, said that evangelization must be understood in the context of the spiritual warfare that has been man's fate since the Garden of Eden.

"The theme of evangelization must be considered in the wider context of the spiritual combat which began in the Garden of Eden with the fall of our first parents, in the wake of fierce hostilities between God and the rebel angels. If this context is ignored in favor of a myopic world-vision, Christ's salvation will be conveniently dismissed as irrelevant," he said.

"The spiritual combat, described in the books of *Genesis* and *Revelation*, has continued unabated down the ages. St. Paul described it in very vivid terms: 'We are not contending against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places' (Eph. 6:12).

"This combat rages fiercely even today, aided and abetted by well-known secret sects, Satanic groups, and New Age movements, to mention but a few, and reveals many ugly heads of the hideous anti-God monster among them are notoriously secularism, which seeks to build a Godless society; spiritual indifference, which is insensitive to transcendental values; and

relativism, which is contrary to the permanent tenets of the Gospel.

"All of these seek to efface any reference to God or to things supernatural, and to supplant it with mundane values and behavior patterns which purposely ignore the transcendental and the divine. Far from satisfying the deep yearnings of the human heart, they foster a culture of death, be it physical or moral, spiritual or psychological.

"Examples of this culture are abortions on demand (or the slaughter of innocent unborn children), divorces (which kill sacred marriage bonds blessed by God), materialism and moral aberrations (which suffocate the joy of living and lead often to profound psychic depression), economic, social, and political injustices (which crush human rights), violence, suicides, murders, and the like, all of which abound today and militate against the mind of Christ, who came that 'all may have life, and have it in abundance' (John 10:10).

"The world today needs Christian apologists, not apologizers; it needs persons like Hohn Henry Cardinal Newman, G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, Hilaire Belloc, and others, who brilliantly expose the beauty of the Christian faith without blushing or compromise."

News Notes

NEW MASS TRANSLATION ACCENTUATES REVERENCE AND AWE

Imagine that you are a student in an introductory Latin class, and this phrase pops up on a quiz to be translated: *totiusque ecclesiae suae sanctae*. Fortunately you're Catholic, and you have one of those wonderful missals with the English and Latin texts on facing pages. Working easily from memory, you write down your answer: "and all his church." Wrong!

Your error is not hard to find, once you look at it. You left out a word. Look again at the Latin: *totiusque ecclesiae suae sanctae*. Now look at your answer. *Totiusque* = and all. Correct; *ecclesiae* = church. Right.; *suae* = his. Right again. But you completely forgot the word *sanctae*, which of course means "holy." So your translation was wrong.

More to the point, the translation that English-speaking Catholics have been hearing at Mass for years is also wrong. Not just subtly inaccurate, but downright wrong. A word is missing.

...These translations are done by learned scholars, working in committees, over a period of years. They are reviewed and re-reviewed by bishops and their consultants. The word "holy" was not dropped from the Latin original, in this instance, because of a careless mistake. The omission was intentional.

The currently authorized English translation of the *Missal*, you see, was produced by people who thought it was at least unnecessary, and perhaps even undesirable, to identify the Church as "holy" in that particular prayer. Despite the fact that the *Roman Missal* is the authorize, normative version of the liturgy for the universal Church, the translators dropped that word "holy" from the English-language translation.

This is not the most important way in which the current English translation varies from the Latin original. But in this case the error is so unmistakable, and the translators' intent is so clear, that it neatly illustrates the more general problem. Again and again in the current translation, pious phrases are either omitted or pared down to a minimalist form. Instead of "beseeching" God to accept our sacrifice, we "ask;" rather than asking God to "grant" our petitions, we express the hope that our wishes "may" come to pass.

At its best, this stripped-down approach to translation produces prayers that sound like ordinary, everyday English. At its worst,

it almost conveys the impression that we, the faithful, are issuing instructions to the Almighty: telling Him what we expect Him to do. ... the Vatican has given [final approval to a new American translation](#) for the Order of the Mass. The new translation is markedly more faithful to the Latin original. It makes much greater use of an elevated liturgical language, and revives those "prayers of supplication" that have been downplayed in English-language liturgical translations for years. This is not just a big story; it is a *huge* story, and cause for great rejoicing.

Now understand that the change will not be evident immediately. The new translation will not be put into use until the US bishops have made appropriate preparations: a process that could take months. And the Vatican approval covers only a translation of the Order of the Mass: the prayers that we hear each day. The translation of the entire *Roman Missal*, with all its prayers for particular feasts, is still being done. Still, once the first changes are introduced at the parish level, the impact will be considerable.

For the first time in a generation, Catholics worshipping in English-language parishes will be constantly reminded, by the language of the liturgy, that we are participants in a great universal drama that extends far beyond the confines of our own communities.

Consider, for example, this snippet from the Roman Canon: In humble prayer we ask you, almighty God: command that these gifts be borne by the hands of your holy Angel to your altar on high...

Nothing comparable to that beautiful prayer can be found in the current translation, and our liturgy today is the poorer for it. So when the new translation is finally rolled out, we will be enriched. The prayers of supplication, soon to be restored to our daily liturgical life, are expressed in a lofty language, which some Catholics find beautiful in itself. But the beauty of the language is only a part of its importance. Far more important, in my view, is the fact that this language reminds us that as we celebrate the Mass, we are dependent on God's gracious gift.

The language of the *Roman Missal* reflects and reinforces the reality of the Mass. With each phrase we are reminded that the liturgy is not our own creation-- that the central actor in the Eucharistic drama is not the priest, nor the people, but the Lord.

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