

Personal Notes
120101 The Octave Day of Christmas:
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God 0180
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Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

Roman Missal¹

I. Introduction

The revised prayers, below, are my translation of the Bible-babble from the Missal into standard American English as heard on the Weather Channel and the national evening news.

II. Prayer before reading Sacred Scripture (Collect)²

A. Missal: O God, who through the fruitful virginity of Blessed Mary bestowed on the human race the grace of eternal salvation, grant, we pray, that we may experience the intercession of her, through whom we were found worthy to receive the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever [*forever* is one word] and ever.

B. Italian Latin:³ Deus, qui salutis aeternae, beatae Mariae virginitate fecunda, humano generi praemia praestitisti, tribue, quaesumus, ut ipsam pro nobis intercedere sentiamus, per quam meruimus Filium tuum auctorem vitae suscipere. Qui tecum.

¹ n.a., The Roman Missal: Renewed by Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II: English Translation According to the Third Typical Edition: For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America: Approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See (Washington, DC, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2011) 216-219.

² *Collect* is the technical term for this prayer.

³ This is the Latin Missale that the Missal translates into English. I name the Missale Italian Latin, because of the accent marks, which do not appear elsewhere. Pagina 166 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> The Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy runs this website. (accessed December 6, 2011).

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C. Revised: **God, we praise you. God, through you, the Blessed Virgin Mary gave the grace of eternal salvation to the human race. God, we pray that with your help, we may receive the son of Mary, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you, our Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, without end.**

D. Comment: The Missal Collect has a 14.4 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability. The revised Collect has a 7.6 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability. Readability is a test of how well-written the prayers are.

The Latin omits the **O** in the Missal **O God**.⁴

Through . . . is a sentence fragment the Missal uses throughout the book⁵

⁴ Standard American English would add a comma to *O God, who through the fruitful virginity of Blessed Mary bestowed . . .* to read, *O God, who, through the fruitful virginity of Blessed Mary, bestowed . . .* The Little, Brown Handbook explains, “When an interrupting or concluding prepositional phrase is *not* essential to meaning, but merely adds information to the sentence, then it *is* set off with punctuation, usually a comma or commas . . .” H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 244.

⁵ The Little, Brown Handbook explains,

A prepositional phrase is a modifier consisting of a proposition (such as *in, on, to,* or *with* [including *through*] together with its object and any modifiers (see pp. 242-43). A prepositional phrase cannot stand alone as a complete sentence . . .

At the end of the prayer, *the unity* is confusing. A dictionary definition for the word *the*: “1 c:-- used as a function word to indicate that a following noun or noun equivalent refers to someone or something that is unique or is thought of as unique or exists as only one at a time <the Lord><the Messiah> . . .”⁵ *Unity* is a noun meaning “1a: the quality of stage of being or consisting of one.”⁵ Because the Faithful have not challenged *the unity* since Vatican II, the now traditional silly (*unique unity*) phraseology remains.

III. Prayer after Communion

- A. Missal: We have received this heavenly Sacrament with joy, O Lord: grant, we pray, that it may lead us to eternal life, for we rejoice to proclaim the blessed ever-Virgin Mary Mother of your Son and Mother of the Church. Through Christ our Lord.
- B. Italian Latin:⁶ Sumpsimus, **Dómine, laeti sacraménta** caeléstia: praesta, quaesumus, ut ad vitam nobis proficiant sempitérnam, qui beátam **semper Vírginem Maríam** Filii tui **Genetrícem** et Ecclésiae **Matrem** profitéri **gloriámur**. Per Christum.
- C. Revised: **Lord, we have enjoyed this heavenly sacrament, the Holy Eucharist. We pray that the Eucharistic presence may lead us to eternal life. We recognize the holiness of the blessed ever-Virgin, Mary, the mother of your Son and the spiritual mother of our Church. We pray through Christ, our Lord.**

D. Comment: The Missal Prayer after Communion has a 9.1 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability. The revised Prayer after Communion has a 7.7 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability.

