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Review of new missal mixed in St. Louis parishes

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NCR Today

My best friend in kindergarten was named Grail and her older sister was named Chalice. My own mother, Genevieve, was quite clear that I had been named for the Blessed Virgin and her mother, Ann. It seems to me that the bishops are reaching back to that narrow period of piety in the 1940s and '50s in their effort to reinvigorate the faithful.

I interviewed Dominican and Loretto sisters who attend Mass at a retirement community. The sacristan there is worried that the older priests who celebrate Mass will have trouble carrying the new book, sent to all the churches and chapels from the chancery.

The review was mixed. One sister said, "I like very much the words at the consecration and at the end. It is very prayerful."

Another said, "I kind of like it. There are not that many changes. So far I don't mind."

And, "It worked of us. It's not a necessity."

A couple said, "I come out with the wrong words," "It's not that much of a change for me." "I still get lost." "It's too soon to have an opinion." "Sometimes I turn these things off." "The priest's diligence in using the right phrases made me more diligent."

A sister who attended Mass at the local parish said the parish response generally was great but one woman said, "I'm 83. This is so hard for me."

One sister said, "Oh, goodness. To me it surely doesn't help us. I have not heard two priests explain that we have a special kind of language in church, different than in the secular world. I feel that that premise is

not in line with Vatican II. What is the point of going back to the Latin? Jesus didn't speak Latin. All this time and money is a distraction from what's important."

From another sister, "The bishops don't have enough to do. They have their priorities mixed up."

And from a third, "They could have used all that money for the poor."

And finally, a lot of laughter followed by, "I'm ignoring it as much as possible. Maybe it will go away."

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If the premise is that we should speak to God more formally than we speak to one another, that flies in the face of tradition. God is thou, tu, ti. They tell us "abba" means "daddy."

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