

[http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/willis\\_e\\_elliott/2007/07/heritage\\_is\\_sound\\_silence\\_is\\_a.html](http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/willis_e_elliott/2007/07/heritage_is_sound_silence_is_a.html)

# Heritage Is Sound, Silence is Amnesia

ON FAITH - WASHINGTON POST - WILLIS ELLIOTT

The Pope is right.

In 1943, the Pope was right in permitting Roman Catholic Biblical scholars to switch their basis of study from Latin to the Bible's original languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. In the U.S., Rome's Bible scholars could now attend meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis. At our annual meeting in December, on either side of me (a Protestant) sat a Roman priest who was surprised to see that the book open in my hands was the New Testament in *Greek and Latin*. I was nobody special. Everybody's New Testament was in Greek and Latin—except the new-come Roman scholars, whose former New Testament was *only in Latin*.

In 1965 (the end of Vatican Council II), priests were permitted to say Mass in the vernacular, the people's languages; and the Latin-said Mass faded fast. Also, the people began to fade away from Mass-attendance. The Latin language's sacred sounds (phonemes), signs (morphemes), and significances (sememes), with almost two millennia of associations, died away. Heritage is more sound than sight, and silence soon is amnesia.

*False* is the argument that people need to hear everything in their own language in order to understand. Understanding is not just cognitive (ideas); it's of one's whole being. Fourth-century Augustine put it well: Understanding arises out of one's whole experience of faith and belief and practice: "Credo ut intelligam." Roman Catholics who hear no Latin are cut off from the sounds that have shaped the souls and minds of their ancestors in the Latin branch of the Christian Church. Besides, congregations are easily provided with translations in their own vernacular (preferably printed in parallel with the Latin). And it's not as though the people leave church having heard nothing in their vernacular: the homily or sermon is in their mother-tongue.

We are *the language animal*, with mental and physical linguistic powers far exceeding those of our closest evolutionary neighbors. Religion, culture, civilization, heritage all depend on our audio memory-banks. We are shaped and saved by sounds.

**Helen Keller** began to be humanized when she associated the flow of water on her hands with the sound "water," which she could speak but not hear. And when she put her fingers on my lips (I was 11) and I asked her "Who is God to you?" she said "God is the sound in my silence and the light in my darkness." She put hearing first. For our becoming and remaining human, sound is even more important than sight.

I believe in the practice of hearing the sounds of the heritage one is committed to living. I am a Christian. I practice hearing the sounds of my faith and offering them to God in prayer. For more than a half century, each day I have read the Bible in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the formative languages of the Christian mind.

English is the formative language of the American mind. Some of our founders could read and even speak other languages, but their public speaking and writing was exclusively in English. All our founding documents, from the Mayflower Compact to the latest Amendment to the Constitution, are in English. In this light, all other languages are un-American.

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | JULY 11, 2007; 7:30 AM ETSAVE & SHARE:



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Contrary to popular belief, the end of the year is one of the best times to look for, awesome descion

POSTED BY: SASHA BRINKOVA | DECEMBER 10, 2007 8:52 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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POSTED BY: JENNIFER | NOVEMBER 26, 2007 6:21 PM

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POSTED BY: JENNIFER | NOVEMBER 26, 2007 6:20 PM  
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The comic visited the land for the first time in decades to promote his anRrpWTYnkmcou new animated movie about bees, and he was treated like royalty literally

POSTED BY: IRIS | NOVEMBER 26, 2007 10:35 AM  
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Gear up for grub with a tripleheader of pigskin, including a meeting of brothers in Dallas. Everybody knows it's been a rough year for her, but find out who else had issues

POSTED BY: BETTY | NOVEMBER 25, 2007 3:10 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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POSTED BY: BETTY | NOVEMBER 25, 2007 3:10 AM  
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POSTED BY: JESSICA | NOVEMBER 22, 2007 5:24 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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POSTED BY: JAMES | NOVEMBER 22, 2007 8:37 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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POSTED BY: JAMES | NOVEMBER 22, 2007 8:36 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Latin was the language of the earliest New Testament translation and later became the official language of the Bible after Jerome's translation (c.400 AD the Latin Vulgate)was completed. The church and western civilization has had a long love affair with this language till the late 20th century. Latin was taught in our public schools in the 1800s, which some are not aware of. Catholics that were brought up in the church learned the meaning of the mass. Post-Moderns the US are disconnected from this kind of education or from the churches past.