See Part 4, "Clear Sentences," Chapter 17 c, "Sentence Fragments: Verbal or prepositional phrase," H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 335. <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=the&x=0&y=0> (accessed December 4, 2011). <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=unity&x=0&y=0> (accessed December 4, 2011).

⁶ This is the Latin Missale that the Missal translates into English. I name the Missale Italian Latin, because of the accent marks, which do not appear elsewhere. Pagina 168 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> The Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy runs this website. (accessed December 6, 2011).

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The argument that the English is to stay close to the Latin does not hold up. The English has *O Lord*. The Latin has only *Dómine*, without the *O*. *O* is a Latin word.⁷

The Latin *sacraménta* is not capitalized, but the Missal *Sacrament* is capitalized. Since the Faithful will not hear the difference between an upper and lower case word, there is no reason to stray from the Latin, except, perhaps, to show the arrogance of the translator in the face of anyone objecting to the illiterate 2011 Missal.

The Missal translates *laeti* with *joy* and *gloriámur* with *rejoice*, even though *rejoice* is not an English choice for *gloriámur*. *Gloriámur* is a deponent verb meaning *to glory in, boast of, pride oneself on anything*.

Mary is in apposition to *Virgin* and in English should be set off with commas. The Little, Brown Handbook has a "using appositives" subsection.⁸

An appositive is usually a noun that renames another noun nearby [in this case *ever-Virgin*], most often the noun just before the appositive. (the word *appositive* derives from a Latin word that means "placed near to" or "applied to.") An appositive phrase includes modifiers as well All appositives can replace the words they refer to: [*ever-Virgin/Mary*] . . . Appositives are economical alternatives to adjective clauses containing a form of *be* . . . [*ever-Virgin [who is] Mary . . .*] you can usually connect the appositive to the main clause containing the word referred to . . . An appositive is *not* set off with punctuation when it is essential to the meaning of the word it refers to [in the United States of America, which has no secular lords, *Mary* is not essential to *ever-Virgin*] When an appositive is not essential to the meaning of the word it refers to, it *is* set off with punctuation, usually a comma or commas [as is the case here, *O Lord, our God,*] . . .

The Missal takes *Mother of your Son* from *Genetrícem*, but *Mother of the Church* from *Matrem*. *Genetrícem* is translated by *one who brings forth or bears, a mother*.

⁷ Cassell's Latin Dictionary: Latin-English and English-Latin, revised by J. R. V. Marchant, M.A. and Joseph F. Charles, B.A. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1952) 371.

⁸ H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 254-255.

IV. Blessing⁹

- A. Missal: May God, the source and origin of all blessing, grant you grace, pour out his blessing in abundance, and keep you safe from harm throughout the year.
R.¹⁰ Amen.
- B. Italian Latin:¹¹ Deus, fons et origo totius benedictionis, gratiam vobis concédât, benedictionis suae largitatem infúndat, atque per totum annum vos salvos **et incólumes prótegat**. R. Amen.
- C. Revised: **May God give you many blessings. And may God protect you throughout the coming year.**
R. Amen

D. Comment: The Missal Blessing by the priest has a 10.7 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability. The revised Blessing has a 7.4 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability.

Protect is closer to the Latin, *prótegat*, than *keep you safe*.¹²

⁹ The full heading is: **Blessings at the End of Mass and Prayers over the People
Solemn Blessings
I. For Celebrations in the Different Liturgical Times
1. Advent**

¹⁰ The Missal uses the **red**. The Italian Latin does not.

¹¹ This is the Latin Missale that the Missal translates into English. I name the Missale Italian Latin, because of the accent marks, which do not appear elsewhere. Pagina 607 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> The Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy runs this website (accessed December 6, 2011).

¹² Cassell's Latin Dictionary: Latin-English and English-Latin, revised by J. R. V. Marchant, M.A. and Joseph F. Charles, B.A. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1952) 451.

