

sentation at the Vatican is political, not religious, in its scope, and that it can be, has been and is, carried on by competent trained diplomats without reference to their personal beliefs. It has, in a word, settled down to being a normal part of the British Foreign Service, as it is of the Foreign Services of so many other Governments.

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## RELIGIOUS TRANSLATION: FOUR EXAMPLES

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**I**N our January number we published an article on religious translation. One of our readers, the Rev. J. B. O'Connell, who has himself collaborated in a fairly recent translation of the missal, asked the writer of the article to provide some examples which would embody the principles of translation he had formulated. This seemed a very just request, and so we are printing here four pieces of translation, two from the breviary and two from the missal. The extracts from St Leo and St Augustine were chosen for the contrast of style. These two, and the translation of the prayers from the missal, are by Fr E. Hill, O.P., the writer of the aforementioned article; the translation of the Consecration Prayer is by Fr H. McCabe, O.P. It will be observed that there are some small points on which they differ, for example on the use of 'thou' or 'you' in formal prayers to God. They would both welcome the comments and criticisms of readers.

(I) FROM ST LEO'S 8TH SERMON ON THE PASSION (3rd nocturn lesson, Good Friday)

Pilate's guilt was certainly surpassed by the wickedness of the Jews, who made use of Caesar's name to overawe him, and so drove him to carry out their villainy. Yet he did not come out of it guiltless either, since he forsook his own judgment and lent himself to other men's wrongdoing. But that Pilate allowed Jesus to be ignominiously ridiculed and maltreated, that he had him flogged and crowned with thorns and dressed up in the trappings of mock grandeur, and then paraded him in such state before the

gaze of his persecutors; all this he reckoned might soften the animosity of his foes and glut their hatred; it might perhaps make them think that there was no point in persecuting any further a man whom they saw so variously misused. But in fact their yells of rage were redoubled in intensity, and so they obtained to their own condemnation what they had been so persistently demanding. The Lord therefore was handed over to their savage lust for blood. In mockery of his royal dignity he is bidden to be the bearer of his own gibbet. Thus the words were fulfilled, 'His government is upon his shoulder'. A beautiful touch, this; there he was carrying his own battle honours in triumph, and advancing against the kingdoms of the earth under the standard of salvation which all of them were soon to be worshipping. The crowds that went along with Jesus found a Cyrenean called Simon, and to his shoulders they transferred the timbers of the Lord's gibbet. This was done to foreshadow the faith of the gentiles, for whom Christ's cross was not to be a thing of shame but of glory. Furthermore it was not in the temple nor within the city limits that he was crucified, but 'outside the camp', because with the passing of the old rites of sacrifice the new victim must be placed on a new altar, and this altar, the cross of Christ, must not be the temple's merely, but the world's.

And now that Christ has been lifted up on the cross, beloved children, you should not just picture to yourselves the sorry sight which met the eyes of the wicked, who were told through Moses, 'Your life will be dangling before your eyes, and you will be afraid night and day, and you will not trust your own life'. But our minds should be clean and bright enough to catch the glory of the cross as it sweeps heaven and earth with its beams; and to see what our Lord meant when he said, 'Now is the judgment of the world, now shall the prince of this world be thrown out outside. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself.' O the power and wonder of the cross! O the glory of the passion beyond telling! There is to be seen the Lord's chair of justice, and the world's judgment, and the power of the Crucified. You drew all things to yourself, O Lord, when the whole world acquired a sense of the praise due to your greatness. You drew all things to yourself, O Lord, when all the elements concurred in one verdict to abhor the villainy of the Jews, when the lights of heaven were darkened, and the earth shook with

unwonted tremors, and the whole of creation refused its services to the wicked. You drew all things to yourself, O Lord, when the veil of the temple was torn in two, and the Holy of Holies was thus withdrawn from an unworthy priesthood; by this means was make-believe to be turned into truth, prophecy into present fact, and the Law to give way to the Gospel. You drew all things to yourself, O Lord, to provide a public and open sacrament, in which all nations might dedicate themselves to the celebration of that mystery which used to be tucked away, under cover of shadowy symbols, in one solitary temple of Judaea.

(2) FROM ST AUGUSTINE'S SERMON ON PSALM 63 (2nd nocturn lesson, Holy Saturday)

(To make better sense, I have begun the translation a little earlier than the breviary lesson, and followed the text of Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, which differs in a few places.)

