

## Lost in translation

Fr Philip Endean (“Worship and power”, 28 August) speaks of secrecy in connection with the new translation of the Missal, but a certain secrecy or at least obscurity seems to surround the text that is being translated. Our parish priest knows nothing of it. The Latin Mass Society is not interested in Latin Masses according to the new order; it supplies only Tridentine missals. Cenacle stocks a CTS Order in Latin and English, but this does not contain the prayers proper to different days. St Paul’s Bookshop (at £100) offers a new order Missal of five or six years ago, but is unable to say whether the text has since been changed. I wrote asking our bishop when the text was last changed, but have received no reply. Does anyone in Britain possess a current Roman Missal? If the text is as good as the specimens quoted in *The Tablet* by Dom Daniel McCarthy suggest, it is a pity that Catholics who read Latin cannot follow the Mass in Latin when it is being said in English.

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So – the elephant in the room can be confronted. The interpretive base for the new translation of the liturgy would seem to be to mystify and glorify ordination. This distorted theological perspective would link the ordained man particularly with Christ. Here Christ is identified exclusively in male terms with women providing the unordainable “difference”. Thus all falls into place including the response “and with your spirit” to the clergy – not to mention “my most grievous fault” – and the stubborn retention of the word “man” which – *pace* Philip Endean – does point to unreconstructed sexism as an integral part of this interpretive framework. The proposed “intensive catechesis” is a probably futile attempt to brainwash the faithful into a retrogressive theology at odds with Vatican II.

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I am horrified that a learned Jesuit would liken the introduction of the new English Missal with child abuse. As a member of the lay Christian faithful I have a de facto right to be taught the authentic teachings of the Church and not the personal ideas of any individual priest or pastoral minister. My right to receive this authentic teaching is primary over Fr Endean’s conscience. To paraphrase the great C.S. Lewis, I have no problem with clergy dissenting from teachings, but they should do so in their own time.

By linking his call of dissent to child abuse, Fr Endean both debases those who suffered abuse and intellectually weakens his argument by making it emotive.

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### Contrasting experiences

I was dismayed reading Eamon Duffy’s article “Where truth and beauty meet” (14 August). If he has it right, Pope Benedict’s restoration of elements of the pre-Vatican II

Mass relate in a significant way to his experience of beauty and mystery of traditional liturgy during his youth in Bavaria, coupled with the contributions of the German liturgical movement. I imagine this would have been a powerful religious and cultural experience. It is certainly different from the liturgical experience of many of us in the pre-Vatican II Church, with the 20-minute Sunday Masses, priests distributing Holy Communion starting at the Offertory, with the presider moving inaudibly through the Eucharistic Prayer in Latin. Mysterious? Definitely, but not quite in the sense of sacred or awesome. When you compare that experience with what we have now, the RCIA, the Easter Vigil, the distinct Liturgy of the Word, and so on, you can see what Pope Paul VI had in mind for the whole Western Church. I hope his work is not undone.

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### Islam and love

John Borelli (“Of a different order”, 21 August) states: “In October 2007, 138 Muslim leaders issued ‘A Common Word Between Us and You’, a substantive invitation to Christians to dialogue based on the commandments to love God and love one another, found in the Bible and the Qur’an.” The problem is that no such thing exists in the Qur’an.

While love is central in Christianity, it is hardly relevant in Islam. The few Qur’anic verses that mention love mean something totally different from the New Testament. In the Qur’an, Allah’s love is conditional upon man’s blind obedience to his laws. Thus we read in verse 4:107, for example: “Allah loveth not the impious and the guilty.”

Love in the Qur’an is just an attribute rather than a part of God’s very essence (“God is love”: 1 John 4:8). The concept of love of neighbour does not exist either. There is only love for fellow-Muslims; for example they are told in 5:59 “Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends”, and in 9:29: “Fight those who believe not in Allah or his Apostle, even if they are the People of the Book [Christians and Jews] until they submit”.

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### The women were there

Jacqueline Castles bemoans the absence of women from the “Treasures of Westminster Cathedral” exhibition (Letters, 28 August) but did she read the labels?

Omar Ramsden’s great monstrosity was given by Margaret Nickols in thanksgiving for her calling to the religious life. Another monstrosity was presented by Elena and Anita O’Callaghan. A chalice was given by Georgina



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and Blanche French, and others by married couples and families, the names of whose wives and mothers are identified. Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough, gave a Spanish crucifix and Mrs Crawford the morse set with 61 amethysts which made such an impact at Archbishop Nichols' enthronement last year. The vestments belonging to Cardinal Manning, Cardinal Bourne and Cardinal Howard were made and exquisitely embroidered by nuns, and Cardinal Wiseman's by the embroideresses of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

The devotion, sacrifice and generosity of these women is emblematic of Catholic life, history and patronage and women were the mothers of the bishops and priests who used these objects and the men who designed and made them. Their influence on them made them, for good or ill, the men they were.

