

# **REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ENGLISH IN THE LITURGY\***

**International Committee On English  
In The Liturgy, Inc.**

**Report to the Episcopal Conferences  
of**

**Australia, Canada, England and Wales, Scotland, Southern Africa,  
The Philippines, and the United States of America, India,  
Ireland, New Zealand, Pakistan,**

**Secretariate: 2900 Newton Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20018, U.S.A.  
December 1967**

## **MEMBERS OF THE EPISCOPAL COMMITTEE**

**Most Rev. Gordon J. Gray, Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh,  
Scotland. Chairman.**

**Most Rev. Gerald Emmett Carter, Bishop of London, Canada, First  
Vice-Chairman.**

**Most Rev. Guilford C. Young, Archbishop of Hobart, Australia. Second  
Vice-Chairman.**

**Most Rev. George P. Dwyer, Archbishop of Birmingham, England and  
Wales.**

\* Excerpts from the report of the International Committee in the Liturgy  
to the episcopal conferences of the major English-speaking countries.

- Most Rev. Leonard J. Raymond, Archbishop of Nagpur, India.  
 Most Rev. Joseph Walsh, Archbishop of Tuam, Ireland.  
 Most Rev. Joseph Cordeiro, Archbishop of Karachi, Pakistan.  
 Most Rev. Lino R. Gonzaga, Archbishop of Zamboanga, Philippines.  
 Most Rev. Denis E. Hurley, Archbishop of Durban, Southern Africa.  
 Most Rev. Paul J. Hallinan, Archbishop of Atlanta, U.S.A.  
 Most Rev. John J. Dougherty, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, U.S.A.  
 Most Rev. Owen N. Snedden, Auxiliary Bishop of Wellington, New Zealand.  
 Rev. Frederick M. McManus, Treasurer.  
 Rev. Gerald J. Sigler, Executive Secretary.

### **MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

- Rev. Godfrey Dickmann, O.S.B., United States.  
 Professor H. P. R. Finberg, England.  
 Rev. John Hackett, Ireland.  
 Professor G. B. Harrison, United States.  
 Rev. Percy Jones, Australia.  
 Rev. Frederick R. McManus, United States.  
 Rev. Stephen Somerville, Canada.  
 Rev. Harold E. Winstone, England.

### **Ordinary of the Mass**

As a result of *English for the Mass: Part I*, and nearly two years of extensive analysis, the Advisory Committee has reached agreement on a translation of the Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Apostles' Creed, *Orate fratres*, Preface dialogue, *Sanctus*, *Praeceptis salutaribus*, *Agnus Dei*, *Domine non sum dignus*, and dismissal. The Committee proposes to print a booklet with the text, including notes, in a "you" and "thou" form, and submit it to the liturgical commissions of the major Protestant Churches.

The booklet should be ready early in 1968, and discussion will begin immediately. Although it is unrealistic to expect a joint, uniform text for Catholics and non-Catholics alike within the next few years, at least a start will have been made.

Meanwhile, the Advisory Committee will continue to evaluate this text, and by the end of its next meeting should be able to offer the Episcopal Committee a text of the Ordinary which, if desired, can be used immediately with the new *Ordo Missae* when it appears. It is expected that this text of the Ordinary will be the agreed text until a uniform translation is achieved for all the Churches.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

A newly translated Our Father for liturgical use, and one equally acceptable to other Churches, is perhaps the most challenging task the Committee faces. Already a number of Churches have attempted a translation on their own. To avoid the appearance of "one more translation," and to guarantee a genuine ecumenical undertaking, ICEL will prepare a scriptural brief on the problems inherent in such a translation. This brief will be circulated as a first effort to evoke ecumenical discussion. Advisory Committee and Episcopal Committee members will then meet with other Church representatives in various countries to consider the next steps. The episcopal conferences will receive additional reports on this project as necessary to keep them abreast of the issues.

### **Graduale Simplex**

Since the last Rome meeting a translation of the antiphons of the *Graduale Simplex* has been under way. A first draft of the entire body of antiphons has been completed and is now being examined by consultors and an editor. About one-third of the material has been redrafted and approved by the Advisory Committee.

It is expected that a final revision of these antiphons will be ready by March, 1968, after which they may be used by musicians and publishers to prepare pastorally adapted books for the faithful.

The most that the ICEL can do at the present time is to provide a translation of the rubrics, titles, and, most important, antiphons and hymns found in the official text. It will be up to publishers and others to use this material properly with a view to supplying parishes with the needed materials to make the *Graduale* a feasible experiment.

Pending completion of its own translation of the psalter, the ICEL suggests that the choice of texts for the psalms be left to the publisher, composer, or episcopal conference.

The Committee is also considering recommending the translations of those few hymns which appear in the *Simplex*. Final decision on this will be made in the next month or six weeks.

