Managing Liturgical Change

by Clare V. Johnson[1]

People react to change in very different ways. Some run from it, others deny that it is happening. Some become very angry at the prospect of change, wanting to fight it with everything they have, while others simply acquiesce to its inevitability. A few welcome change excitedly, seeing an opportunity for growth and development. The wise person understands that change is a sign of life – change is what living things do. Dead people and dead institutions are incapable of changing any further.

The upcoming implementation of the new English translation of the third edition of the Roman Missal (*Missale Romanum editio tertia*, hereafter MR3), due in 2011, presents the world's English-speaking Roman Catholics with the largest change to their liturgical praxis in almost 40 years. History demonstrates that managing liturgical change well, is not something at which the Roman Catholic Church has been particularly adept. The implementation of the previous major liturgical change, namely the move from the 1962 *Missale Romanum* to the *Novus ordo* of Vatican II, in general appeared to occur with little preparation or proper catechesis either for clergy or laity regarding the changes to come, despite the official procedural advice proffered by the Church in relation to implementing Vatican II's liturgical changes.[2] While there had been experiments[3] conducted in various places in the decades leading up to the move from Latin to English, from *ad orientem* to *versus populum*, from congregational observation of the priest saying Mass to that full, conscious and active participation called for in the celebration of the Vatican II liturgy, accounts indicate that the first ritual shift experienced by most people following Vatican II was abrupt and in some places occurred virtually within the space of one week to the next.[4]

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[1] This paper was prepared initially to aid the National Liturgical Council in determining its recommendation to the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference on how to implement the MR3 in Australia.

[2] See *Inter oecumenici*, the first instruction on the proper implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, issued by the Consilium of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (Sept. 26, 1964), #4. [Source: http://www.adoremus.org/Interoecumenici.html, (accessed June 8, 2010).]

[3] See: John Fenwick and Bryan Spinks, "Rediscovery, Research and Renewal: The Roman Catholic Liturgical Movement 1900-62," *Worship in Transition: The Liturgical Movement of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Continuum, 1995), 23-35. See also, R. Kevin Seasoltz, "The Liturgical Movement from 1946 until the Second Vatican Council," *New Liturgy, New Laws* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1980), 6-16.

[4] See James M. O'Toole, *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America* (Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 2008), 204, 208.

Following on from this initial swift shift was a period of liturgical flux during which waves of changes issued forth from the Consilium charged with the task of implementing the Vatican II liturgical reforms,[5] until the final promulgation of Paul VI's *Missale Romanum editio typica altera* in 1975 (hereafter, MR2). Over the subsequent (almost) 40 years, the text of the MR2 has become solidly embedded in the collective procedural, declarative, kinetic, and aesthetic memories of English-speaking Roman Catholics throughout the world. Given its deep-rooted and habitual familiarity, a decision to change the text of this translation was always going to cause a certain level of disruption, unease and controversy among elements of the English-speaking church. The long and difficult revision and approval process[6] involved in moving from the MR2 to the MR3 over the last 23 years or so has not been without its problems or its casualties.[7] Further complicating the status quo is the perception from some quarters of the Church that the translation process has not been broadly consultative beyond the bishops[8] and/or that the final translation seeks to impose the revisionist agenda of a conservative element of the church onto all English-speaking Roman Catholics.[9] Widely-publicised negative reactions to the MR3, following the premature introduction of an unfinalized and unapproved version of it in South Africa in late 2008,[10] served to heighten feelings of unease among those already concerned about an unenthusiastic reception of and reaction to the MR3 upon its official introduction into parish practice.

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[5] These waves of changes are documented in detail in ICEL's *Documents on the Liturgy: 1963-1979 – Conciliar, Papal and Curial Texts* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982). In the Australian context, the archives of regional Catholic newspapers chronicle local efforts to inform the church-going public about the changes being mandated from Rome. See for example the various articles on liturgy in Brisbane's *Catholic Leader* 1964 – 1970.

[6] The origin of this process dates back as far as 1987, when ICEL began its work on a more thorough revision of the English translation of the Roman Missal, *editio typica altera*, according to the timeline of changes listed on the USCCB website: http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/, (accessed June 8, 2010).

