



Sacred Heart

Catholic Church

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Homily Fr. Paul Ward

Saturday, July 30, and Sunday, July 31, 2011
18th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle A
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Imlay City

The Gloria and Awe in Divine Worship

(cf. Homily Aid for Congregation #2)

I begin with a few reminders. Auxiliary Bishop Arturo Cepeda will be offering Mass next Sunday, August 7, only at the Spanish Mass at noon. The day after that I will be departing for World Youth Day in Madrid Spain, and we have been working very hard to find a whole bunch of different priests, and remarkably outstanding priests at that, to continue providing the sacraments while I'm away. I beg you to take advantage of these Fathers, and get to confession while I'm away, and so be reconciled to God!^[1]

Today we enter into part two of our study of the new translation of the Gloria. Last week I provided some background into the Kyrie and the Gloria, and now we will look more closely at the text, to reap some good spiritual fruit.

The Gloria is a very contemplative prayer, filled with spiritual wonder, from which all poetry and music comes. This wonder has God as its object. Aristotle says that "our wonder is excited by phenomena... of which we do not know the cause,"^[2] and that "it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize."^[3] Philosophy for Aristotle was no different from theology, the study of "god."^[4]

Wonder comes at the beginning of experience, and not at the end. Today's world mistakenly assumes that the basis of all knowledge is our data, from which we move to analysis, and from there some go to the un-intellectual exercise of wonder. But wonder comes first, analysis second, and data is the last and poorest of all the abstractions our minds fabricate.

In many contemporary catechism books for children – so many of which are remarkably poor and lacking in both content and in supernatural inspiration... and what's with all those pointless clown pictures in Catholic catechism texts? – the authors have renamed the gift of the Holy Spirit called “Fear of the Lord” for “awe and wonder.” That is an error. Fear of the Lord is associated to piety and takes sin into account; wonder is associated to wisdom and of itself is lifted up to a vision of glory with no immediate consideration for sin, even if a sinner, after the experience of wonder, feels shame for his sins.

The Gloria is therefore a prayer of wonder. It starts with the angels' words in the scriptures (Lk 2:14), but then the Church of the centuries takes it up from there and continues the praise.^[5] We mentioned last week how its origins were Eastern, that is, from the Greeks, but in Latin it seems to have been translated and re-arranged by St. Hilary of Poitiers (d. 366).^[6]

The angels sang “Glory!” to God who is in the highest place of all that is. Then they wish peace. The current translation wishes peace, unexplainably, to “his people,” God's people. But the *universality* of God's saving plan is in part revealed, as God provides the hope of reconciliation to sinful men of all lands and all nations in all centuries, and *not* just to “his” people, which might be understood here as only Israel.

The actual text, and the new translations, wishes peace to “people of good will.” It should say “men” of good will, but inclusive language has gotten involved here, one of the few places it still rears its ugly head. The problems with inclusive language are principally two: first, its *linguistic* error of understanding the term “man” as only the masculine half of our species; and second, the *philosophical* error of implying a *difference of species* between man and woman.

Then the Church adds praises to the angels' praises. First we heap on praises in the form of a climax: “we praise you,” because of who we are, creatures and sinners before God. “We bless you,” because of his gifts and mercies which we have received by no merit of our own; and so *blessing is greater than praise*. “We adore you,” now turning our gaze completely off of ourselves, because God is worthy of all adoration, and is one of the prayers of the angels; so *adoration is greater than blessing*. “We glorify you,” also an act of saints and angels in heaven, bearing now *public* testimony of God's goodness and power; so *glorification is greater than adoration*. Thus there is a *climax*, and in order, like 1-2-3-4; whereas the current, poorer translation has it all mixed up, as if the translators of the 1970's didn't understand what they were looking at in the Gloria, and mix the verb up, more like in an order of 3-2-1-4, showing the disorder of the translators' minds. Also, they had put in the word “thanks” for “bless,” which makes no sense, which is also now corrected with the new translation.

Then we find, finally in the right place, the object of our praise *after* these initial praises, where they belong and as found in the Latin original. “Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.” “Almighty” is associated to the term “Father,” and not to “God” as the current translation. The inclusive language people, with their contempt for males, refused to translate the Latin properly until now, preferring to disassociate fathers from might rather than simply give us a faithful translation. May the new translation of just this clause help us understand God better, and help men grasp better how they are to love God, their wives, their families and their neighbors.