POSTED BY: BILLYRAYJOEBOB BUBBA | JULY 27, 2007 9:05 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Now why do you suppose a guy who is a member of the United Church of Christ and also a member of the Baptist Church, neither of which ever has services in Latin, would be so gung ho about the Roman Catholics resurrecting the Tridentine Mass?

If the CEO of Coca-Cola starts praising some policy at Pepsi, a wise executive at Pepsi might want to reconsider the policy.

POSTED BY: RICHARD | JULY 23, 2007 7:12 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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To Lepidopteryx: Actually whatever you do out of love, you do for the Divine. Sometimes what some people refer to as secular music, God speaks to me thru much better than some of the so-called sacred music. Lots of people try to put God in a box. I cherish my faith but however God works in your life, go for it, I just happen to be the New Testsmnt Moses and God and I will do the job that God chose me for, God is real and He is so much nicer, to say the least, than a lot of people that know His Name think that He is. I refer to God as He but God is not male or female or an it, pronouns you know, but God is Pure Love. Take Care. Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | JULY 21, 2007 11:09 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thoams: \*\*You know in the catholic faith the fall of man is referred to as, O Happy Fault,\*\*

Actually, I never knew any such thing, never having been Catholic, and having left Christianity over twenty years ago. I don't believe that man is a fallen being. Imperfect, sure - everything is. But not fallen.

After having studied many different spiritual paths, I have found that all of them contain some history, some wisdom, and some dreck. What I have done since is to take wisdom where I find it, whether in the OT/NT, the Qu'ran, the Baghavad Gita, the teachings of the Buddha, the Goseigen, Shakespeare, Stephen Hawking, the biographies/autobiographies of people I admire from Albert (Einstein) to Zelda (Fitzgerald), the poetry of Lorca, Neruda, cummings, or Rumi, the fiction or essays of Barbara Kingsolver, the plethora of children's books by Dr.Suess and Byrd Baylor, the music of Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, or Muddy Waters, the utterings of the various children of all ages in my life (from my friend's toddler to my teenage daughter), to the antics of my menagerie (and that lis is hardly exhaustive), and incorporate it into my being.

I have also found that much of the ritual that people use for worship is strictly of their own invention as a way to better understand or apply their scriptures, and there's nothing wrong with that. My personal worship rituals are very much my own invention, as I do what best allows me to feel attuned to the Divine. I just don't try to tell myself that my choice of ritual is the only one that the Divine really approves of.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | JULY 18, 2007 7:48 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

To Lepidopteryx: You know in the catholic faith the fall of man is referred to as, O Happy Fault, this is basically a translation from a latin term which I don't know what the latin term is, if there is someone out there that knows more about it, chime in. Yes, I agree that original sin is a blessing, a blessing in disguise, but a blessing nevertheless because it is part of God's Plan for all of His children and I do mean ALL. I am very glad that God is nothing like so many people think that He is. I refer to God as a He but He is not male, female or an it, God Incarnate was a man though. Take care, Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | JULY 17, 2007 6:57 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thomas:

\*\*Actually God did want Adam and Eve to know and that is really what gave us free will.\*\*

So he told Adam and Eve NOT to eat the fruit, but he really DID want them to eat it? If that's the case, then why were they punished for it?

I saw an interesting program on the history channel last night about Genesis. There is a school of thought that it's actually an allegorical record of man's transition from hunter-gatherer (Eden) to agriculture (sweat of your brow). Once societies begin to function on an agricultural basis, their hunter-gatherer days are over.

Also learned that there's a Sumerian? Phonecian? story almost identical to the Garden story in Genesis - the epic of Gilgamesh. It's several thousand years older than Genesis. It even has a talking snake. Only in Gilgamesh, the snake was a god who offered wisdom. It's pretty common when one society takes over another to also take over their stories and make their gods into demons. Just look what the Christians did to pagan traditions and to our Horned God.