[7] For example, the ICEL revised edition of the MR2 which was approved by the USCCB in November 1996, was doomed never to receive the *recognitio* of the CDWDS because the Holy See intended to "promulgate a third edition of the *Missale Romanum* in observance of the Jubilee Year." Source: http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/,(accessed June 8, 2010).

[8] The fact that the *Ratio Translationis for the English Language* (Vatican City: Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 2007) was not published until 2007, well after the completion of the translation of the Order of Mass in 2006, is a example of the lack of consultation and transparency that has surrounded the translation process. Broad consultation on liturgical matters is not the way the Roman Catholic Church typically operates, though it must be noted that each local bishop had the opportunity to share draft versions of the translation with whomever he chose and could seek expert opinion and input on these drafts.

[9] Such attitudes were noted by ICEL member Archbishop Mark Coleridge in a speech given in Perth, Western Australia, Feb. 5, 2010. See: Anthony Barich, "New Missal Translation to Address Deficiencies, Bleaching," *The Record* (February 12, 2010),
http://www.therecord.com.au/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1546&Itemid=27, (accessed June 8, 2010).

[10] See: http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0901004.htm, (accessed June 8, 2010), for details of the reaction to the premature introduction of the unapproved Missal translation in South Africa in late 2008. See also: Michelle Faul, "South Africa protest over new Catholic Mass translation," (AP, March 17, 2009), http://wwrn.org/articles/30501/?&place=south-africa, (accessed June 8, 2010).

For the majority of English-speaking Catholics, there is little choice in regard to this change to our liturgical prayer – the Church hierarchy has decided this will happen and expects its decision to be carried out. The point at which a level of consultation *can* occur is in the manner in which the implementation of this pre-determined change is approached on the local level where the challenge of facilitating the large-scale behavioural change necessitated by the introduction of the MR3 must be met. Having an understanding of the process of change itself and how liturgical change in particular can be managed effectively will aid those charged with the task of anticipating and planning for the problems and practicalities of the transition process to be undertaken at all levels of the Church over the coming months and years.

Understanding change

Change theorists note that people tend to resist change when it is imposed from above or from outside without consultation, and they tend not to handle change well when there is "uncertainty, concern over personal loss, and a belief that the change is not in the organization's best interests."[11] For most people change is "disruptive and is neither sought nor welcomed."[12] Techniques designed to facilitate change can be hampered by "the common attitude that things should last forever and never change and that if they do change it is for the worse."[13] For those with such a mindset, acceding to change appears as a betrayal.[14]

According to change theory, the most difficult changes to negotiate are the ones that are: "imposed without choice or participation; those that are overwhelming, going beyond one's immediate power of accommodation; those that are illegible, their pattern confused or seemingly random; those unequal or unjust; those that are long announced, late in coming, but whose results do not match expectations,"[15] and changes where there has been a failure in communication and a failure to involve affected individuals in the change process. A lack of communication from leaders and a lack of participation in decisions surrounding a change, generally lead to high barriers to accepting change.[16] Active communication from leaders and active participation in the change process by those being asked to make the change generally result in lower barriers to accepting change.[17] Inevitably in any change process, there may still

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[11] Tom Callaly and Dinesh Arya, "Organizational change management in mental health," *Australasian Psychiatry* 13:2 (June, 2005): 120

[12] Ibid., 122.

[13] Kevin Lynch, *What Time is This Place?* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1972), 201.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 205.

[16] See Robert E. Levasseur, "People Skills: Change Management Tools – Lewin's Change Model," *Interfaces* (July-August 2001): 72

[17] Ibid.

be some barriers to change acceptance, but they need not be insurmountable if approached in a constructive, open and flexible way.

Those responsible for instigating the change and those who have been involved in its development, often have immersed themselves in the rationale for the proposed change over a period of years.[18] In contrast, most of those on whom the change is being imposed often have not had exposure to the rationale and have not had the time necessary to 'get on board' with the change prior to being asked to make that change. Psychologists Clegg and Walsh note:

> Indeed, if we put users in the position where changes are pushed at them at the end of a fragmented process, and where they have little influence over design... then one might argue that 'resistance to change' is one of the few ways in which they can exert some control. Indeed it seems somewhat ironic to allow users relatively little say over, and control of change, and then blame them when they display adverse reactions.[19]

