



The Journal



January - March 2011

God Is An Alien

By Charles Callanan

The best definition that we have of God was given to us by the ancient Hebrews many years before the birth of Jesus. God, according to this definition is “wholly other”(than man or woman). It is therefore impossible for us to have a concept of God. We do not have the materials necessary to build this concept. So, mentally we draw a blank.

What we do know of God we know through Jesus, through the prophets and through nature.

In modern parlance - God is an Alien. God is not the universe but our knowledge of God is related to our concept of the universe. Our concept of the universe is changeable and subject to the information we have about the universe that changes from day to day.

When I was a schoolboy in the forties, there was only one galaxy. This galaxy was the entire universe. In recent times we have placed sophisticated telescopes in space and have discovered that there are not millions but billions of galaxies. Even as I write this article new information of some 1200 “new” planets has been revealed by science. It is probable that a small number of these planets could support life as we know it. This kind of information has to change our concept of God. God must be much greater that we first believed. In two hundred years time He may well be greater again in human minds.

Yet despite its unimaginable greatness, the universe is finite. Lately, we are told that there may be more than one universe. “Where does it all end”, we ask. Yet, it is our concept of God that changes - never God Himself.

Jesus' message to us is about human relationships and about human-Divine relationships. This message is timeless and will be valid in eight thousand years time and beyond that.

In a human family, as a child grows he learns more and more about his father and mother. Yet, in a sense his parents have not changed - he has changed.

In the light of this information, the multiple divisions within Christianity seem trivial. They are due to historical circumstances which are solely our doing.

Many people I talk to are afraid that if they think too much about God and about the changing information about the universe, they will lose their faith. They may lose their 1950's concepts of God and the universe; they will not lose God or their faith. I think that this mentality makes adult education, in the area of faith, so difficult. Not too long ago a man said to me, “I know everything there is to know about the Catholic Church. I learned it from the nuns when I was a small boy”. The term “eternal truth” is often used as an excuse from trying to learn new things about our faith. God does not change - we do.

The church into which I was ordained in 1961 (fifty years ago) no longer exists - yet it does. The church has changed in ways that we never thought it could. The Church as we remember it will continue to change. The idea that certain topics such as celibacy are forbidden topics unable to be discussed, is ridiculous. If discussing celibacy diminishes God in any way then it has taken on an importance that is inappropriate. When the ideal of celibacy prevents the faithful from participating in Eucharist (due to a shortage of celibate males) then priorities need to be adjusted.

When the Black Death hit the Church in the Middle Ages, hundreds and perhaps thousands of priests died. Desperate times demanded desperate measures. Bishops changed the rules concerning priestly training, for pastoral reasons. A new group of “Massing Priests” was created. People received little or no training in theology but were trained to say Mass and were ordained for this reason.

Right now we are coming to a crisis situation in the Church. Old priests are working longer and trying to cover more territory. There are no new plans to cover current and future conditions. Officials in Rome have to think outside the Roman Box and put celibacy and other “unmentionable” topics on the table.

It is a time for all of us to “think outside the box”. God Himself is outside the box. He has always loved us and He has sent His Son to bring us to Him. Jesus will bring us to the Father, no matter what branch of Christianity or non-Christianity we may embrace.

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The Journal welcomes submissions from small faith communities and individuals that share its vision of the Christian Church as one in which all are equal, decisions are made by consensus, healthy relationships are nurtured, justice is done, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

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See the back page for further details.

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On Vatican II Gregory Baum in Amazing Church offers the following "... extraordinary evolution of the Church's official teaching. The ecclesiastical magisterium changed its mind regarding religious liberty and human rights in general, and moving beyond its previous teaching, it recognizes freedom, equality and participation as values sustained by divine revelation. New in the Church's official teaching is the understanding of human beings as historical subjects responsible for their own lives and their society. Gaudium et spes recognizes with approval "the birth of a new humanism in which human beings are defined first of all by their responsibility towards their brothers and sisters and towards history." (#55) To express this new humanism John Paul II introduced a new word into the Church's vocabulary: he spoke of the "subjectivity" of human beings (i.e. their freedom to see, judge, and act) that must be respected by all governing authorities.

Churchmouseland

by Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK

(Apologies to Clarence Gillis and Tommy Douglas)

This is the story of a place called Churchmouseland. Churchmouseland was a place where all the little mice lived. And they lived much as you and I do. They even had a church. The church was run by the mice with tall pointy hats. The mice prayed, paid, and obeyed the churchmice with the tall pointy hats who saw to it that the mice in their charge were canonically hatched, matched and dispatched according to the scriptures.

In Churchmouseland the black mice were male and the female mice were white. There were also some g(r)ay mice. Now the pointy hats were of the opinion that God made a mistake creating gray mice, so they restricted them to being hatched and dispatched, but not matched.

The pointy hats treated the white mice a little better, but not much better, than the gray mice. Everyone recognized how very useful the white mice were, as long as they didn't talk too much.

Sometimes what they said made sense, and that was embarrassing to the black mice who were supposed to have superior brains. White mice were

also noted for changing things, like their clothes, re-arranging their furniture, painting the kitchen and such stuff. The pointy hats were particularly wary of this because they liked the way things were and change would upset the cheese cart, so to speak.

