

## French Catholics face battle royale over Roman Missal translation



Vatican insisting on a precise translation of a new Latin text. French Catholics face battle royale over Roman Missal translation

The French-speaking Catholic world is heading for the same tug-of-war over translating the Roman Missal that their English-speaking cousins fought and lost five ago. As in the case of the English text, the Vatican insists on a precise translation of the new Latin text approved in 2002.

The planned new text, meant to replace the first translation made after the Second Vatican Council, will be used in the French-speaking parts of Europe, Canada, Africa and the Caribbean for the next half-century. The bishops' first draft was rejected by the Vatican in 2007.

Several francophone bishops conferences, especially in Belgium, Canada and Switzerland, have raised objections to the latest text that they find pompous and unnatural, the French daily *La Croix* reported. The French bishops are less critical, but still have reservations.

But Cardinal Robert Sarah, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, told the French magazine *Famille Chrétienne* that Pope Francis had recently told him "the new translations of the Missal must absolutely respect the Latin text."

The latest text introduces the adjective "consubstantial" that English speakers discovered in their new Missal, and brings back the "through my fault" sequence that had been replaced by "Yes, I have truly sinned" in French.

For the chalice, it turns the current word for chalice "coupe" back to the older "calice", which has become a swear word for exasperated French Canadians. The introduction to the Offertory ("Orate fratres") has become stilted and hard to recite.

By contrast, a change to the Lord's Prayer has been well received. The currently used French prayer now says "do not submit us to temptation", which theologians say implies that God tempts people to sin. The new translation, which France's Protestant churches also support, says "do not let us enter into temptation".

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