So maybe God really DID want Adam and Eve to eat the fruit. And so-called Original Sin was actually a blessing.

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | JULY 17, 2007 5:16 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Again, the important point:

There is no religion in the Spirit State aka Heaven. The Gate is open to anyone of good standing with or without the assistance of B16 and/or Latin Masses.

POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | JULY 15, 2007 8:55 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

NONYMY is that "Viva Benedict Arnold" or have another slug of Benedictine?

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | JULY 14, 2007 3:39 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I have no comment. I'm not suppose to waste my time arguing with uninformed outsiders. (Those poor guys who missed a lot of good things). Viva Benedict!

I have been to mass in English (my native language) and German (a language I speak and understand well), as well as Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, and Latin (languages which I don't understand, although I know some words).

Obviously when I go to mass in English, I understand every word, and I feel that there is a great value in being able to understand every word. When I lived in Germany, I had to learn many of the words, since they are not used in everyday speech. I eventually came to understand most of the words in the German Novus Ordo mass as well, though I still do not understand as well as I might in English.

As to the others, I certainly did not understand every word, or even most words. To me, however, these experiences were also special, in that they showed me the true importance of the mass. Even if I could not understand every word (or take part in the responses), I still understood the full importance of the mass and had the same religious experience as in the English and German masses. Sure, the homilies were fairly uninteresting, and I did wish I could participate in the responses, but the Eucharist was the same. Being part of these masses in other languages helped me to understand the essential character of the mass—it is not the words, but the act itself that is essential.

So, most likely, since I live in the U.S., I will continue to go to mass in English. At the same time, however, I feel that it really isn't all that important what the language is, as long as you take part in the mass.

Viejita del oeste,

A few more offensive utterances from B16 and we will demand an impeachment.

Also note his handling of limbo. This significantly stupid concept was generated to make original sin fit its dogmatic character. If B16 would have put limbo on the myth pile where it belongs, he would have deleted original sin and could not bring himself to do it. Why??

Knowing that "Adam's" sin keeps us pew peasants in a constant guilt trip (\$\$\$\$) and its importance to the Immaculate Conception (\$\$\$\$) and the Assumption (\$\$\$\$) are the reasons why!!!!

Concerned

Benedict doesn't need to re-establish himself as the sole leader of the Roman (Latin) Church. He's already got the job, whether people like me like it or not.

B16 is trying to re-establish himself as the sole leader of the Roman (Latin) Church. The problem is that when one closely evaluates the scripture that he depends on for this "God-given" role, it falls heavily on the side of embellishments made by scribes trying to "sell" Catholicism to folk accustomed to being led around by the swords of kings, queens and emperors and their "Divine Rights". Enter democracy and education of the masses about 200 years ago and things are now rapidly changing.

More and more priests and men are opting for marriage. Priests who do remain have significant issues with sex. Nuns what few are left are demanding installation in the priesthood.

What do many of the contemporary NT scholars conclude about scriptural approval of said papacy ??

John 14: 26 not historic ( 62-. Spirit under Trial: (1) 1Q: Luke 12:11-12 = Matt 10:19-20; (2) Mark 13:11 = Matt 10: 19-20 = Luke 21:14-15; (3) John 14:26.)

Matt 16: 18-19 not historic (73- Who Is Jesus?: (1) Gos. Thom. 13; (2a) Mark 8:27-30 = Matt 16:13-20 = Luke 9:18-21; (2b) Gos. Naz. 14; (2c) John 6:67-69.)

1 Timothy- not written by St. Paul (See Crossan's "In Search of Paul", Harper, San Francisco, 2004, p.105)

2 Peter 1:20

Since Catholic theologian Father Edward Schillebeeckx basically ruled out prophecies by concluding God does not know the future, one can rule out the infallible nature of this verse.

Also from Raymond Brown's, An Introduction to the New Testament, 2 Peter was the last canonical work written i.e. ~ 130 AD, author unknown. Tis a bit dated for use in claiming infallibility plus the verse is not from Jesus or Peter but some possible remembrance of a scribe.