Now in this mousechurch, the pointy hats closely guarded the secret of the magic formula for making the cheeses of Mouseland. To satisfy the demand they delegated other black mice to help. When not enough black mice volunteered, the white mice offered their services. But the pointy hats said their offer was not acceptable because they contended that white mice were born without the ability to wear a pointy hat.

Well, some white mice didn't think that was a good enough reason to refuse their help, so they just went ahead and tried on a pointy hat. To no one's surprise, they noticed that the hat didn't fall off. There were even a few black pointy hat mice that secretly supported these white mice, and they even gave some of them their pointy hats. As you can imagine, this did not go over very well with the tallest pointy hats, so

they declared that the white pointy hats were pointless and cut off their rights to the cheese. But this kaffuffle did not disturb the rest of the mice in Churchmouseland very much. In fact, many white mice were very happy about this because they said, "At last we have leaders who understand us".

It had always been said that church mice were poor. Was it was because the founder of Churchmouseland was poor, or was it because of some other reason? Yet the curious thing was that poverty did not stop them from doing much good work throughout all of mouseland, and sometimes at the cost of heroic sacrifice. This fact made other mice curious and they inquired about becoming members.

Unfortunately these inquirers found out that the leaders with

pointy hats weren't poor at all. They had the nicest mouse holes and the fanciest outfits. The inquirers thought that this gave a poor example to the other mice. They wondered why the other mice remained loyal to these leaders. The mice answered that this was the way they were brought up. There were some who hoped for change and worked for it, as the white mice were doing. Others simply gave up and quit



supporting the leaders.

But for some strange reason the drop in attendance and support did not seem to bother the leaders very much because they weren't doing much about it. Instead of listening to the real concerns of the mice, they tinkered with the wording in their ceremonies.

Presently there came along one little mouse who had an idea. My friends watch out for the little fellow with an idea. He said to the other mice. "Look, my friends, why must we keep doing things the old way just because that's the way they've always been done?"

"Oh", the pointy hats said, "he's a heretic". So they put him in jail.

But I want to remind you that you can lock up a mouse or a man but you can't lock up an idea.

Criticism: A Catholic Duty

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



Being critical of Church governance is the duty of every Catholic. Don't apologize for it. You may sometimes hear "The pope is the boss or the bishop is the boss. Just do what he says." Well, that is not catholic talk nor is it christian faith. Some catholics may not know it and many others may not care, but "They have the right, indeed at times the duty, in keeping with their knowledge, competence and position, to manifest to the sacred Pastors (bishops) their views on matters which concern the good of the Church. They have the right also to make their views known to others of Christ's faithful..." Canon 212 #3

The oldest of the Curia's nine congregations is The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) the name given to it by Pope Paul VI in 1965; previously it was called the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office. When Pope Paul VI set up the CDF in 1965, its task was specifically "to promote sound doctrine" and its function was to "teach and not to legislate". The International Theological Commission (ITC) was to help the CDF in preparing documents and to work in dialogue between distinguished theologians and officials of the papal magisterium. Using this process the CDF issued a number of "Instructions". For example, on Liberation Theology, the 1988 Instruction was issued "to set forth and explain the principal elements of Christian doctrine about liberty and liberation".

Theologian Francis A. Sullivan S.J., Doctor of Sacred Theology from The Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome, where he taught from 1956 until 1992. He was Dean of Faculty of Theology there from 1962 until 1992. He then retired to Boston College where he taught until his retirement in 2009 at age 87. He specialised in ecclesiology and the magisterium.

In a scholarly article, "The Theologian's Ecclesial Vocation and the 1990 CDF Instruction" (Theological Studies, March 1991) Sullivan pointed out that In 1975, the ITC document stated that "Hierarchy will tend to stress the authority of the magisterium and the obligation on the part of theologians to follow its directives, while statements by theologians (ITC) will tend to stress the freedom of theological research and publication and the critical role of theology even with regard to documents of the magisterium." Sullivan documents the curial bypassing of theologians and the stress on the curial practice of

what has come to be called "the creeping infallibilism of the magisterium."

In 1988, John Paul II in *Pastor Bonus* stated that the duty of the CDF is "to promote and safeguard the doctrine on faith and morals throughout the Catholic world." Then he added "and for this reason everything that in any way touches such matter falls within its competence." This addition was a major change in the mandate of the CDF. Since then the CDF appears to act without dialogue with competent theologians and it often condemns those who do research and, for the purpose of dialogue, publish opinions in journals and at conferences. The declaration that women could not be ordained because it was not in scripture and tradition was challenged by many theologians who were (and still are) more competent to judge the matter without bias.