Then we go from “Only Son of the Father” to the more correct, “Only *Begotten* Son.” The words “only Begotten” are one word in Latin, *unigenitus*. The word in Latin underscores *not*

that he is the only Son, but rather the *manner* in which he proceeds from the Father – he is Begotten. Now, the Son of God has no brothers and sisters from the Father, even if by baptism we are his brothers and sisters, but only by adoption. But the point here is that He came forth in some mystical and incomprehensible way from all eternity from the Father, and no one, not even the eternal Spirit, came forth eternally like that. The Son is *begotten* from the Father; the Spirit *proceeds*, and not *just* from the Father, but from the Father *and* the Son. There was never a time when he had not already been begotten.

Then we come to a famous problem which finally got corrected. “Sin,” in the singular, in the current translation is “sins,” in the plural, in the Latin. What’s the difference? In the singular, it is abstract; in the plural, it is concrete – each one of my and your individual particular sins, which was paid for by the blood of the Lord. Also, in the singular the “Sin of the World” might mean, “the world, which is one, big, nasty sin.” But God created the world as good.

Then there is the repetition, “You take away the sins of the world.” We say that twice now. The same is true for, “have mercy on us.” The old translators hated repetitions. You’ll notice how ever since the 1970’s, things like Litanies and Rosaries, which include repetitions, are always under attack. It’s like the liberal, modernist mind has an obsession with repetition like it is evil. That is false; in ritual worship, we repeat everything all the time. We repeat our prayers, our readings in the scriptures year after year, the renewal of our baptismal promises, our confession of sins. These repetitions are the basis for the formation of habit, as all habit is formed by the repetition of acts; and good habits are virtues. So ritual repetitions help us believe, hope and love God more perfectly, and grow in prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

As you can tell, *much more could be said* about the Gloria and the praiseworthy new translation, but I must stop here. I only complain that the word “people” is in the second line: that is an inaccurate translation, and perhaps in some future the Bishops will correct event that.

Next time I will continue discussing the collects – those small prayers the priest sings at several points during the Mass – and something too about the readings and our responses and replies. I will continue, however, in September, as in August I must say something about World Youth Day, and Youth Ministry in general, and guest priests will have their own preaching with which to teach you and strengthen you in the faith.

Those who do not have contemplative souls usually find the Gloria to be a boring, long prayer, and can’t wait until its done. Such souls should make efforts to be more prayerful. The problem is that such souls put nothing into this magnificent prayer. What one needs to put into it is the spiritual life, namely, the attention of the intellect and the love of the will, and maybe also the powers of imagination and memory. These interior actions are the most arduous of all human acts. Prayer is hard.

Mary, the Mother of God, that first Christmas, heard the angels sing “Gloria!” She hears the Church sing, “Gloria!”, now through all the centuries. Let us join our hearts to her heart, filled with wonder and divine love. Let us, as she, affectionately contemplate that baby in the manger who was God, the same Divine Person we see in the Host on the altar. And with her let us pray with voice and heart, “Gloria to God in the highest!” ■

[1] 2 Cor 5:20.

[2] Aristotle, *Mechanics*, 847a10, Revised Oxford Tr. 1984.

[3] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 982b12 ff.

[4] *ibid*, 1025b1 ff., 1064a1 ff.

[5] Nicholas Gihl, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass Dogmatically, Liturgically and Ascetically Explained*, Herder (St. Louis: 1902), from 6th German edition, 1877, p. 396.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 365.

[Please click here for the translation aid.](#)

[Archives of Homilies on the New English Translation](#)

**New Translations of the English Roman Missal (Advent 2011)
– Homily Aid for Congregation #2**

The Gloria

Latin Missal (source)	Current Translation	New Translation
Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis	Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth. <i>Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father,</i>	Glory to God in the highest, and <u>on earth peace to people of good will.</u>
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. <i>Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.</i>	we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.	We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, <i>Lord God, heavenly King, <u>O God, almighty Father.</u></i>
Domine fili unigenite, Jesu Christe. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. <u>Qui tollis peccata mundi</u> <i>suscipe deprecationem</i> <i>nostram.</i>	Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;	Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; <u>you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;</u>
Qui sedes ad dexteram patris miserere nobis.	You are seated at the right hand of the Father: <i>receive our prayer.</i>	you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus. Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.	For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.	For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.