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The Missal does not translate *et incólumes*, which means *uninjured, safe and sound, without damage*, and which the revision translates as *healthy*.

V. ICEL

Prayer before reading Sacred Scripture (Collect)¹³

ICEL:¹⁴

O God, through the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary you offered to the human race the treasures of eternal salvation. Let us experience the power of her prayers, for through her we have received the author of life, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever [*forever* is one word] and ever.

Prayer after Communion

ICEL:¹⁵

Lord, as we joyfully proclaim the Virgin Mary to be Mother of your Son and Mother of the Church, we ask that this heavenly sacrament by which we have been nourished may bring us to life everlasting. Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

Colloquial Language: The Microsoft Word spell checker directs, "Although `this' or `these' may be used informally consider one of the suggestions for a more formal or

¹³ *Collect* is the technical term for this prayer.

¹⁴ International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholics Bishops' Conferences, The Sacramentary: Volume One—Sundays and Feasts (Washington, D.C.: International Commission on English in the Liturgy, 1998), page 799, downloaded from https://rs895dt.rapidshare.com/#!download|895|35|387089704|ICEL_Sacramentary_1998.zip|6767|R~00A3D4012C6FE19956DB84F71E5405F6|0|0 at http://misguidedmissal.com/wp/?page_id=23 (accessed December 8, 2011).

¹⁵ International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholics Bishops' Conferences, The Sacramentary: Volume One—Sundays and Feasts (Washington, D.C.: International Commission on English in the Liturgy, 1998), page 205, downloaded from https://rs895dt.rapidshare.com/#!download|895|35|387089704|ICEL_Sacramentary_1998.zip|6767|R~00A3D4012C6FE19956DB84F71E5405F6|0|0 at http://misguidedmissal.com/wp/?page_id=23 (accessed December 8, 2011).

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traditional tone.” The Little, Brown Handbook has considerable to say about colloquial language.¹⁶

Like many countries, the United States consists of scores of regional, social, and ethnic groups with their own distinct dialects, or versions of English. Standard American English is one of these dialects, and so are Black English, Appalachian English, Creole, and the English of coastal Maine. All the dialects of English share many features, but each also has its own vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.

If you speak a dialect of English besides standard American English, be careful about using your dialect in situations where standard English is the norm, such as in academic or public writing. Dialects are not wrong in themselves, but forms imported from one dialect into another may still be perceived as unclear or incorrect. When you know standard English is expected in your writing, edit to eliminate expressions in your dialect that you know (or have been told) differ from standard English. These expressions may include . . .

There is more, but that is enough for now.

Blessing at the End of Mass

ICEL:¹⁷ May God, the source of every blessing, grant you the fullness of grace and keep you safe throughout the coming year.
R. Amen.

The respective ICEL priestly Collect, Prayer after Communion, and Blessing have 12.7, 9.6, and 8.5 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readabilities.

¹⁶ H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 503-504.

¹⁷ International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholics Bishops' Conferences, The Sacramentary: Volume One—Sundays and Feasts (Washington, D.C.: International Commission on English in the Liturgy, 1998), page 797, downloaded from https://rs895dt.rapidshare.com/#!download|895|35|387089704|ICEL_Sacramentary_1998.zip|6767|R~00A3D4012C6FE19956DB84F71E5405F6|0|0 at http://misguidedmissal.com/wp/?page_id=23 (accessed December 8, 2011).

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**God, we praise you. God, through you, the Blessed Virgin Mary gave the
grace of eternal salvation to the human race. God, we pray
that with your help, we may receive the son of Mary, Jesus,
who lives and reigns with you, our Father, in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, without end.**

**Lord, we have enjoyed this heavenly sacrament, the Holy Eucharist. We
pray that the Eucharistic presence may lead us to eternal life.
We proclaim the holiness of the blessed ever-Virgin, Mary,
both the biological mother of your Son and the spiritual
mother of the Church. We pray through Christ, our Lord.**

**May God give you many blessings. And may God protect you throughout
the coming year.**

R. Amen