The Processual Nature of Change

Large-scale behavioural change generally is not accomplished via a one-shot-deal. It is a process involving stages that need to be worked through in order to facilitate its achievement. Change theorists suggest that on the whole, people deal most successfully with change if it occurs in a planned, manageable progression. Kevin Lynch writes that: "Long-drawn-out changes will be more welcome if they come in modest, deferrable increments. We can anticipate and cope with each new increment as it arises, make occasional retreats with dignity, or increase our competence to deal with further change."[20] Well in advance, signs of the change to come need to be placed prominently so that the majority of those being asked to make the change are not surprised by its appearance. The change needs to be made legible, and its implementation needs to be conducted in such a way that the next step can be inferred from the previous step, and so that the goal or end-point of the process can easily be anticipated. In order to minimise 'transition shock' and maximise people's ability to deal well with the change, Lynch advises that "Certain stable landmarks... can be conserved as psychological anchors while the remainder of the environment is being transformed,"[21] so that partial continuity with the familiar can be preserved while the change to the new way of doing things is undergone.

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[18] Callaly and Arya, 122.
[19] Chris Clegg and Susan Walsh, "Change Management: Time for a Change!" *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 13/2 (2004): 226.
[20] Lynch, 205.
[21] Ibid., 198.

People are more likely to accept change if they have been properly prepared for it; when they can see a clear purpose for and a coherent logic behind it; when unified and achievable implementation strategies for making the change are presented; when they are convinced that such a change is going to enhance their life; and if they are assured that implementing this change is not going to be immensely difficult. If it is caused by others change is more likely to be accepted if it is rapid and comprehensible, if it has a clearly defined goal and if assurance is given that eventually the period of change-flux will come to an end. If a clear pattern of change (i.e., what is going to happen, why it is happening, when it will happen, by what means it will happen and who will make it happen) is signalled ahead of time, the likelihood of broad change acceptance can be increased.

Managing Change

Over the last 20 years, a method for understanding and dealing with change known as 'change management' has emerged from the worlds of business and psychology. Change management is a philosophy and a set of methodologies for helping groups of people to deal with change. Developed in the early 1990s,[22] change management seeks to determine strategies that are designed to facilitate change within whole systems of people or organizations. Change management works by engendering high levels of involvement of those who will be most affected by a change, *in* the actual process of changing their system or way of doing things.

In a change management process, there is "a concerted effort to engage groups of people in productively working together toward identifying common ground and expanding it together."[23] In such a process, guided by an informed facilitator, people "collectively explore each other's assumptions, seek and expand common ground, shape a desired future, and jointly take ownership of the solution"[24] to what it is they are seeking (or being asked) to change.

There are dozens of different documented approaches to change management.[25] Change management essentially is a dialogical method which begins by announcing the fact that change is coming. Information about the change is provided to the people who are to be involved in the process of deciding how they will make the change. Within a facilitation process usually conducted over a considerable period of time set aside for group meeting and discussion, the group is invited to express their reactions to what they have heard regarding the

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[22] Peggy Holman, Tom Devane and Steven Cady, *The Change Handbook*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2007), 6.
[23] Ibid., 3.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid., xii.

change to come and those reactions are duly and respectfully acknowledged. The group will then consider what the next step in implementing the change to come might be. An adept facilitator will keep the group sharply focused on a clearly-defined goal toward which they will work together.

Open and logical delineation of the boundaries within which the group can consider its options in relation to the change is an essential part of the process. Some options are not realistic for economic, organizational, resource and staffing reasons, and must be rationally discounted early on by the group so that they can determine what the viable and realistic options for consideration actually are. Once all of the options for consideration have been raised, through dialogue, a consensus among the group is determined regarding which of the implementation options they have generated will likely be supported by the majority of the group. Within such a process there will be some whose ideas are supported and others whose ideas do not garner the requisite amount of support in order to be carried forward by the group. Those whose ideas are not supported must be encouraged to try to come to a position of acceptance regarding the approach finally decided upon by the group. Once an implementation approach has been agreed to, the task of strategizing the details and planning practically for the successful execution of the change transition can begin.