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### In defence of Pius XII

I would like to clarify two points in Michael Walsh's review of Hubert Wolf's *Pope and the Devil: the Vatican's archives and the Third Reich* (Books, 28 August). The first concerns the caption to the photograph accompanying the review (which may not have been written by Mr Walsh). It suggests, wrongly, that in 1938 (the apparent date of the picture) Cardinal Pacelli was still the papal nuncio to Berlin. In fact by then, he had been Secretary of State for nearly 10 years. Pacelli had been nuncio first to Bavaria and then also to the Weimar Republic from 1917 to 1929.

The more important error is Mr Walsh's remark that: "The new Pope shelved it", referring to the supposedly missing encyclical of Pius XI. As Ronald J. Rychlak makes clear in his magisterial rebuttal of the much publicised charges against Pius XII (*Hitler, the War and the Pope*, revised edition published in 2010), the three Jesuits who had begun work on a possible encyclical for Pius XI were all quite certain that Pius XII had not seen their preparatory drafts, and therefore could never have been in a position to shelve it.

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### Dilemmas of a Catholic monarch

Another question might be added to your possibilities of a pope telling ambassadors and parliamentarians how they are to act when a moral issue comes up for a decision ("Our

man – or woman – in the Holy See", "Pope to meet former minister who drove equality legislation", 21 August). There has been agitation from some quarters that the monarchy should be open to a Catholic. This is superficially attractive. However, it should be remembered that the monarch still has the power to withhold consent to an Act of Parliament. Would a future pope put pressure on a Catholic monarch to use this power if Parliament passed a law which he considered opposed Catholic teaching? The subsequent constitutional crisis might seriously destabilise the country.

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### Prayer by Newman, not Teresa

The first prayer in the Living Spirit column on 28 August, was composed by Cardinal Newman and not by Mother Teresa. It is a prayer which I first learnt as a young teacher in 1948 and have used ever since.

The prayer was said daily after Communion by Mother Teresa and continues to be said by her Sisters of Charity.

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### Adenauer the great?

Without presuming to take sides in the assessment of General de Gaulle as a person, I must take issue with Crispin Rope's statement (Letters, 14 August) that "Surely, he was the greatest Catholic statesman of the twentieth century". A greater claimant to that title was Konrad Adenauer. In perceiving in 1944 that Germany after the war would be ruined socially, economically and morally and would need to be rebuilt on new foundations, he called together a group of theologians – Roman Catholic and Protestant – and economists to form the Christian Democratic Union Party.

On the subsequent programme was built a policy of capitalism with a strong social element, producing a country which has been a model of coming to terms with an awful past, and of peaceful prosperity and social responsibility. Adenauer's legacy has surely been far greater, politically and theologically, for us all, than that of "Le Generale"?

**(Canon) John Greaves**

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### Peace down under

The new liturgy has been interpreted differently in Australia: I didn't quite catch the reply, but the sign of peace greeting I overheard last week in Sydney of "Good on yer, Digger" wasn't met with "and with thy spirit".

**John Anthony**

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## The living Spirit

Sin is no more than this: that a man turns his head away from God, and looks towards death instead.

**Angelus Silesius**

(1624-77)

*The Cherubic Wanderer*

(Trans. J. M. Cohen)

Through sin we have "lost the plot". We no longer know where we fit in, why we have entered, how we leave, or, indeed, what the whole shooting match is about. How can we make it up? We have stepped on stage in the middle of the human story, so we settle for lesser stories to star in, and become absorbed in sport, business, career, sex, rock music, or family. Our lives are caught up in what has been called a "tournament of narratives". We adopt all kinds of roles and personas in the stories offered us, because our hearts long for that larger story that lifts us above ourselves and fulfils us, which dwarf us without diminishing us, and eclipses yet includes us.

**Philip Greenslade**

*A Passion for God's Story  
(Paternoster Press, 2002)*

Since all the world is but a story, it were well for thee to buy the more enduring story, rather than the story that is less enduring.

**St Columba**

(521-597)

In the person of Jesus the kingdom of God has broken into the world. This is God's "today". When God speaks, no delay is permitted. This is magnificently attested in the call of the first disciples. At a single word of the Master, they leave everything – their business, their family. They no doubt already knew Jesus; but in the eyes of the evangelist this detail is not important, for the whole force of the call resides in the authority of the one who calls ... And these simple men obey without discussion. First they are two, then four: "Immediately they left ... and followed him". This "immediately" characterises, for all time, the obedience of faith.

**Suzanne de Dietrich**

*St Matthew: Layman's Bible  
Commentary  
(SCM, 1961)*

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