In 1990, the CDF Instruction on the relationship between the CDF and the ITC has "little or no evidence of such a dialogue...It unabashedly presents the position of the magisterium, addressing itself in the first place to the bishops." (Sullivan) On the issue of disagreement with CDF positions, Sullivan quotes Avery Dulles S.J. "I would say that the CDF rules out strident public dissent and recourse to the media to foment opposition in the church, but that it acknowledges the value of discreet and constructive criticism of authoritative documents." (Question of Dissent)

The attitude in the Vatican since 1988 has been to press ahead with its programme and to ignore scholarly opinions that do not support its positions. It does not give heed to competent theological research. There seems to be very little if any constructive dialogue. While bishops "are the only ones endowed with authoritative authority..." (Lumen Gentium #25) to teach and promote "sound doctrine" they are not the only ones equipped to give genuine interpretations of the word of God and of the Catholic faith. There can be "healthy theological tension" in Cardinal

Ratzinger's words. There remains the duty of the catholic faithful "to manifest their views on matters which concern the good of the Church."



Excerpts From "A Duty Of Conscience"

by Ted Schmidt, Toronto, ON



When Cephas came to Antioch I directly withstood him to the face because he was clearly in the wrong. Gal 2:11

The chosen people of God is one: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism (Eph.4:5)...They possess in common, one hope and one undivided charity. Hence, there is Christ and in the Church no inequality on the basis of race, or nationality, social condition or

sex, because, there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you all are one in Christ Jesus."

(Gal. 3:28)

Lumen Gentium #32

In *Amazing Church*, Gregory Baum writes with moderation and concern for the Church he has so marvelously served since the days of the Second Vatican Council: **"Disagreement with the magisterium may render an important service to the Church, helping it to respond to the signs of the times in light of the Catholic faith...This may be a duty of conscience."**

Ted Schmidt comments:

Gregory Baum is absolutely correct. It is a duty of conscience to play Paul to today's Cephas, to stand as a parallel magisterium against an adamantine papal magisterium which heretofore appears hopelessly miscast as a monarchy in a democratic age.

This certainly is the case in today's Church. Most depressed Catholics simply walk away, shaking their heads at what they judge to be a refusal by the Vatican to seriously enter into mature dialogue with the overwhelming majority of the Church who are not ordained.

Others, like Baum, persist in attempting to raise concerns which need serious reflection and dialogue. Baum mentions three issues that the hierarchical Church has refused to review despite widespread clamoring from below.

I would like to pursue the first of Baum's issues. He calls it the Church's authoritarian centralism "which contradicts its official teaching on collegiality, subsidiarity and the co-responsibility of people for their institutions." This refusal has certainly weakened the magisterium and, I would say, caused great scandal in the Church.

One can have a measure of sympathy for an institution as perjuring as the Catholic Church. In order to survive for so long, the Church has built a formidable institution which has lasted. But institutions often lose their reason for being and become an entity unto themselves. This is why the Church at Vatican II described itself as "ecclesia semper reformanda" It must always be in the process of renewing itself, of becoming a true sacrament, a *communio* pervaded by the spirit of the living Christ. Vatican II was the great breakthrough as the Church ceased to define itself as the perfect society of the Council of Trent. Vatican II gave us a whiff of collegiality, the Church as the People of God. United in baptism as the quintessential sacrament; we are all priests, prophets and kings,

faithful to Jesus Christ, the suffering Servant whose spirit leads the Church. How energizing and liberating! What an explosion of gifts which inspired so much self-donation for our world!

The old order however did not die. Power is seldom given up. Pius IX in 1870 could say "I am tradition., I am the Church!." and Pius XI (1922-1939) "I don't want collaborators, but those who follow orders."

The Second Vatican Council brought forth an explosion of theological education which the Church surely should have welcomed. After all, adulthood is what we all strive for. Given that collegiality was a rallying cry of the Council, the great desire of the People of God was to open up church structures at all levels -- parochial, diocesan, regional and national. This made infinite sense, communication needed to flow both latterly and upwardly and not simply downward, as had been the feudal *modus operandi*. There was much good will in those years. The People of God actually felt they had a stake in the Church. Bishops appeared to be listening. The first off the mark was the Dutch Church. The Dutch spring was an impressive model in this regard; a great respectful reciprocity was forged among all sectors of the Church. The bishops of Holland desired a permanent national advisory council with strong lay representation. They were not afraid of change. The Dutch bishops were deadly serious about co-responsibility in the Church. But Rome quickly got cold feet when the Dutch Church in the late 1960s pressed to relax the laws on celibacy. This was virtually unanimous among all Catholics in Holland. Later, John Paul II ended this and drove a stake into the heart of the Dutch church by appointing very conservative bishops with little interest in a collegial Church.

The German Church as well, attempted a synodal approach. This common synod in the early 1970s was made up of an equal number of laity and clergy. Naturally it could not pass resolutions which the universal Church could not accept in the area of faith and morals. However, it was a legitimate assembly which pressed the envelope on many disciplinary and governance issues: 'laicization' of clergy, women deacons, new Eucharistic prayers and other matters. A two-thirds majority was needed to make decisions. It was fairly controlled to be sure, but it was an important step. The 150,000 replies received by the central committee signified the first shoots of a truly democratic Church.

In the European approaches, openness was palpable. Gradualism was the order of the day. The Council giant, Cardinal König, had great respect for lay involvement in the Austrian process. He considered the delegates to be partners and not simply automata who carried out episcopal decisions. He was a bishop who had a solid constituency. In those halcyon days of the first decade after the Council, dialogue was taken seriously.

