

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

If you want my opinion, I think there will be no change to the Lord's Prayer in English. The Catholic bishops of Italy have changed one line of the prayer from *non ci indurre in tentazione* to *non abbandonarci alla tentazione*. Or from "lead us not into temptation" to "do not abandon us to temptation." They had discussed this for years, but Pope Francis helped when he recently shared his view that a good Father does not lead children into temptation. Spanish, which is spoken in the pope's native Argentina, has always used these words for the same line: *no nos dejes caer en tentación*. Or, "Do not let us fall into temptation." Last year the French translation changed from *Ne nous soumet pas a la tentacion* to *ne nous laisse pas entrer en tentacion*. Or from "Do not submit us to temptation" to "Let us not enter into temptation." Media outlets are wondering, will it change in English too? Our version like many others is based on a Latin translation of the Greek original. So for *ne nos inducas in tentationem*, we translate literally, "lead us not into temptation." It's not far off from the original Greek version in Matthew, *καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν*, "Do not lead us into trial."

Sometimes I'm wrong, but I think we'll see no change in English. Once you open the door to one word of our translation, you raise a host of issues about the Lord's Prayer. For example, should we change the word "art", and if so, do you replace it with "are", which is grammatically correct, or "is", which is how most people talk? What about the three occurrences of the word "thy"? Should they all be changed to "your"? No other prayer in the mass uses "thy". Scholars tell us that "daily" is the wrong translation for the word *ἐπιούσιον*, which can also mean "from above" or even "for tomorrow." And then you've got the word "temptation". *Πειρασμόν* can also mean "trial" or "test". It calls to mind something Jesus said at the garden of Gethsemane, which uses the same Greek word in the same gospel, "Pray that you may not undergo the test" (Matt 26:41). That sounds a lot like what we're praying in the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into the test."

Then there are ecumenical concerns. When Christians gather, we pray the Lord's Prayer the same way, except that Catholics end it sooner. Many other Christians add a line found in the *Didache*, written about 20 years after Matthew's gospel. That's where you find "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever." If Catholics change the Lord's Prayer on our own, it will seem offensive to other Christians. They have the same Father we do.

Furthermore, there's a shorter version of the Lord's Prayer in Luke's Gospel. That one is probably more original because it's easier to explain why Matthew would expand on the prayer than why Luke would cut some of it out. Matthew's version, the one we use, may be different from the prayer Jesus taught.

On today's Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, we hear the miracle of the loaves, which foreshadows the eucharist. All ate and were satisfied. We receive satisfaction every time we eat the body and drink the blood of Christ. But before we do, we pray the Lord's Prayer. Right after the eucharistic prayer in the presence of the body and blood of Christ we address God with Jesus' prayer. The English translation has some flaws, but to change it would cause great controversy. I think it won't happen. But in any translation it still serves as our best preparation to receive the best sacrament: The Body and Blood of Christ.

Sunday, June 23, 2019