From another source:  
Also think about the logic (or lack thereof).  
"I believe the Bible is inspired." "Why?" "Because it says so."

Would you or anyone let that logic pass if it came from the followers of any other book or person? "I believe x is inspired because x says so." Fill in the blanks:

x=Pat Robertson  
x=the ayatolloah Sistani  
x=David Koresh  
x=the Koran  
x=B16

POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | JULY 12, 2007 5:57 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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To Paganplace: If I am one of the people you get sick of trying to scare folks maybe you should actually read what I wrote. To Lepidopteryx: Actually God did want Adam and Eve to know and that is really what gave us free will. God has a Plan and only God knows all the details but His Plan is for all of His Children to be with Him. I've said it before and I say it again if God was the mean-spirited, revengeful, spiteful piece of garbage that so many people calling themselves christians present Him to be, there is no way that I could be thankful to a being like that. It is about at least trying to be a decent person, we are all God's children and we are all brothers and sisters and a lot of what I see posted by some people calling themselves christians isn't even close to that. It is simple but calling yourself a christian does not mean that you are, saying that Jesus is who He is, God Incarnate, is only a step and if you then start condemning everyone you definitely don't have a clue. I also repeat God is a searcher of hearts and minds, not of religious affiliations or lack thereof, it does not matter what your religion is or if you even have one, but it does matter what you do, what really is the problem with that? You know a lot of people that call themselves christians seem to have a problem with that though. Have to go now, take care. Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | JULY 12, 2007 3:39 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Thomas: "Remember the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we sure do seem to be flying off on all kinds of tangents here, are we not?"

As long as we're getting tangential, why exactly would God have NOT wanted Adam and Eve to know the difference between good and evil?

POSTED BY: LEPIDOPTERYX | JULY 12, 2007 10:55 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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And that's a wee bit over one of my personal 'lines' for my comfort. Sorry.

But I get \*really\* sick of hearing people like you trying to scare folks. Thomas.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 8:55 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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And, as for the whole, 'One day when you'll die, you'll know my threats are the truth...'

Sorry, nah uh. Got the T-shirt.

You like your Holy Spirit, try, Holy Spirit, not 'Holy Head-job that only exists to confirm my mental conceptions of my religion's superiority.'

It'd be a start.

And better for you than what you're trying to do here.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 8:52 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I dunno, Thomas... If 'knowing good and evil' is supposed to be the cause of all human woe, certain people seem quite 'Hell-bent' on making sure everyone 'knows good and evil.'

Whether they believe your self-referential authority on the matter or not.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 8:41 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Remember the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we sure do seem to be flying off on all kinds of tangents here, are we not? I have no idea if it was a literal tree or not but we sure do like to munch on it. One day all will know that God is real and that He is a Trinity of Love

and that His Plan is for all of His children. As far as the post goes I wrote some about it and posted it at 11:08 AM. Take care. Sincerely,  
Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | JULY 11, 2007 6:51 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Umm, not that a Church service is actually 'Good Latin,' it's umm.. 'Church Latin.'

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 5:54 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I mean, \*don't get me wrong, here.\*

Love the classics.

But he's not talking about everyone learning Latin.

He's talking about something else.

Frankly, if it were that good, you'd think even Baptists would be talking about \*everyone learning Latin\* instead of taking the content of Christian belief that's being used so politically lately, .... out of common reach to comment on, (except of course, for sermons to \*tell\* people what all the impressive words meant...)

How bout pushing for students to have to learn classical language, (they used to, you know) \*then\* go ahead and \*then\* go for your awe and majesty thing.

Why hurry?

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 5:52 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Nice thought, Joseph, but he's not actually talking about everyone learning Latin. He's talking about the 'power' it would have when people don't.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 5:47 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Dr. Elliott:

Thank you for an insightful piece that brings up points that I have never encountered before. If we wish to be the heirs in the fundamental psychic ways you talk about of those who built the Catholic Church and Western Civilization, there can be no better language to learn than Latin. I think almost everyone agrees that nothing can be fully understood in translation. Different languages have built into them the subtle differences among cultures, and as you say, they cannot be understood without understanding their languages.