Today monologue -- "I am the teacher in this diocese" -- has become the episcopal *modus operandi*. One sad example suffices to show the terrible deflation in the German Church. Reporter Kyle James told NPR radio that 120,000 Catholics leave the Church every year fed up with reactionary appointments. Cardinal Joachim Meissner appointed over the wishes and traditions of the Cologne cathedral chapter, has watched 300,000 Catholics leave since he was imposed on Cologne by the Pope in 1988.

Excerpts Continued...

The Canadian experience shows a similar pattern. While the Council proclaimed the common participation of all the faithful as priests, prophets and kings (sic), and while it insisted on true equality and placed the hierarchy at the service of the people and not vice-versa, papal appointments have reversed democratizing trends. As in the other countries, the advent of John Paul II increased centralism. Rigid control, fear of dialogue, and distrust of the Holy Spirit increased. Curial and papal micromanagement began to strangle the Body and prevent the necessary oxygen from getting through. Bishops like Meissner were imposed on Catholics all over the world. The principle of subsidiarity -- what can be done at a lower level should be done there -- was forgotten.

A personal aside here: When I was editor of the Catholic New Times we did a survey of the greater Toronto area and discovered less than half had parish councils! Many priests loved this arrangement. In the end, they were accountable to no one. How infinitely sad and counterproductive. What an utter waste of talent and energy.

As time proceeded, the serious flaws in John Paul II's pontificate appeared. The man who asked us not to be afraid himself appeared to be afraid of the Holy Spirit energizing the Church through more democratic structures. Again and again he was told by theologians who loved the Church as much as he did that his brand of papal infallibilism and centralizing structures was hobbling the local Church; his ignoring local democratic traditions of nominating bishops was hurting local morale. He turned a deaf ear to all these entreaties

From June 6-9 of 1990, the Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA) with Canadian Basilian Walter Principe as its president, affirmed "the right of theologians to freedom of research, their right to raise questions, their right to re-examine the meaning of dogmas, and even more to explore the import of past authoritative statements by the magisterium, and finally the right within a faithful unprejudiced presentation of the official teaching to disagree publicly with that teaching under certain circumstances."

The statement "Do not Extinguish the Spirit" was critical of the growing chill within the Church and the increasing denigration of theologians who were now seen as "dissenters," rather than loyalists who had a different opinion. Principe addressed the Vatican criticism about "harm being done to the faithful by theologians." He countered with the harm being done by "the Vatican issuing of documents without prior discussion and consultation with bishops and theologians, their inhibiting legitimate discussion by premature decisions on complicated questions, their condemnation or silencing of theologians and their presentation of reformable teaching almost as if they were matters of faith." Do not Extinguish the Spirit was concerned about "excessive Roman centralization" that diminishes the role of local bishops and which impugned the authority of bishops' conferences. This brave statement well summarizes the general disenchantment with the papacy.

I believe that toward the end of his pontificate John Paul II, great man that he was, began to become aware of the deep unhappiness in the global Church. There was simply too much principled resistance to his centralization. Audible grumbings in the episcopacy about Rome's high-handed style began to penetrate his awareness. Keith O'Brien, the Scottish archbishop, in no uncertain terms told the press after the European synod of 1999 that bishops were "damned angry about the

usurpation of their own authority". In 1987 an Acadian Archbishop Donat Chiasson had ripped the synods as being an exercise in futility and dissemblance where the conclusions were written beforehand. In a candid interview he bravely stated that the doors were being closed on the collegial approach of Vatican II.

In 1995 the Pope hinted at his mini-conversion. His encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* expressed a readiness to change a new way of defining the Petrine office as an exercise in communion with the whole body of bishops (#95). This was John Paul II at his best. It was time to make the papacy, "more of a service of love than domination." It was time to become more collegial. He wrote: "I am convinced that I have a particular responsibility in this regard, above all in acknowledging the ecumenical aspirations of the majority of the Christian Communities and in heeding the request made of me to find a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation."

In short order on June 29, 1996 he was answered by American Archbishop, John Quinn of San Francisco in a now famous lecture at Oxford. "The Catholic Church needs to seriously look at itself" Quinn inferred. In no uncertain terms he called for a greater collegiality and a much greater autonomy for bishops. "Testimony from all over the world," he said, "points to a widespread dissatisfaction with the present procedure for the appointment of bishops." This was an understatement. There was deep resentment for the bypassing of local input, and in many observers' judgment, the sex scandal in the U.S. had been precipitated by the naming of too many sycophantic bishops who had placed the institution over the reign of God and the vulnerable among us. Quinn correctly pointed out that "the procedure chooses who can be trusted to be safe...But the problem is orthodoxy can be confused with integralism. Integralism may be described as a kind of narrowness and intolerance, raising private opinions and viewpoints to the level of dogma." Quinn knew well that the gatekeepers for the American episcopacy were Boston's Bernard Law and New York's John O'Connor, both papal loyalists. When O'Connor died in 2000, Law became the America kingmaker before he was disgraced in the sex abuse scandal.