It makes sense to assume that an informed group being asked to change can "crank up a strong desire to participate in decisions that affect them."[26] Having a say in shaping something which affects them, means that the group of people concerned will be more likely to begin to take ownership over the change and take some responsibility for seeing it through to a positive conclusion. A change management approach done well, will educate people about the change and the justifications for making it, and will "systematically increase participation and energy while simultaneously addressing concerns" with regard to change within an organization or community.[27]

A change management approach potentially has wide applicability in terms of the type of transition process with which the English-speaking Roman Catholic Church is charged in implementing the MR3, and the employment of such a methodology may help to smooth this transition and increase the likelihood that the new translation eventually will be accepted and utilized effectively by all concerned.

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[26] Ibid., 4.
[27] Ibid., 4.

As by definition the liturgy is the work of the people of God, and what is being altered is the primary language[28] in which the people of God does its work, managing the change to the MR3 well is crucial, if the people are to continue performing their work of praising and worshiping God in the most effective way possible.[29] The move to the MR3 is not a minor change, a mere tinkering with the surface-level of the liturgy. This wholesale retranslation of the Latin typical edition changes the conceptual and imaginative categories within which the people of God express formally their relationship with God and with each other. If we accept the liturgical axiom: *lex orandi, lex credendi* (what we pray is what we believe)[30] then what is changing runs deeper than simply the technical words of the liturgy. Clegg and Walsh explain that "...change initiatives are systemic in nature, typically involving changes both to the technical and social system. In practice, however, the majority of organizational change programmes pay most attention to new technologies, techniques and tools, as opposed to the social (human and organizational) aspects of change."[31] In moving beyond focusing only (or mainly) on the technical aspects of the new translation of the liturgy, a change management approach to implementing the MR3 has the capacity to deal with both the technical and social-organizational aspects of this change.

Time for a new approach

In general, the church hierarchy's implementation of liturgical change in the past has been conducted with a traditional managerial style of "command and control."[32] An edict is issued and compliance is expected. The church's traditional form of leadership and governance structure is "inherently change-averse,"[33] functioning according to a highly centralized decision-making body that gives orders and expects those orders to be obeyed.

In contrast, a modern form of corporate/business leadership often emphasizes empowerment of the followers in order to achieve common goals by working collaboratively along with their leaders. Leaders and followers together create a shared goal/vision of the future. Leaders are careful to share responsibility for achieving this goal/vision with those who must carry it out as this helps to ensure that the followers feel some sense of ownership of and responsibility for

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[28] Liturgy encompasses a variety of ritual languages both verbal and non-verbal, but western liturgy tends to privilege verbal language above the others.

[29] What constitutes the 'most effective way possible' in this case has been determined for the English-speaking church by the members of the hierarchy responsible for the move to the MR3.

[30] The axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi* is a shortened version of the phrase *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine (c.370 – c.463/465, a disciple of Augustine).

[31] Clegg and Walsh, 228.

[32] Holman, Devane and Cady, 4.

[33] Joan Leitzel, Candace Corvey and David Hiley, "Integrated Planning and Change Management at a Research University," *Change* (January-February 2004): 40.

that which is being changed. Modern forms of corporate leadership often focus on developing the capability of individuals in an organization to perform at their best.

Today's Catholic pew-dwellers are far less likely simply to pray, pay and obey as may well have been expected of them in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Appeals to authority do not register as strongly among younger generations and do not carry the same weight they once did with older generations. In relation to anticipated levels of acceptance of the MR3, an expectation of "religious docility of will and intellect" and "conscientious obedience"[34] such as can be demanded of the faithful in matters of faith and morals, or servile compliance simply because "Father says so...," is a somewhat outdated mode of thinking in terms of younger generations (particularly in the first-world west). There will be segments of English-speaking parish populations that will simply comply and obey regarding the implementation of the MR3 without asking many questions, but there are many others for whom this type of thinking is utterly foreign.

Today, large numbers of the laity are highly educated[35] and are far less hesitant about asking questions, seeking further information, raising concerns, expecting to have some input (in terms of what affects them and their experience of church), having their input taken seriously, and even walking out the door without a second glance if they do not feel that what is being asked of them is legible, reasonable, worthwhile and ultimately edifying. If they are not convinced of those things in relation to the MR3 implementation, they may well build high barriers of resistance to accepting this change.