Joseph D'Agostino

POSTED BY: JOSEPH D'AGOSTINO | JULY 11, 2007 5:31 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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" BGone:

The Devil you say, PAGANPLACE."

Actually, 'The Devil' I \*don't\* say. That would seem to cause all kinds of people to behave in ...interesting ways, don't it?

"You gotta get Lucifer and Satan clear in your mind. Satan is a good guy working directly for God. God is good?"

Technically, 'Lucifer' is a name that someone speaking Latin later applied to the Devil/Satan, cause they thought that'd make everyone more Christian, but... it's actually not something which bears on either how I live or speak.

That whole 'Devil's Advocate' thing shows how divorced people are from the original idea that 'Satan,' 'The Adversary' was actually supposed to be appointed to that role by the monotheist God in order to tempt people to go to his Hell, but what do you want.

What \*do\* you want, anyway?

This is irrational, what we hear from you. Utterly.

"What do you mean all gods aren't always good for ya? Oh! I see. It's according to who Vulcan decides to erupt all over or who Thor bangs with His big hammer?"

Ummm. I wasn't speaking of Gods, I was speaking of ritual practices and technologies.

You seem to be freaked out about 'All religion abuses and exploits people cause it's religion and Gods and Devils.'

Aren't you the least bit curious \*how?\*

I'm sure if they're really righteous, they'll use this openly and responsibly.

Right?

Or am I still the bad guy, at once to be thrown coins as an unworthy poor person, and accused of going for the 'Easy Faith dollar.'

These techniques this columnist extolls as 'evidence of the authority of my particular Divine' are real... Just not to be treated in the manner of a cargo cult.

I speak of how it works so people can make their own determinations.

No question that this stuff raises energy and affects minds, I assure you.

What do they \*do\* with it? That's the question.

It's often not good. I think you know that, the way you act.

This is not 'God' or the 'Devil,' Bgone.

It's \*people.\*

We have great capacities and great songs.

We are not the animal that cannot be conditioned.

We are the animal that can choose our own conditioning.

Don't be fooled by your own psychology.

You're all over the place here, trying to find a way that 'being impressed' and 'The Absolute Truth' can possibly get along in what's doubtless a painful experience in terms set up to cause you to self-destruct rather than disobey.

No honest God wants that. And if they do, we'll deal with them together, all of us.

Maybe even the Christians'll get in on it.

Frankly, I think that's why Ratzinger is trying to take their standards out of reach.

Cause they actually haven't been doing right by people a long time.

Listen to an old punker.

It sucks, but it's OK. We're all going to deal. OK?

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POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 5:13 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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MR MARK, the ultimate, perfect even sacrifice to God is God's son. Actually it would be God Himself but they couldn't get their hands on God so they settled for His son. There's a certain logic there I'm sure, but I don't get it. I wanna be there when they explain how that works to God.

Now the notion of sacrificing the son of God to Devil. That has merit, no doubt at all and easy to explain but not to God.

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POSTED BY: BGONE | JULY 11, 2007 4:03 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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E Fav,

Thanks for that. I've noticed several other posters mention the book. Very cool. My original question is this: is the Mass more about the worship of ancient practices, or about the worship of God? Is the purpose (as some have said) of switching back to Latin purely for aesthetics and connecting with the past?

I'm not Catholic, so I have no stake in this. I'm just curious if people are going to attend Mass now just for the performance aspect of it.

POSTED BY: ANDREA | JULY 11, 2007 4:01 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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The Devil you say, PAGANPLACE. You gotta get Lucifer and Satan clear in your mind. Satan is a good guy working directly for God. God is good?

What do you mean all gods aren't always good for ya? Oh! I see. It's according to who Vulcan decides to erupt all over or who Thor bangs with His big hammer?

POSTED BY: BGONE | JULY 11, 2007 3:53 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Devil speaks all languages. Of course Latin, Greek and Aramaic are His favorites. They're the ones used by His special agents who wrote His sacred scriptures used successfully by those leading the multitudes to Him.