Quinn wrote: "Even the modicum of consultation has disappeared." This was too obvious to challenge. I well remember the seminary professor's call before a well-known bishop was named. Regarded as a crank and marginal to almost everything, the new bishop would have never made 50th place in the terna (the three priests on a bishop's ballot sent around to a number of priests). The professor was in hysterics when he told me the name of the bishop. He knew it was so patently ludicrous that this far-right loyalist should be named to a large See. History proved him right. Like so many other papal impositions, the bishop turned out to be a disaster. This was the case in diocese after diocese.

Currently the Roman Catholic Church is in a state of ecclesial paralysis, unable to move forward. Sadly, millions have left convinced of its terminal dysfunctionality, its inability in an

Excerpts Continued...

historical epoch noted for its rapid development, to move at more than glacial speed. Reasonable people, living in a democracy watching this slow motion horror implosion proceed, are aghast at the timidity of the present leadership to address this governance problem.

Is it so difficult to bring intelligent believers together for the good of the universal Church? What is the clerical caste afraid of? Can it be so shortsighted and unaware of the depth of the crisis? Can it simply be afraid of a loss of power? Are they terrified that the obvious will happen? Will retrograde positions (no optional celibacy, no married or female priests, no new evaluation of sexual ethics, no serious consultation with the baptized and a host of others) they supported when the neo-conservative Church was in its ascendance be shown to have so little support among the People of God?

The Divine Disturber, also called the Paraclete, the Comforter, is out of the bottle.

The answers are all in place:

Broaden the basis of consultation and decision-making.

Acknowledge the Spirit alive in the baptized. Reconvene diocesan

synods.

Apply the principle of subsidiarity at each level of the Church. Give people a stake in the communio.

Do not be afraid of accountability and a much greater democracy. We all have a right to a fuller participation in the life of the Church.

Disagreement with the Magisterium, as Baum suggests, may indeed render a service to the Church, a Church which Joseph Ratzinger, now Benedict XVI said needs "not adulators to extol the status quo but men (sic) whose humility and obedience are no less than their passion for truth; men who brave every misunderstanding and attack as they bear witness; men who, in a word love the Church more than ease and the unruffled course of their personal destiny."

The full text of Ted Schmidt's article may be read in *Corpus - National Capital Region, Canada*, Articles and Letters



Tribute To The Memory Of Neil Parado, My Dear Friend And Colleague *by Leonard E. Schmidt, M.A. (Laval)* *Co-Founder of AOCC*

Gregoria Parado, wife of Rev. MSGR. Neil, informed me that Neil passed away peacefully on Thursday February 3 at 4:30PM surrounded by his loving family. May he rest in peace.

The funeral service was held on Friday, February 11, at 10:00AM at St. John de Brebeuf Church, Winnipeg. Viewing took place at Thompson-In-The-Park on Wednesday and Thursday.

Neil received his doctorate degree in sacred theology from St. Mary's University in Baltimore, MD. Neil was a fervent activist who promoted the use of titles such as reverend by married Roman Catholic Priests. He was a member of Corpus Canada and he will be sadly missed by his corpus friends and colleagues. He and Gregoria often attended the CC general gatherings.

He was also one of the founders of the Alpha & Omega Christian Community of Manitoba, Inc. Which sponsored over the past six years discussions on the mystical writings of St. John Of The Cross, OCD, 16th century carmelite friar, poet and doctor of mystical theology. Neil was a member of Rent-A-Priest organization, and he officiated at over 20 weddings. As a Knight Of Rizal, he was area Knight Commander Of Western Canada.

From 1975-79, Neil served as chaplain to a Knights Of Columbus Council in Winnipeg, probably while he was serving at Holy Cross Church or at St. Edward's. The sympathies of his CC colleagues go out to Gregoria and family.

New Translation Of The Missal Unacceptable Says The ACP

presentations by Gerard Alwill, Dermot Lane, and Pdraig McCarthy, Dublin, Ireland

The ACP understands that the Irish Conference of Bishops has decided that the new translation of the Missal will be introduced in Ireland on the First Sunday of Advent 2011. While a new and improved version of the current missal would be welcome, this new translation is not what is needed. The ACP urgently calls on the bishops to defer its introduction for five years. During that period the bishops, together with the people and priests, can properly examine the suitability of these texts for the Irish Church.

The celebration of the Mass is central to our work as priests and, more importantly, to the lives of the people we serve. In the words of the central document of Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* (The Light of the People), the Mass is “*the source and summit of the Christian life.*” (LG11). Our concerns flow from our experience as pastors who attempt each Sunday to celebrate the liturgy with our people in a meaningful, dignified and prayerful way. Many bishops, priests, lay people, theologians and liturgists across the English speaking world share our concerns.

Opposition on the grounds of the Language used

- A word-for-word translation from Latin into a vernacular language, mandated by the document *Liturgiam Authenticam* (March 2001), demonstrates a lack of awareness of the insights gained from linguistics and anthropology during the past 100 years. Translators in other international bodies follow the ‘dynamic equivalent’ norm which means translating according to the sense of the original text, rather than literally.

