

The Rhetorical Style of the New Translation

(20:49 – 24:05)

Basic Questions

- ❑ What is the rhetorical style of the Latin Roman Missal and the new English translation?
- ❑ What in our shared experience is like the rhetorical style of the new translation?

Key Ideas

- ❑ The rhetorical style of the Roman Missal, now reflected in the new English translation, is thick, memorable, and theological.
- ❑ The formal rhetoric of some of America's greatest statesmen is similar to that of the new translation.

Beginning Reflection

Remark to participants that in this third chapter of the DVD, Monsignor Moroney makes the statement that with the new translation, for the first time, we will be exposed to “the voice, ever ancient and ever new, of Roman Catholic liturgical prayer.”

As you watch, think about this statement and its importance in the life of the Church.

Show DVD (20:49 – 24:05)

Activity

Group Discussion

Ask participants the following questions and discuss responses.

- ❑ What is the rhetorical style of the Latin Roman Missal and the new English translation?
The rhetorical style of the Roman Missal, now reflected in the new translation, is thick, memorable, and theological.
- ❑ What in our experience is like the rhetorical style of the new translation?
The formal rhetoric of some of America's greatest statesmen is similar to that of the new translation.
- ❑ How do the examples from Lincoln, Kennedy, and Reagan relate to the new translation, according to Moroney?
Each are formal, yet profoundly intimate. In a similar manner, the collects, prefaces, and other prayers of the Roman Missal convey both the transcendence and the immanence of God's incarnate love.

Additional Resources

Liturgiam Authenticam, 59

Since liturgical texts by their very nature are intended to be proclaimed orally and to be heard in the liturgical celebration, they are characterized by a certain manner of expression that differs from that found in everyday speech or in texts intended to be read silently. Examples of this include recurring and recognizable patterns of syntax and style, a solemn or exalted tone, alliteration and assonance, concrete and vivid images, repetition, parallelism and contrast, a certain rhythm, and at times, the lyric of poetic compositions. If it is sometimes not possible to employ in the translation the same stylistic elements as in the original text (as often happens, for example, in the case of alliteration or assonance), even so, the translator should seek to ascertain the intended effect of such elements in the mind of the hearer as regards thematic content, the expression of contrast between elements, emphasis, and so forth. Then he should employ the full possibilities of the vernacular language skillfully in order to achieve as integrally as possible the same effect as regards not only the conceptual content itself, but the other aspects as well. In poetic texts, greater flexibility will be needed in translation in order to provide for the role played by the literary form itself in expressing the content of the texts. Even so, expressions that have a particular doctrinal or spiritual importance or those that are more widely known are, insofar as possible, to be translated literally.