Despite the limitations of the *Graduale*, and the fact that the ICEL is not able to provide a complete text of the psalms at the moment, the Advisory Committee strongly recommends that wherever possible this liturgical option be used, developed, and reported to the Committee. This will enable the Committee to prepare a translation of similar antiphons and of the entire psalter which will have a realistic chance of universal acceptance.

Regarding the "intervenient chants" of the *Ordo Lectionum* which overlap the *Graduale*, cf. the section on that matter.

### **The New Roman Lectionary**

It is expected that the new Roman *Ordo Lectionum*, announced just before the meeting of the Synod of Bishops, may be ready for use during the three-year period beginning in Advent, 1968, on an experimental basis.

Although some preliminary comments received by the International Committee indicate a preference for the Jerusalem Bible, the Revised Standard Version, and the (incomplete) New English Bible, no thorough study of the question has yet been made. It is premature to recommend, for liturgical use in the readings of the *Ordo Lectionum*, either a single translation or several specific translations of the Bible. Moreover, there are certain major translations of the Bible now being prepared.

For ecumenical purposes the common acceptance of several biblical translations seems to be as desirable as agreement upon one translation. In fact, the uniform imposition of an agreed translation is simply impossible at the present time, whether or not it may be a desirable future goal.

It should be pointed out that it is immaterial whether a single version of the biblical readings be available for missals, booklets, etc., intended for use of congregations. There is no need for the people to have a text of the readings that is identical with the one used by the lector or other minister. On the contrary, the development of a broader biblical culture may be helped by such variations.

For liturgical use in the readings of Mass, arranged according to the experimental *Ordo Lectionum*, it is recommended that the episcopal conferences approve at least two or three of the commonly accepted translations of the Bible. A period of experiment — perhaps the same three-year period during which the *Ordo Lectionum* will presumably be used in its present form — should indicate which translations are most suitable for public proclamation of the readings in the liturgical assembly.

Since new translations which may appear during this period will attempt to render ever more faithfully the original meaning of the scriptures, there should be no hesitation about approving them also for liturgical use in the readings.

With regard to the psalms between the readings, the International Committee is prepared to provide, within the next several months, the necessary responses or refrains in English translation. With regard to the translation of the Book of Psalms itself, the International Committee does not expect to have its projected version ready in time for use with the *Ordo Lectionum*. It therefore recommends, as it did in the case of the *Graduale Simplex*, that the episcopal conferences approve for liturgical use one or more translations of the psalms which appear, in the judgment of experts, suitable for singing or recitation.

### **ICEL Translation of the Roman Canon**

In general, in those countries which have already put the text into use, the translation has received overwhelming approval from lay and cleric, peritus, and man in the street. This does not mean that criticism is not present, expected, or needed. It simply notes that the text has met our requirements—it is a fresh translation which can be proclaimed well and wears well, even with daily use.

Certain objections to the translation are more frequently heard, though in fact they are small. In general the notes cover these objections and it is important to refer to them. Objections do not occur as frequently when the people have heard the text proclaimed before they have had a chance to see it.

Frequently the objections do not take into account the principles on which the translation was based, or the general approach of the International Committee to its work and especially to the particular task of translating the Roman Canon.

Regarding specific small objections, from whatever source, very often what appears to be a valid criticism is offset by a conflicting opinion from an equally qualified voice.

However, without overlooking the various objections and suggestions from every area of concern (since these will be seriously considered in any future revision of the text), it is quite proper to quote from two sources as representative of the overwhelming favourable opinion towards the translation.

"It was a very professional project, featuring the collaboration as consultants of a hundred or more experts in liturgy, scripture, Christian Latin, English style, speech, and related fields. Perhaps only those with some personal experience of the problems involved in translating the Roman Canon can fully appreciate the achievement. As we noted in the last issue, we think this text compares very favourably not only with all existing English translations of the canon but also with current translations into other modern European languages. We are fortunate to have it." (*Chronicle, Worship*, November 1967).

"The question is precisely how one is to remain faithful to a text that will be read aloud in a language possessing different structural and rhetorical principles from Latin. The ICEL translators have offered an answer that deserves serious attention if not downright admiration." ("The Canon in English," *The Tablet*, December 2, 1967).

### **A New Psalter**

Despite the proliferation of Bible translations (with several yet to come) the Advisory Committee is unable to recommend any for liturgical

use. One of its major imminent projects is the translation of the entire psalter.

Beyond the work of *English for the Mass: Part II*, little has been done to further this project, although much was learned as a result of the publication of this booklet.

The Committee plans an immediate and extensive programme of sample translations and critiques of fairly large amounts of the psalter. This material will be examined at the May meeting and the final work of commissioning a psalter translation begun. In all probability the project cannot be completed in less than two years.

#### STRUCTURE OF THE COMMITTEE