'They have pored over iniquity; they have slipped up in their poking and prying'—that is in working out their sly spiteful schemes. 'Have him betrayed by a disciple of his, not by us; have him killed by the governor, not by us; let us work the whole thing without seeming to be responsible for any of it.' But the sharper their slyness the greater their mistake. . . . For what comes next? 'A man will come near, and a deep heart; and God shall be exalted.' *They* said 'Who will see us?' and they slipped up in their poking and prying into evil schemes. A man came up to their schemes, he let himself be caught in them as man. You see he could never be caught at all unless he were man, or be seen unless he were man, or be beaten or crucified or die unless he were man. And so a man came up to all those sufferings, which could not have touched him unless he had been a man. But if he had not been a man, there would have been no deliverance for man. 'A man came near, and a deep heart'—that is a heart with a secret. He presented a man to the eyes of men outside, he kept God unheeded inside; he hid the form of God in which he is equal to the Father, and displayed the form of a slave in which he is less than the Father.

Look how far they carried their futile poking and prying; even when our Lord was dead and buried, they slipped up to the extent of placing a guard on the tomb. 'That charlatan', they said to Pilate—that is what they called our Lord Jesus Christ, to encour-

age his servants when *they* get called charlatans—‘that charlatan said while he was still alive’, they told him, ‘“I will rise again after three days.” Order his tomb to be guarded then, until the third day, in case his disciples come and steal him, and tell the people he has risen from the dead; and the latest folly will be worse than the previous one.’ Pilate said to them, ‘You can have a guard; go and guard it as best you know.’ They went away and secured the tomb by sealing the stone and setting guards.

They put soldiers on guard at the tomb; there was an earthquake, our Lord rose. The tomb was the scene of such wonderful happenings as even the soldiers who had come to guard it could have vouched for, if they had wanted to tell the truth. But the tomb’s military guardian was enslaved by the same greed that had caught Christ’s disciple and companion. ‘We are giving you money’, they said, ‘and you just say that his disciples came and took him away while you were asleep.’ Well, they *did* slip up in their poking and prying, their plotting and their planning. What have you gone and said, you slinking slyness? You must indeed have forsaken the light of honest counsel, and plunged deep in the slime of subtlety, to say a thing like that; ‘Say his disciples came and took him away while you were asleep’. Fancy bringing forward sleeping witnesses! You yourself must have been asleep and snoring, to make such a slip in your poking and prying.

### (3) SOME PRAYERS FROM THE MISSAL

#### *IIIrd Sunday in Advent*

COLLECT: Please Lord, lend thy ear to our prayers; and light up the darkness of our minds with the grace of thy guardian presence.

SECRET: Please Lord, may we ever devote ourselves to thee in offering this sacrifice; both performing in it the sacred mysteries thou hast prescribed, and finding in it the wonderful effect of thy salvation.

POSTCOMM.: We earnestly entreat thy favour, Lord; clear us of our faults, and by this divine provision make us ready for the coming feast.

#### *Christmas, First Mass.*

COLLECT: Please God, since thou hast made this sacred night glow with the brilliance of the true day, enable us to enjoy in

heaven the happiness of that Light, whose mysteries have been made known to us on earth.

SECRET: Please Lord, may today's festive offering be to thy liking; lavish thy favour upon us, so that on the strength of this sacred bargain we may be found in his shape and likeness, who is with thee our life, our substance, and our all.

POSTCOMM.: Ours being the happiness of celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ by thronging to the mysteries, please give us the grace, Lord God, to prove ourselves worthy by our behaviour of admission to his company.

*Christmas, Second Mass.*

COLLECT: Now that we are being drenched in the new light of thy Word made flesh, please almighty God, enable our deeds to sparkle with the same freshness of grace as gleams by faith in our minds.

SECRET: May our gifts, please Lord, succeed in matching the mysteries of this birthday by filling us with peace; and just as he who was born a human being glowed with the brilliance of the Godhead, so may we be endowed by these earthly materials with god-like grace.

POSTCOMM.: May he whose unique birth, O Lord, has put a stop to the staleness of humanity, always continue to restore us by his birthday freshness in this sacrament.

(4) THE CONSECRATION PRAYER.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. *And with your spirit.*

V. Let us lift up our hearts.

R. *They are raised to the Lord.*

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. *It is right and just.*

It is truly right and just, it is our duty and it is our salvation to give thanks to you always and everywhere, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord. Through him the Angels praise your greatness, the Dominations worship it, the Powers stand in awe, the Heavens and the Armies of the Heavens, with the blessed Seraphim, praise it, united in a single joy. We beg you to let us join our voice with theirs to proclaim in humble praise:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, God of the heavenly Armies, heaven and earth are filled with your glory. Hosanna in the highest heaven. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heaven.

