

Personal Notes

Missal: First Sunday of Lent, 0220 (February 26, 2012)

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Raymond J. Jirran, Ph.D.

Roman Missal¹

The Protestant revolutionary, Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563), expressed sentiments I share, when he writes, “He [Saint Paul in Ephesians 3:21] was right to remind us that God must certainly be glorified first of all in the church, if he is to be glorified anywhere.”² The Sunday Lectionary does not use Ephesians 3:21 anywhere. Whether in the church or out of the church, the illiterate 2011 Missal is a disgrace anywhere. The Roman Catholic Church needs a better prayer book, one written in standard American English. That is my personal opinion, as a Roman Catholic.

Collect Prayer

Missal: Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever [sic] and ever.

Revised: Almighty God, grant that we may grow in understanding of the comfort, love, and caring presence of Christ tucked away in the hearts and minds of the Faithful. Direct our annual Lenten penitential worship toward the Christ in each of us. We ask for this grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives

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 Wolfgang Musculus, “Commentary on Ephesians,” Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament X: Galatians, Ephesians, (ed.) Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, An Imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2011), 325.

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**and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
forever.**

Comment: In the United States, *riches hidden* is overly materialistic. The Latin for riches is *intellegéndum*,³ which means *understanding*.⁴ Translating *intellegéndum* as *riches* is a sign of an anti-intellectual value system emanating from the Vatican and illustrated in the recent statements from the College Theological society.⁵

Worthy conduct is gibberish, as if there were such a thing as *unworthy conduct*. The Latin for conduct is *conversatióne*, which is translated *change*,⁶ as in *change in behavior*. As written, the Collect leaves the impression that conduct may be *unworthy* to pursue the effects of *the riches in Christ*.

The Missal refers to “fidelity to the original Latin text,” without identifying just what that text might be or where to find it for purposes of verification and accountability. The Missal also proclaims that it is the vernacular typical edition of the Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia.⁷ Barnes and Noble, the bookstore, indicates, the Missale Romanum

³ Pagina 206 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> (accessed December 5, 2011).

⁴ Cassell’s Latin Dictionary: Latin-English and English-Latin, revised by J. R. V. Marchant, M.S., and Joseph R. Charles, B.A. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1952 printing, no copyright date) 289.

⁵ Joshua J. McElwee, “Scholars see ‘breach’ between bishops, theologians,” <http://ncronline.org/news/theology/scholars-see-breach-between-bishops-theologians> (accessed December 7, 2011).

⁶ Cassell’s Latin Dictionary: Latin-English and English-Latin, revised by J. R. V. Marchant, M.S., and Joseph R. Charles, B.A. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1952 printing, no copyright date) 136.

⁷ 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) 7.

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cannot be purchased. "We found 0 results for Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia."⁸ That seems to mean that the Missal is a retranslation of the Sacramentary.

Googling for the exact words, "Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia," gets 37,500 results, including one with the following:⁹

A reprint of that edition ("Editio Typica Tertia Emendata"), issued under Pope Benedict XVI, corrected misprints and some other mistakes (such as the insertion at the beginning of the Apostles' Creed of "unum", as in the Nicene Creed). A supplement gives celebrations, such as that of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, added to the Roman Catholic calendar of saints after the initial printing of the 2002 typical edition.

The above quotation shows that the Faithful cannot be certain of exactly which Latin is the basis for the 2011 illiterate Missal. There is a web site run by the Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy with the 2002 edition of the Missale Romanum, Editio typica tertia.¹⁰ Obviously, the English Missal is not in exact correspondence with the Latin Missale, because even the opening pagination is not the same. This web-site Missale begins on page 4 and corresponds to page 3 of the Missal. Apparently, however, this Missale is the best available Latin and, as such is used here.

The criteria of standard American English demonstrate that the 2011 Missal is illiterate. The first sentence of the **Collect** has twenty-nine words, with a 13.6 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability.¹¹ That is reading at the sophomore college level. Preachers aim their comments about the Third Grade level. Presiders will use this prayer for the Faithful to hear, rather than read. The Little, Brown Handbook has some advice, to which the 2011 illiterate Missal seems entirely oblivious.¹²

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<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/noresults?keyword=Missale+Romanum%2C+editio+typica+tertia&store=allproducts> (accessed December 5, 2011).