- The ACP is gravely concerned that this literal translation from Latin has produced texts that are archaic, elitist and obscure and not in keeping with the natural rhythm, cadence and syntax of the English language. In fact, from the few available samples of the new texts, it is clear that the style of English used throughout the Mass will be so convoluted that it will be difficult to read the prayers in public. In the words of Bishop Donald Trautman, former chair of the United States Bishops’ Liturgical Committee, this is a translation where “*the vocabulary is not readily understandable by the average Catholic... how can someone read the text in public when some of the sentences contain 70 or 80 words.*”

It is particularly ironic that this Latinised, stilted English is being imposed on Irish people who are so blessed with world-renowned poets, playwrights, and novelists.

- Catholics should be allowed to pray publicly in their own language. Jesus used the language of the people when he was speaking with them. The New Testament is written in the language of the ordinary people, not classical Greek.

- The ACP is aware of the history of this translation. It regrets that the expertise of scholars in many disciplines was spurned. Many of these scholars gave their time and talents freely to help the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), produce acceptable texts. In 1998 the ICEL translation was accepted and approved by every conference of bishops in the English speaking world.

- The translation is also in conflict with the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy which has a whole section on norms for adapting the Liturgy to the temperament and traditions of people. This allows for legitimate variations and adaptations. (No. 38).

- This translation runs contrary to one of the main goals of our

Association, namely: *That liturgical celebrations use rituals and language that are easily understood, inclusive and accessible to all.*

A Theological Problem

A central teaching of the Christian Churches is that Jesus died for all people. This meaning is conveyed in the current translation of the Latin words of consecration over the chalice, *pro vobis et pro multis*. The phrase is translated *for you and for all* in the current missal. The new text opts for the more literal translation, *for you and for many*. In English, the word “many” contrasts with the word “few,” so people may be led to ask, are there some for whom Jesus did not die?

Furthermore, in a country where ecumenism should be an important pastoral priority, it is worth noting that the new text is less ecumenical than the current one.

Ignoring Lay People

In Ireland, hundreds of thousands of lay people attend Mass each Sunday. This is the principle expression of their faith, the most important prayer they can offer to God and the focal point of their togetherness as a Christian and parish community. Together we are the people of God, yet we were ignored during the period when the texts were being translated.

Ignoring Women

Many women will be rightly enraged by the continued deliberate use of non-inclusive language. The ACP strongly opposes the introduction and use of any texts which will insult and offend women who are at the heart of every Christian community in Ireland.

Ignoring Priests

Priests, who work hard with their parishioners to celebrate the Eucharist in a prayerful, dignified manner, were ignored by those who translated these texts. They have a better knowledge of the prayer-life and liturgical needs of Irish Catholics than anyone in a curial office in Rome. The ACP believes that the Irish bishops should have consulted widely with their priests and people before agreeing to impose these texts on Irish Catholics,

Confusion and Division

The ACP believes that the imposition of the new texts could lead to chaos and confusion. The new translation may be fully implemented in some churches and rejected in others. Some priests will adopt a ‘pick-and-mix’ approach using some texts from the current Missal and others from the new translation. There may be frustration and even anger among laity, religious and priests alike. As a result, the celebration of the Eucharist, instead of being a symbol of unity, could become a focus of disagreement and division. The Irish church does not need this confusion and disharmony, especially at this time.

Conclusion

- The ACP calls on the members of the Irish Episcopal

New Translation Continued...

Conference to postpone the launch of these new translations.

- We ask the bishops to engage with Irish Catholics with a view to developing a new set of texts that will adequately reflect the literary genius and spiritual needs of our Church community in these modern times.

- We suggest that the Irish bishops take a lead from the German bishops, who have objected to “good German texts” being replaced with “unfamiliar new interpretations” and to assert the right of the Irish Conference of Bishops to make its own decisions in regard to the celebration of the Liturgy in Ireland. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 36 § 4) Bishops are the chief pastors of their dioceses. They should give priority to the liturgical needs of the priests and people above everything else.

We encourage priests, laypeople and religious to read these proposed new texts. If you share the perspective of the ACP as outlined above, we urge you to make your concerns known to the bishop of your diocese. The U.S. version of some of these texts can be found in www.usccb.org/romanmissal.

Since Rome is intent on imposing this new text on the Catholic Church without proper consultation you might wish to share your views on this and other matters with the Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, H. E. Card. Antonio CAÑIZARES LLOVERA. cultdiv@ccdds.va

www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie

Letters On The New Liturgical Texts

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies,

With a heavy heart, I have recently made a difficult decision concerning the new English missal. I have decided to withdraw from all my upcoming speaking engagements on the Roman Missal in dioceses across the United States. After talking with my confessor and much prayer, I have concluded that I cannot promote the new missal translation with integrity. I'm sure bishops want a speaker who can put the new missal in a positive light, and that would require me to say things I do not believe.

I love the Church, I love the sacred liturgy, I love chant in Latin and English, and I treasure being involved with all these as a monk and priest. It has been an honor to serve until recently as chairman of the music committee of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) that prepared all the chants for the new missal. But my involvement in that process, as well as my observation of the Holy See's handling of scandal, has gradually opened my eyes to the deep problems in the structures of authority of our church.

The forthcoming missal is but a part of a larger pattern of top-down impositions by a central authority that does not consider itself accountable to the larger church. When I think of how secretive the translation process was, how little consultation was done with priests or laity, how the Holy See allowed a small group to hijack the translation at the final stage, how unsatisfactory the final text is, how this text was imposed on national conferences of bishops in violation of their legitimate episcopal authority, how much deception and mischief have marked this process—and then when I think of Our Lord's teachings on service and love and unity...I weep.