One of the fundamental principles on which the change management approach is based is that "people support what they help to create. Active participation by the affected parties in the change process is the most important element of effective change."[36] The obvious problem with utilizing typical change management strategies in the implementation of the MR3 translation is that the end-point users of the MR3 (celebrants and most members of the assembly) in general have not been involved in crafting the new translation or in deciding that it is to be implemented; they are simply the recipients of a change into which they have had no creative input and about which they have not been consulted. Does this mean that change management techniques cannot be used or will be ineffective in aiding the transition to the MR3? No. What this means

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[34] Richard Gaillardetz, *By What Authority: A Primer on Scripture, the Magisterium and the Sense of the Faithful* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 126.

[35] Holman, Devane and Cady note that "Generally speaking, the more people learn, the less likely it is they will enjoy being told what to do and how to do it," 4.

[36] Levasseur, 72.

is that change management techniques can only *begin* to be employed at the point and time of local implementation, which is the opportunity local liturgical leaders have to give the people a say in *one* aspect of this change they are being asked to make, namely, *how* this change is going to be implemented in their particular parish context.

In broad strokes, a 'change management' process for the implementation of the MR3 would involve:

1. Announcement of the change to come
2. Provision of information relating to the change, a taste/preview of the change[37] and a rationale underlying the change[38]
3. Time for reactions to the change and the information provided about it
4. Clear statement of the common goal toward which all will work together (i.e., full implementation of the MR3)[39]
5. Determination of a consensus on appropriate strategies for implementing the change[40] (opportunity for feedback and adaptation of the strategies)
6. Agreement on a timeline for the change (i.e., full implementation will be achieved by a particular date)[41]
7. Implementation of the change (opportunity for feedback and adaptation regarding the implementation process)
8. Embedding the new status quo (opportunity for feedback and adaptation of the change, as wide-scale use exposes any inadequacies and drawbacks therein.)

Determining the most appropriate local implementation strategy

Deciding on the process via which the change implementation is to proceed is crucial in determining the extent to which the change will be resisted or accepted by the local assembly. There are numerous process-models (with useful analogies) for consideration in deciding how to make the change to the MR3. Is there a local preference for a beheading or a slow poisoning?[42] Would

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[37] Allowing people to see whole program for change before they are asked to make any changes, would enable them to grasp the entire project, and would assure them that there will be an end point to the change-process, as in general people do not deal well with being in a constant state of transition.

[38] If people are given an opportunity to preview the changes to come in a non-liturgical environment they would more free to ask questions about it (which they may not feel free to do in a liturgical context).

[39] The common goal needs to be fixed, clear and measurable so that people can see it, measure their progress toward it and anticipate its achievement.

[40] This is the point at which a local change-facilitator delineates the boundaries within which the group can consider its options.

[41] Presenting a clear timeframe for what is to come makes change comprehensible and allows for people to infer what the next step will be, and when it will happen, so that they can prepare themselves for it. The timeframe for implementing the MR3 in all Catholic parishes in Australia has been determined by the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference.

[42] Lynch, 205.

the local assembly prefer to implode the building with dynamite or demolish and rebuild it brick-by-brick? Is there a preference for 'ripping off the Bandaid' in one swift movement or easing it off gently while immersed in a bowl of warm water?

Ideally, the people in each parish need to have input into this decision – how are *we* going to do this here? The language used by change-agents (those charged with spearheading the local implementation) needs to be inclusive – always "we," as all are working on this together to get to *our* endpoint. Choosing to employ such a linguistic approach can help to take the heat off the local-leadership as the 'face of change' and can help to engender local corporate ownership of the approach to change implementation. Once a decision regarding the implementation approach at a broad level has been made by the concerned parties in the local community, then the specifics of strategising exactly how this will happen can be negotiated.

Local liturgical leaders will probably have an idea of how their local parish likely will choose to proceed with implementing the changes – implosion or brick by brick. Given that knowledge, it is a good idea to have a substantially worked-out plan ready to share with the local parish at the appropriate time (not so that the people feel ambushed yet again by a procedural *fait accompli*, but so that they can see that local leadership has invested some time in thinking about how the implementation might proceed logically and achievably at the local level and has considered how to resource it appropriately). Often people will be more accepting of a well-thought-out strategy if they have had a chance to say what they think first before that strategy is presented, and can see after some discussion, that the strategy presented will help them to make the change. Local liturgical leaders must also be prepared to alter their plan in light of the feedback offered from the local parish community, (recognising that the basic change management approach is by nature dialogic).