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Missal at "More Recent Changes" (accessed December 5, 2011).

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Missal (accessed December 5, 2011); Pagina 206 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> This website is run by The Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy. (accessed December 6, 2011).

¹¹ <http://www.readabilityformulas.com/flesch-reading-ease-readability-formula.php> (accessed December 2, 2011).

¹² H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 856.

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. . . writing for readers is not the same as speaking to listeners. Whereas a reader can go back and reread a written message, a listener cannot stop a speech to rehear a section. Several studies have reported that immediately after hearing a short talk, most listeners cannot recall half of what was said.

Effective speakers adapt to their audience's listening ability by reinforcing their ideas through repetition and restatement. They use simple words, short sentences, personal pronouns, contractions, and colloquial expressions. In formal writing, these strategies might seem redundant and too informal; but in speaking, they improve listeners' comprehension.

The Little, Brown Handbook has much more, but this is enough to digest for now.

The second sentence of the **Collect** has twenty-six words with a 9.5 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability. That is reading at the sophomore high school level. The Little, Brown Handbook has a section, "Writing Concisely" that is helpful for the wordiness here.¹³

You may find yourself writing wordily when you are unsure of your subject or when your thoughts are tangled. It's fine, even necessary, to stumble and grope while drafting. But you should straighten out your ideas and eliminate wordiness during revision and editing.

. . . wordiness is not a problem of incorrect grammar. A sentence may be perfectly grammatical but still contain unneeded words that interfere with your idea.

That is why the revised **Collect** has three, rather than two, sentences. The Missal Collect has an 11.9 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability. The revised **Collect** has a 9.6 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability.

Non-American English, such as Scottish or British, can appear illiterate to Americans in the United States.¹⁴ That is why oral prayers in anything other than

¹³ 8. Effective Words, 39. "Writing Concisely," H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 523-524.

¹⁴ Bette Mae K. Jirran reads widely in fiction and cites the following as examples. Emily Brightwell, Mrs. Jeffries Forges Ahead, (New York: Berkley Prime Crime, 2011); Jude Deveraux, Jill Barnett, Geralyn Dawson, Pam Binder, and Patricia Cabot, A Season in

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standard American English are irrelevant, in the United States. Because American English is not the first language of many Catholics in the United States, pastoral care requires standard American English. Otherwise, the Faithful are subject to two contrary conclusions about the readings. The first conclusion for the Faithful is that the Church does not respect what the marginalized, particularly immigrants are doing to learn American English. The second conclusion is that the Church is actively sabotaging any attempt to learn standard American English.

Through . . . is a sentence fragment the Missal uses throughout the book. The Little, Brown Handbook explains,¹⁵

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>”¹⁶ *Unity* is a noun meaning “1a: the quality of stage of being or consisting of one.”¹⁷ Does *the unity* mean that the Holy Spirit belongs to a union, like a labor union? Does *unity* in the Collect mean that the Holy Spirit, unlike Jesus, has only one nature, Divine? Does *unity* mean the trinitarian unity? In the same vein, does *unity* mean that it is the Holy Spirit, which is the relationship between the Father and Son, thereby causing a triune unity? The last is how the revision would resolve the matter, substituting *Divine Trinitarian nature* for *unity*. Because the Faithful have not challenged *the unity* since Vatican II, the now traditional silly phraseology remains.

the Highlands (New York: Pocket Books, 2000); Christina Dodd, Stephanie Laurens, Julia Quinn, and Karen Ranney, Scottish Brides (New York: Avon Books, 1999).

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=the&x=0&y=0> (accessed December 4, 2011).

¹⁷ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=unity&x=0&y=0> (assessed December 4, 2011).

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Prayer after Communion

Missal: Renewed now with heavenly bread [sic], by which faith is nourished, hope increased, and charity strengthened, 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 proceeds from your mouth. Through Christ our Lord.