I see a good deal of disillusionment with the Catholic Church among my friends and acquaintances. Some leave the Catholic Church out of conviction, some gradually drift away, some join other denominations, some remain Catholic with difficulty. My response is to stay in this church for life and do my best to serve her. This I hope to do by stating the truth as I see it, with charity and respect. I would be ready to participate in future liturgical projects under more favorable conditions. I am sorry for the difficulties I am causing others by withdrawing, but I know this is the right thing to do. I will be praying for you and all leaders in our church.

Fr. Anthony Ruff, O.S.B. Collegeville, MN

Anthony Ruff, O.S.B., is a Benedictine monk of Saint John's Abbey and a professor of liturgy and Gregorian chant. He was on the committee which drafted the 2007 document “Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship” for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He is founder of the National Catholic Youth Choir and blogs at Pray Tell. His letter above to the U.S. bishops is printed in its entirety.

To: Anthony Ruff, osb, St John's Abbey, Collegeville, MN, and interested parties,

“The Association of Pittsburgh Priests (APP) is a diocesan wide organization of ordained and non-ordained women and men who act on our baptismal call to be priests and prophets. Our mission is to carry out a ministry of justice and renewal, rooted in the Gospel and the Spirit of the Second Vatican Council, in ourselves, the Church and the world.”

Your letter of resignation (<http://www.associationofcatholicpriests.ie> and at Americamagazine.org, Online) is very significant for authentic liturgical reform; it ranks with the public stance of Bishop Donald Trautman in questioning the wisdom of implementing the texts of the Roman Missal. It will surely inspire many of those who have their doubts to ask themselves what they might do in addition to having “outed” themselves on whatifwejustsaidwait.org. Many who also chose initially to identify themselves as “Priest” but anonymously, might now go back and put their full name on the statement, moved by the audacity of your resignation.

The suggestion that a number of priests agree to declare that they will not implement the Roman Missal as adopted for use as of Advent, 2011 would be very, very significant, and very likely draw a response.

Fr. Bernard Survil, Fr.Survil@EmbraceAllofLife.us

I wish to thank Anthony Ruff, O.S.B. for his courage in making it clear to the American Bishops that the new literal translation from Latin to English is not a translation that should be accepted for the Roman Catholic liturgies. The literal translation from Latin to English is clumsy.

When we are giving worship and praise to our God, elitist and clumsy language is not the way to pray to our God. We need words that come from our hearts and souls, and that convey meaning to us, and not to the people of the Middle Ages.

As an American Catholic lay person and as a physician, I feel that the American Bishops seem to have no minds of their own. Is this what it has come to?

There is real need for the American Bishops and the Bishops of the World to unite in challenging the poor decisions of Pope Benedict XVI and of those in the Curia if they really care about the future of the Roman Catholic Church.

I have great praise for the Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland. Those priests are like a beacon of light and hope to me. Thank goodness there are priests that refuse to continue to act like they are mindless sheep before the authority of Rome.

Having been to Rome and to the Holy Land, I was struck by the wealth and power of the Vatican and the simplicity of Galilee and the simplicity of the life of Jesus, Our Lord.

I feel that the leaders of the RCC want to be Princes, rather than Servant Leaders like Jesus was.

Our leaders have lost their way and need to be helped back by the bishops, priests, and lay people.

Thank you Anthony Ruff, O.S.B., for being part of this much needed reform in the policies and structures, and hopefully reform in the leadership of the RCC.

Dr Rosemary Eileen McHugh, Chicago, IL,
mchughrosemary@gmail.com

The use of “for many” in the Institution Narrative: a scriptural note

We do not have direct access to the actual words of Jesus at the Last Supper. Rather, we are working through a series of translations (Greek, Latin and English) of a memory of what Jesus said in Aramaic. The earliest text (1 Corinthians 11:23-27) recalling that memory is from Paul writing 55 AD: “For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’” Paul has no reference to the phrase “for many.” It is Mark (14:24) who introduces the phrase into the Gospel tradition in 70 AD: “He said to them, ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many (*hyper pollon*).’” In his Gospel, Mark proclaims Jesus as the Suffering Messiah of Israel. It is not possible to know if Mark is influenced by the Suffering Servant Songs in the Book of Isaiah, but there are strong link between Mark’s text and the Fourth Servant Song (Isaiah 53:12), where the LORD’s servant is described as

having borne the sins “of many (*pollon*).” Here, the Greek is a translation of the Hebrew *rabbim* which means “many,” “multitudes,” “myriads beyond number.” Mark’s Greek phrase is an attempt to communicate a Semitic concept of inclusiveness which implied that Jesus’ death was a death for all. The phrase could be translated as “for many” or even “for the multitudes.” Matthew (26:28) writing in 85 AD follows Mark: “For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many (*peri pollon*) for the forgiveness of sins.” Matthew modifies Mark’s Greek phrase slightly, but still retains its underlying Semitic meaning. Luke (22:20), writing in 80-85 AD omits the phrase entirely: “And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood’.” Thus Luke is closer to the Pauline memory. In short, two New Testament texts have the phrase “for many” and two do not. Those texts which use the term do not restrict Jesus’ sacrificial death in anyway. On the contrary, what is implied is that Jesus died to save all. “For many” is a very literal translation of the original Greek, but does not immediately communicate the underlying Semitic and theological concepts. “For all” is a good attempt to communicate those concepts, but is not a literal translation of the original text. It is worth noting how other modern languages have translated the phrase in the Eucharistic Prayer: Dutch (*alle mensen*); French (*la multitude*); German (*alle Vergossen*); Italian (*per tutti*); Norwegian (*de mange*); Portuguese (*por todos*); Spanish (*por todos los hombres*) and Swedish (*de många*).

