

Catholic Priest resigns over new Mass translation

by [Jo Siedlecka](#)

February 23, 2012

(ENInews)--A pastor in Belleville, Illinois, has become the first Catholic priest to resign over the new translation of the Mass, which was introduced throughout most of the English-speaking world last November.

Bishop Edward Braxton wrote in a letter to parishioners last week: "Father William J. Rowe, 72, has resigned from his position as Pastor of St. Mary Parish in Mount Carmel...because, as he has told me forthrightly on several occasions, he simply could not and would not pray the prayers of the Mass as they are translated in the new Roman Missal."

The new translation was voted for by most English language bishops and is the result of several years of study and preparation. An earlier version, which contained more inclusive language (i.e. 'us' instead of 'us men') was rejected by Rome and replaced by a text said to be closer to the original Latin.

Speaking on behalf of the U.S. Catholic Bishops in November, Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond said: "The entire Church in the United States has been blessed with this opportunity to deepen its understanding of the Sacred Liturgy, and to appreciate its meaning and importance in our lives."

"The new translation is a great gift to the Church," said UK church spokesman Arthur Roche, Bishop of Leeds and chairman of the Department for Christian Life and Worship. "In the new translation we find a text that is more faithful to the Latin text and therefore a text which is richer in its theological content and allusions to the scriptures but also a translation which, I believe, will move people's hearts and minds in prayer. This is a tremendous opportunity for the Church in England and Wales to learn about our faith and the Mass."

However, the new translation has not been universally welcomed, and some critics find the language clumsy. For example, a phrase from the first Eucharistic prayer in the Mass that formerly read: "Joseph, her husband" becomes in the new translation "Joseph, spouse of the same virgin." One prayer contains a single sentence 74 words long.

Before the texts were introduced they were met with gentle protests from clergy and lay people around the world, and these are ongoing. In February 2011, a group representing more than 400 of Ireland's 4,500 priests urged the country's bishops to postpone the introduction of the new missal.

"We are passionately concerned about the quality of our liturgical celebration and about the quality of the language that will be used in the way we worship Sunday after Sunday," said Rev. Dermot Lane, president of Mater Dei Institute of Education in Dublin. "If this goes ahead, instead of drawing people into the liturgy, it will in fact draw people out from the liturgy."

"We are saying very clearly that this new translation of the missal is not acceptable," said Rev. Gerard Alwill, pastor of a rural parish in the Diocese of Kilmore. "We are deeply concerned that if these new texts are imposed, they could create chaos in our church. Our church doesn't need chaos at this time."

A group in Seattle, Washington, made a similar appeal. So far 23, 270 have signed its petition, entitled "What if we just said wait" (<http://www.whatifwejustsaidwait.org/Default.aspx>).