NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

First U.S. edition of missal in Spanish may be on the horizon

Patricia Zapor Catholic News Service | Oct. 25, 2013
Washington

Anyone who's familiar with the arduous, years-long process of getting English-language liturgical texts into use might be a bit surprised to learn that there is no comparable system for single-source Spanish translations of missals and other liturgical books.

In the United States, priests celebrating daily or weekly Mass, a wedding or other liturgy in Spanish have a choice of using texts of the second edition Misal Romano approved for use by any national bishops' conference. Unlike the system for English liturgical texts, no multinational entity oversees the translations from Latin -- it's just between the individual nations' bishops' conferences and the Vatican.

In the U.S., which has never adopted an official Spanish translation, it's a matter of the priest's -- or perhaps the local bishop's -- preference whether to use the Misal Romano of Mexico, Argentina, Spain or any other Vatican-authorized translation.

That could change as soon as next fall, if the U.S. bishops accept recommended changes on the agenda of their Nov. 11-14 meeting in Baltimore.

The bishops' Committee on Divine Worship is proposing a handful of liturgical items, including adopting the third edition of the Mexican Misal Romano as the base for the first U.S. version of the missal in Spanish. The committee also is asking the bishops to approve local adaptations for that missal, including Mass prayers for U.S. observances such Independence Day and the feasts of saints from various Spanish-speaking countries.

Auxiliary Bishop Octavio Cisneros of Brooklyn, N.Y., who chairs the subcommittee on Spanish liturgy for the divine worship committee, told Catholic News Service that if the proposals are approved and all goes smoothly with getting final Vatican approval and with the publishing process, the U.S. church could have its own Spanish Misal Romano in place by a year from now.

In comparison to the process for English liturgical texts, it should be a relative breeze.

As Cisneros explained, the other countries' missals differ from each other primarily in minor ways. Spanish itself is fairly close to Latin, so translators rarely have significant variations.

One difference among translations that would be obvious to even casual listeners is that the new Mexican translation discontinues the use of the "vosotros" form of verbs, a more formal tense that is not typically used in the United States, said Fr. Daniel Merz, associate director for the Secretariat of Divine Worship at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Just as the English-speaking countries in 2011 began using a new translation based on the 2002 Latin version of the Third Typical Edition, so too have Spanish-speaking countries begun using translations that have been approved in the last decade. Mexico's new third edition is being released in November. The bishops of Spain are

still working out details of their translation.

After the last of the proposed adaptations to the Mexican missal are approved by the U.S. bishops, they will be sent to the Vatican for approval. Since the main text has already been approved by Rome, putting the adaptations together with an already finished missal should be relatively easy, Cisneros said.

Not every Spanish-speaking country produces its own missal translation, largely because of the resources it takes, Cisneros said. Mexico and Spain each has their own, while Argentina's is a collaboration with Chile and other southern South American countries. Colombia's was a joint project with Ecuador.

Elsewhere, the bishops' conference chooses one, perhaps adapting it with propers for saints and other national observances. This is what the U.S. proposes to do. Once the U.S. edition of the Misal Romano is available, that will be the only Spanish translation approved for U.S. use.

Comparatively speaking, the process is much simpler than what it takes to get an English missal into common use. When texts are retranslated or updated, typically there are years of back-and-forth consultations among a dozen or more bishops' conferences, the International Committee on English in the Liturgy and the Vatican.

The bishops' conferences of 11 English-dominant countries make up the ICEL's membership. Since 1963, ICEL has been the resource to prepare translations of Latin liturgical texts for use in those and about 20 other nations where English is spoken.

As observers may have gathered from watching the seven-year process of approving the English version of the Roman Missal that went into use in the United States in 2011, getting to a common translation accepted for use around the world is complicated.

That's part of the reason why the bishops' conferences of Spanish-speaking countries have never created a counterpart to ICEL or sought to use one Misal Romano, Cisneros said. The subject most recently came up in 2010 at a meeting of the Latin American Liturgical Conference, for bishops from Spanish-speaking countries, which Cisneros attended.

On the last day of the meeting, Cisneros said, Cardinal Antonio Canizares Llovera, a Spaniard who is prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, asked about creating such a commission. "I was the only one who spoke in favor of it," he said.

He said the opposition to a Spanish version of ICEL from the bishops in other countries may be partly a matter of regionalism, he suggested, or not wanting to make things more complicated. Also, few countries have the same issue the United States does, of large numbers of immigrants from a variety of different Spanish-speaking countries who may be aware of small differences in translations.

Other liturgical items on the agenda for November include a retranslation of the Order of Confirmation and some adaptations to the Order of Celebrating Marriage. The rite for marriage includes a few new prayers and options, including the possibility of using a litany of the saints, or adaptations of the Hispanic traditions of giving coins and the blessing and use of a "lazo," or veil, over the marrying couple during the nuptial blessing.

Also proposed are new prayers for blessing engaged couples and for celebrating wedding anniversaries.

Source URL (retrieved on *02/10/2016 - 16:59*): http://ncronline.org/news/people/first-us-edition-missal-spanish-may-be-horizon