Ciaran O’Callaghan

The proposed introduction of the new liturgical texts in such a hasty manner is in sharp contrast to the current preparations for the Eucharistic Congress. However I believe that it will have a far more lasting (and potentially negative) impact on our church. I welcome and support the ACP press release. I hope that it will start a comprehensive and informed discussion on the issue, particularly by liturgy groups throughout the country. The suggestion to postpone the implementation is justified.

I am a lay person involved in music ministry and from a church music point of view there are many practical considerations in addition to the points raised by the ACP. I am not aware of any published settings of the proposed revised parts of the mass by Irish composers or attempts to amend existing established ones. It will be impossible to fully implement the introduction of the new texts in the short term if sacred music is a consideration. The reality is partial implementation at best in the timescale proposed. There is also the difficulty of setting some of the proposed texts to music. For example the first line of the proposed Gloria will be very awkward and contrived when set to music. The only practical solution? back to the Latin text! I suspect that there were no native English speaking church musicians involved the decision making process regarding the proposed text.

I conclude with a somewhat trivial analogy, apologies in advance. If McDonalds decided to change their well established jingle ‘I’m lovin it’, it would be very reasonable to assume the following: Management would have consulted widely, would be

Letters Continued...

very confident that the change would be for the better from all points of view AND would implement the change with a jingle which is both musical & identical to the printed text. It is inconceivable that they would use a contrived jingle that rolls off the tongue such as 'Lovin it I am' or even 'Lovin it with certainty'.

Even one occurrence of convoluted English is unacceptable in any proposed revised text.

John

The bishops are the ones primarily responsible for liturgy in their dioceses. The US bishops have ignored voices like Fr Ruff's before; they virtually mocked at their own Bp Trautman. Being an "expert" wins you no credence, but rather draws ridicule from bishops and Vatican bureaucrats who are sure they know best. Cardinal Pell assures us that the new translation has been warmly greeted throughout the world (implying that Ruff, Trautman et al. are merely recalcitrant malcontents). It is all a little like Tony Blair's doggedness in leading the UK to war in Iraq.

The Irish bishops won't be able to escape the coming outcry by saying they were following Vatican orders.

Joseph O'Leary

Congratulations on your (ACP) recent statement regarding the new Roman Missal. I think your statement is excellent and find it very encouraging that such a large group of priests was willing to speak out. I'm the author of the "What If We Just Said Wait" article/initiative in America magazine that you referenced in your statement. Along with a few colleagues, I am currently working on some new initiatives regarding the missal. The statement from the Irish priests will certainly help.

Would you be willing to contact your members and encourage them to sign on at www.whatifwejustsaidwait.org? It could make a difference and encourage further interest at a critical time.

Thanks very much. And thanks again for your great statement. I find it very hopeful that priests are beginning to find their/our voice.

Fr. Michael G. Ryan, St. James Cathedral, Seattle

As a 75 yr old resigned priest, who loves the Church and advocates a restoration of the Vatican Council II mentality in the administration and liturgical practices of our beloved church, I am concerned about the already growing hostility and name calling towards the recently established Association of Catholic Priests.

I am referring to a recent email I received from a group that I am not familiar with Los Leandros. The name calling and derogatory comments directed towards the new association is disturbing. I feel there is place for both conservative Catholics and progressive Catholics within Roman Catholicism.

I respectfully submit a proposal to the Association of Catholic Priests for their consideration.i.e to introduce a space for dialogue between pro Vatican II Catholics and anti Vatican II on their new website. I speak as one who has for 45 yrs has being involved as a successful moderator and participant in Catholic/non- Catholic Christian dialogue, Catholic/Jewish, and for five years as moderator of Moderate Muslim/Non-Muslim dialogue sponsored by Rotary International.

I believe the key to the success of any religious dialogue is a willingness to listen as well as speak and trust the Spirit to guide both sides to learn from each other. The present hostility of Los Leandros towards the renewal of our Church advocated by the Association can only encourage the demise of our beloved Church. As I am now retired from teaching I am available to help in creating the dialogue process. I have no doubt that members of Los Leandros love the Catholic Church as much as I do and agree that many changes need to be made and much purification needs to happen to the Catholic Church worldwide for it to survive.

Finbarr M Corr Ed D

*Nothing is so strong as gentleness.
Nothing is so gentle as real strength.*

Francis de Sales

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We are a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did. We also provide support for married Roman Catholic priests, their family and friends.

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