And so, kind and loving Father, we humbly beg of you and ask you through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, to accept and bless these presents, these gifts, these holy and unspoilt offerings. We offer them in the first place for your holy Catholic Church. Deign throughout the whole world to grant her peace, to guard her, to gather her into unity and to govern her. And also for your servant . . . our Pope and for . . . our Bishop and for all those who, faithful to the true doctrine, have in their keeping the catholic and apostolic faith.

Remember, Lord, your servants . . . and all these gathered here; you know their faith and their loyalty. We offer for them (or they offer) this sacrifice of praise for themselves and their families, to obtain redemption for their souls, the security and salvation for which they hope; and they address their prayers to you, eternal God, living and true.

United in a single community we venerate the memory, in the first place of the glorious Mary, ever a virgin, mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, then of your blessed Apostles and Martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, . . . Cosmas and Damian, and of all your saints. Through their merits and their prayers grant us always the help of your strength and your protection, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

See, then, the offering which we present to you, we your ministers and with us your whole family. Accept it, Lord, with kindness, order in your peace all the days of our life, snatch us from eternal damnation and count us in the number of your chosen ones, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deign, O God, to bless this gift, to accept it and fully to approve it, to make it perfect and worthy to please you; and may it become for us the Body and Blood of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For he, on the eve of his passion, took bread in his holy and adorable hands, and with his eyes raised to heaven towards you, O God, his almighty Father, giving thanks to you, he blessed this bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat this, all of you,

FOR THIS IS MY BODY.

In the same way, after the meal, he took this precious chalice in his holy and adorable hands, again gave thanks and blessed it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and drink this, all of you,

FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD,

the blood of the new and eternal alliance, the mystery of faith, which shall be shed for you and for the multitude of men for the forgiveness of sins.

Every time you do this you shall do it in memory of me.

That is why, Lord, in memory of the blessed passion of Christ your Son, our Lord, of his resurrection from the dead, and of his ascension into the glory of heaven, we your ministers and with us your holy people offer to your glorious Majesty, from among the good things that you have given us, the perfect victim, the holy victim, the victim without blemish, the holy bread of everlasting life, and the chalice of eternal salvation.

Look with favour and kindness on these offerings; accept them as you were willing to accept the gifts of your servant Abel the Just, the sacrifice of Abraham the father of our race, and that of Melchisedech your high priest, an offering holy and without blemish.

We beg you, almighty God, to have these offerings carried in the hands of your holy angel to your altar on high in the presence of your divine Majesty. And when, by taking part at this altar here, we receive the sacred Body and Blood of your Son, may we all be filled with every grace and blessing from heaven, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Remember also, Lord, your servants . . . who have gone before us marked with the seal of the faith, and who sleep the sleep of peace. To them, Lord, and to all who rest in Christ, grant, we beg you, a place of happiness, of light and of peace, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

To us sinners also, your servants, who put our trust in your infinite mercy, grant a place in the community of your holy Apostles and Martyrs, with John, Stephen, . . . Anastasia, and with all your saints. In admitting us to their company do not weigh the value of our deeds but freely grant us your pardon. Through Christ our Lord.

Through him, Lord, you never cease to create all these good

things, to make them holy, to give them life, to bless them and to grant them to us.

Through him, with him and in him there is to you, God the Father almighty, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

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## REMBRANDT AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

MARIA SHIRLEY

REMBRANDT'S art reveals a unique reverence and appetite for life which originated in an entirely different attitude and vision from the extrovert thirst for sensual excitement animating the tavern scenes by Jan Steen and other Dutch painters. Rather he evinced an insatiable curiosity about reality, about matter informed by spirit, and if he depicted *genre* scenes they indicated a pervasive intangible quality beyond the facts of their immediate physical appearance. The acuteness of his observation enabled him to translate the most complicated forms and structures—struggling children, wild beasts, carriages—into drawings where their particular essentials are seized with an inimitable assurance and spontaneity: a single calligraphic curve defines the receding plane of an upturned nose, a bold prolonged oval stroke the thrust and fulness of an abdomen. Like Constable he was an intuitive rather than a scientific draughtsman: that his results are objectively convincing is a triumph of optical and manual co-ordination.

However, it is not mere technical virtuosity which provides the key to his perennial fascination. His *oeuvre* represents a continual and gradual elimination of superfluities in an unending quest for visual equivalents of the fundamental mystery which lies at the heart of all human experience. Contrary to the usual pattern of responsiveness, his sense of wonder increased with age, and compassionate wonder became the ultimate theme of his art, culminating in the painting of the 'Prodigal Son' with its universal and personal hope of Divine mercy.

This level of profundity was slowly and painfully acquired in