Revised: **O Lord, renew our commitment to you in Holy Communion, where Jesus is present under the appearance of bread.**

Heavenly Father, grant that we may actively seek the Eucharistic presence of Christ. May Jesus inspire us with the strength needed to live by Sacred Scripture. We pray that, through Jesus Christ, our Faith may be nourished, our Hope increased, and our Charity strengthened. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Comment: The first sentence of the **Communion Prayer** has forty-four words, with a 16.8 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability, or Graduate level. To do that for the average parish church is more than illiterate. It is unconscionable.

Hunger for in the United States of America conjures up notions of pizza, chocolate, fried chicken, and the like. *Strive for* makes more sense.

The Missal translates *refécti*¹⁸ with *renewed*, which is not any of the choices in the dictionary. The base word is *re-facio*, or *remake*. The meaning is not anything new, but something *healed, to restore a thing to its previous condition*.¹⁹ While I do not object

¹⁸ Pagina 207 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> This website is run by The Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy. (accessed December 6, 2011).

¹⁹ 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) 475.

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to *renewed*, the dictionary does not use *renew* to translate *refécti*. *Renewed* modifies *we*, three lines down in the *Missal*. This is acceptable Latin, but unacceptable English. In Section 26, “Achieving Variety,” *The Little, Brown Handbook* explains, “Adjectives, modifying nouns and pronouns, may include participles [used here] and participial phrases . . . These modifiers may sometimes fall at the beginning of a sentence to postpone the subject.”²⁰ Since this is the first sentence of a prayer, achieving variety is not yet possible.

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.²¹

O Lord, is an interjection. “Interjections express feeling or command attention, either alone or in a sentence: *hey, oh, darn, wow*.”²² Since it is inappropriate for humans to command anything of God, what is left is feeling, namely, *O Lord*, which, like the *Mon Dieu’s* of Saint Vincent de Paul,²³ is also inappropriate here in standard American English.

Capitalizing *Bread* is meaningless for the Faithful, who will only hear (rather than see and read) the Prayer after Communion. The *Missal* uses *bread* twice once in upper case, once in lower case. In contrast, the *Missale* uses *bread* both times in the lower case. The Latin does not capitalize *bread*. The argument that the English is to stay

²⁰ H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, *Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook* (New York: Longman, 2010) 409.

²¹ *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.

²² H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, *Eleventh Edition: The Little, Brown Handbook* (New York: Longman, 2010) 233.

²³ See Newly Translated, Edited, and Annotated from the 1920 Edition of Pierre Coste, C.M., *Saint Vincent de Paul Correspondence Conferences, Documents I Correspondence Volume I (1607-1639)*, (New York: New City Press, 1985); Newly Translated, Edited, and Annotated from the 1921 Edition of Pierre Coste, C.M., *Saint Vincent de Paul Correspondence Conferences, Documents II Correspondence Volume II (January 1640-July 1646)*, (New York: New City Press, 206 Skillman Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11211, 1990); Newly Translated, Edited, and Annotated from the 1921 Edition of Pierre Coste, C.M., *Saint Vincent de Paul Correspondence Conferences, Documents III Correspondence Volume III (August 1646-March 1650)*, (New York: New City Press, 86 Mayflower Avenue, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801, 1992).

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close to the Latin does not hold up. The revision takes into account the hearing of the faithful.

The revision changes the passive voice to the active. Section 3 Grammatical Sentences, #14 Verbs, Voice J. Active (*She wrote it*) vs. Passive (*It was written*) in The Little Brown Handbook explains the difference between active and passive voice with the following large letter sentence. “Generally, prefer the active voice. Use the passive voice when the actor is unknown or unimportant.”²⁴ In this case, *Lord*, the actor, is both known and important.