<http://www.hoax-buster.org/sellyoursoul> The big money goes to those who lead the multitudes to hell. Worshiping Devil and calling Him God does not make Him God but does make Him happy.

POSTED BY: BGONE | JULY 11, 2007 3:45 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Hmm. A dead language (Latin) for a dead social compact (Christianity).

I guess there's a certain logic to that.

POSTED BY: MR. MARK | JULY 11, 2007 3:43 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Don't get me wrong, here, the author is right that there's a power there... it's also in the song 'Louie, Louie,' that some Christians have freaked out about as 'Obviously concealing a Satanic message' and others simply take as 'Hey, signal to party.'

Just so happens a certain version hit something.

The song's content is really about a Jamaican fisherman who misses his sweetie terribly.

There's a power to these things. Like any power, it can be used for good or ill.

"Like any machine, it's either a benefit or a hazard. If it's a benefit, it's not my problem."

Cavete.

OK?

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 3:26 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Andrea - Catholics can understand the Latin prayers using the "Sunday Missal" - a little book with Latin on one side and English on the other.

POSTED BY: E FAVORITE | JULY 11, 2007 3:25 PM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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As an anonymous poster reiterated a defense from the columnist, I thought I'd emphasise my original point:

"Andrea, the sermon/homily would still be said in the vernacular, not Latin. I just wanted to correct that - no other comment."

That's actually what to be \*wary\* of.

People taking the content of their supposed authority out of the reach of most of the 'flock' while, of course, providing priests to tell you "what it says? "

Is that what you want? Again?

Frankly, if Latin's all that important, then they oughtta speak and teach it. For real.



Impressive sounds you can't quite understand have a certain effect on people. This does not mean that those words necessarily align with the meaning they're supposed to have.

Even in English.

Mystery is good.

\*Mystification\* does not serve the people.

I say this especially cause some of my family is still Catholic:

Beware.

And, you might wanna go learn some Latin.

After me:

Amo amas amat amamus amatis amanti...

Amo amas amat amamus amatis amanti...

Amo amas amat amamus amatis amanti...

Could almost trance out already, couldn't you?

For the studio audience, those ancient tones don't actually produce any great feelings of 'love' in the hearer.

That's the verb 'to love.'

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 3:12 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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As I said on some thread, I'm a proponent of a traditional liturgy and a non-binding authority. The Latin mass is quite beautiful at best, inoffensive at worst. I do hope a side effect of this ruling on the Tridentine mass will be a return to more traditional music.

Fuji, The Vatican's strong guidance on matters spiritual and otherwise is one of the things I have liked about being Catholic, but I'm not ready to reject all non-Catholics for their lack of obedience to the pope. I realize that second part makes me a bad Catholic -- or not really Catholic at all.

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | JULY 11, 2007 2:34 PM

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Fuji,

It sounded to me in Mr. Elliott's post that he thought the decrease in Mass-goers was because they were superficial enough to leave when Mass didn't sound as pretty.

Re: guitar choirs and guitarorchestras...contemporary services skeeve me out. When I attended church, I was always a fan of the traditional service with the beautiful hymns. But it was conducted in English so I understood every word of it.

POSTED BY: ANDREA | JULY 11, 2007 2:08 PM

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Viejita del oeste:

Paganplace

This pope seems really nervous about anyone thinking for themselves....

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Actually, Vie, the RC Church is the church of reason par excellence. No other church has synthesized faith and philosophy so effectively and so well, nor has any church invited so many non-believers in for comment.

POSTED BY: FUJI | JULY 11, 2007 1:59 PM

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No, Andrea, actually what you're seeing is the increase in parishoners and the decrease in religious vocations. And why not? In the 70s, priests were relegated to cheerleaders who backed up the guitar choir.

Under JP II and now Benedict, the clergy have reasserted themselves. Middled-aged priests can't stand it, being products of the happy go lucky 70s. But young priests and the old priests love it.