In *proceeds from your mouth*, *your* refers back either sixteen words to *Christ* or twenty-four words to *Lord*. In the Prayer after Communion, *Lord* seems to refer to God the Father, rather than God the Son, Christ. The Little Brown Handbook warns, “when either of two nouns can be a pronoun’s antecedent, the reference will not be clear.”²⁵

The Communion Prayer reads, . . . *to live by every word which proceeds from your mouth*. As The Little Brown Handbook puts it, “Whereas both nonessential and essential clauses may begin with *which*, only essential clauses begin with *that*. Some writers prefer *that* exclusively for essential clauses and *which* exclusively for nonessential clauses.”²⁶ The Missal signifies that the relative clause is essential with a comma, rather than a different word, namely *that*. The revision uses *that*, since *that* is easier to hear than a comma.

Prayer over the People

Missal: May bountiful blessing, O Lord, we pray, come down upon your people, that hope may grow in tribulation, virtue be strengthened in temptation, and eternal redemption be assured. Through Christ our Lord.

Revised: Almighty God, bless your people, both those present and those unable to be with us. We pray that, with your help, hope will grow despite the trouble we face. Heavenly Father,

²⁴ H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 299.

²⁵ H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 346.

²⁶ H. Ramsey Fowler and Jane E. Aaron, Eleventh Edition: The Little Brown Handbook (New York: Longman, 2010) 429.

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strengthen our virtue against the temptations of the world.

Heavenly Father, grant us the blessed assurance of eternal

redemption. We ask for these blessings through Christ our

Lord.

Comment: The Missal translates the same Latin word, *super*, first as *over*, then as *upon* in *Over the People* and *upon your people*.²⁷

In the Latin, *tribulatione* is a made up word, perhaps from Italian. The word for *tribulation* in Latin is *miseria*.²⁸

The Latin for *may grow* is *succrescat*, which may also be translated as to *grow beneath*, *grow from beneath*, *grow up*, *increase*, but not *grow*, alone, as the Missal uses the word.²⁹

The first sentence of the Prayer over the People has twenty-six words, with a 14.2 Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability, or third year of college. To force that on the average parish congregation at the end of a confusing Mass is unconscionable. The Missal has what appear to be two sentences, but one is a sentence fragment. The revision has five sentences. In real life, *bountiful blessing* comes in the plural, rather than singular. The revision, therefore, asks for *blessings*.

Trying to pray with the 2011 illiterate Missal is difficult for at least two reasons. The first is the amount of time and space unscrambling the illiteracy takes. Second is that the purpose of this part of Personal Notes is to pray with the Missal. That means these Personal Notes are not free to ignore the Bible-babble found in the Missal.

²⁷ Pagina 207 at <http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/exw.htm#bsr> This website is run by The Holy See, Congregation for the Clergy. (accessed December 6, 2011).

²⁸ 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) 892.

²⁹ 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) 552.

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Clarity is not a prerequisite for prayer. The search for clarity can be a means to prayer, *faith seeking understanding*, as Saint Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) puts it.³⁰ In an attempt to use the prayers the anti-Vatican-II, Vatican, is now setting forth, these Personal Notes are taking on a new focus. This new focus begins November 27, 2011, the First Sunday in Advent. From the First Sunday in Advent until just before the First Sunday of Lent, February 26, 2012, these Notes have a double focus, including both the Lectionary and the Missal. Beginning with the First Sunday of Lent, these Notes retain only the Missal focus, which will last three until the liturgical cycle is completed.

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³⁰ <http://www.google.com/search?q=faith+seeking+understanding&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> (accessed November 28, 2011) and <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/anselm/> (accessed November 28, 2011).

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Collect

Almighty God, grant that we may grow in understanding of the comfort, love, and caring presence of Christ tucked away in the hearts and minds of the Faithful. Direct our annual Lenten penitential worship toward the Christ in each of us. We ask for this grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever.

Prayer after Communion

O Lord, renew our commitment to you in Holy Communion, where Jesus is present under the appearance of bread. Heavenly Father, grant that we may actively seek the Eucharistic presence of Christ. May Jesus inspire us with the strength needed to live by Sacred Scripture. We pray that, through Jesus Christ, our Faith may be nourished, our Hope increased, and our Charity strengthened. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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