POSTED BY: FUJI | JULY 11, 2007 1:57 PM

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Vie,

Hmmm...is that why Mass attendance shrunk when they switched from Latin...people were thinking for themselves? Not just because it didn't sound pretty anymore?

POSTED BY: ANDREA | JULY 11, 2007 11:27 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Paganplace

A little mystification can be a good thing. But on the rest, you are exactly right. If you read the rest of Cardinal Levada's clarification (stylistically I don't recommend it) you will see that he reiterates very forcefully the view that it is the Apostolic Succession that makes the Catholic Church the only valid form of Christianity. In plain English, follow our authority or else. This pope seems really nervous about anyone thinking for themselves....

POSTED BY: VIEJITA DEL OESTE | JULY 11, 2007 11:19 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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As far as sound being more important than understanding what a bunch of hogwash. When Jesus, God Incarnate, walked this earth and talked to the people, He spoke the language that the people understood, even if they might not have understood what He was saying. I am a Catholic, I consider myself a roaming catholic, not a typo, and I cherish my catholic faith, but I do see where the catholic religion can sometimes try to get between someone and their faith. I think the mass is just exquisite and if you really listen to the words spoken and I include the priests here too, you might just be amazed at what God is trying to tell us. When I was a child I was an altar boy and I knew the responses but I for the most part did not know what I was saying, I think that is kind of ridiculous don't you. If people want the Latin Mass fine, but I would rather let words that I understand have a chance to sink into my heart than a bunch of fancy sounds gonging away. When Dad, God the Father, came into my heart, He didn't say a word, He didn't have too, He is Pure Love, but at mass I like to understand the words so that I can be amazed at something I might have missed previously. I am not a linguist but I do tend to listen and I can't get anything out of the latin except maybe some pretty sounds. As far as tradition goes, like I said earlier Jesus spoke in the language of His time and place that is where the tradition started not later on, so the mass being said in the vernacular is going back to tradition not moving away from it. When the Holy Spirit came into my body, He revealed to me that Jesus really is present in the Eucharist which makes the words of the Consecration even more vivid and wonderful to me as opposed to whatever they might be in the latin. When I spoke of God the Father and the Holy Spirit as He, well I have to use some kind of pronoun but God is not a He or a She or an it but is God a Being of Pure Love, of course Jesus was a Man and the only Man to ever choose to become a Man and also the only One ever to ask permission and Mary said Yes, thank you Mary. I happen to be the New Testament Moses and I have also said Yes. Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | JULY 11, 2007 11:08 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Anon,

Thanks for the clarification, but, what about the prayers?

POSTED BY: ANDREA | JULY 11, 2007 11:01 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Andrea, the sermon/homily would still be said in the vernacular, not Latin. I just wanted to correct that - no other comment.

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | JULY 11, 2007 10:56 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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PaganPlace,

You very well may be right! It sure is prettier, and possibly more moving to hear it in Latin...but I also think there's more motive behind the change than aesthetics.

POSTED BY: ANDREA | JULY 11, 2007 10:50 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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Well, Andrea, as neat as Latin is, I have to cynically suggest that there may be an element of \*remystification\* involved in this move. The Church, and especially Ratzinger's organization within it, haven't much liked the involvement of the Catholic flocks questioning Church authority...

If putting the services back in a language many don't understand just happens to put the Church in a position where fewer can question what they're doing, I'm sure they like this just fine.

Probably prettier, though.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | JULY 11, 2007 10:44 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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I can see, somewhat, what your point is.

But with your argument "Roman Catholics who hear no Latin are cut off from the sounds that have shaped the souls and minds of their ancestors in the Latin branch of the Christian Church," is the Mass more about the worship of ancient practices, or about the worship of God?

People do have to understand the language to understand the point. I said in another response that if my family's pastors suddenly started speaking in German (our ancestral language) they wouldn't have a clue what he was talking about unless he was swearing or asking what was for dinner.

How can Catholics, esp. young Catholics connect with a sermon or a prayer if they have no idea what is being said? Yes, hearing an ancient language and seeing beloved symbolism is moving...but the heck's going on?

POSTED BY: ANDREA | JULY 11, 2007 10:18 AM  
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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