It is likely that the beheading, implosion or 'ripping off of the Bandaid' approach to implementing the MR3 may be far too abrupt and overly traumatic for many people, as such an approach would require that all of the changes to the liturgy be dealt with at once. However, this may be the preference of some communities – the key point is that whichever approach is adopted, the local community needs to be involved in making the decision about which implementation method to employ in its own parish context.

Staged Roll-Out
As was indicated earlier, according to change theory, people are far more likely to accept large changes such as the implementation of the MR3 if the change

comes in modest increments. Callaly and Arya note that: "Continuous change involves small continuous adjustments, created simultaneously across units, which accumulate and create substantial change."[43] So, a staged roll-out of the changes to the liturgy is an implementation approach worth considering.[44] In such an approach, the local praying community would be introduced to the new translation incrementally over a period of several months, slowly adjusting to the new while gradually relinquishing the old.

It has been suggested that it usually takes at least 21 consecutive days of repetition to create a new habit.[45] If the people in a local parish attend liturgy once every week, they would have only a handful of in-ritual repetitions of each new segment of the MR3 before they would need to begin to implement another segment.[46] However, the repetition of the previous change-segments would continue as each new change-segment is added into the liturgy, gradually allowing the assembly to transition from the MR2 to the MR3 over the course of several months. If the overall implementation process is to be completed within a reasonable time-frame (i.e., not too-drawn-out), such swift transitioning may well be preferable to a slower implementation approach.

Learning to sing the MR3 using one of the new approved musical Mass-settings incorporating the MR3 texts would be a highly effective way of teaching the assembly its new liturgical texts. Many parish assemblies would already be well used to rehearsing and learning new ritual music in this manner, so introducing the MR3-translation versions of new or adapted musical settings of the Mass would come easily to such parish assemblies.

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[43] Callaly and Arya, 121.

[44] Such an approach seems consonant with the approach suggested by Pope Benedict XVI for the implementation of the MR3. He stated that: "The change will need to be introduced with due sensitivity... and the opportunity for catechesis that it presents will need to be firmly grasped.... I pray that in this way any risk of confusion or bewilderment will be averted, and the change will serve instead as a springboard for a renewal and deepening of Eucharistic devotion all over the English-speaking world." "Pope Proposes New Translation as Chance to Learn," Zenit.org (April 28, 2010) http://www.zenit.org/article-29072?l=english, (accessed June 8, 2010).

[45] The 21-day theory has been attributed to Maxwell Maltz, who observed in *Psycho-Cybernetics: A New Way to Get More Living out of Life*, 7th ed., (New York: Pocket Books/Simon and Schuster, 1989), that it generally took 21 days for people who had had limbs amputated to stop feeling 'phantom sensations' from their missing limbs. From this observation, he extrapolated his theory that it took on average 21 days for a new habit to be formed. This commonly accepted theory recently has been challenged by Phillippa Lally, Cornelia H.M. van Jaarsveld, Henry W.W. Potts, and Jane Wardle, "How are habits formed: Modelling habit formation in the real world," *European Journal of Social Psychology* (July 16, 2009), online journal (see http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/122513384/abstract, accessed June 8, 2010), who suggest that there is a large variety of timeframes within which a habit can successfully be created. The length of time it takes depends on the type of habit one is trying to create, one's level of commitment to creating the habit, and various other factors which impact on the relationship between practice and automaticity in relation to the successful creation of a new habit. Hence, it may take considerably longer than can be anticipated, to embed the MR3 translation to the point at which it becomes 'habitual' among Catholic praying assemblies.

[46] In the case of those who attend liturgy less frequently than weekly, the transition to the new translation will be more abrupt and less processual.

The scope of change to be negotiated in the MR3 transition should not be underestimated. Beyond learning to pray the new MR3 texts for the people, the assembly also needs time to adapt to the new sound and theological/scriptural nuances of the all of the Presidential prayers,[47] not to mention the rhythm of the new Lectionary translation when it is finalized.

Pre-Change, Inter-Change, Post-Change

Planning for the implementation process as a whole ideally needs to include a long-term strategy encompassing a Pre-Change Process which prepares the local assembly for the change to come; an Inter-Change Process which monitors the assembly's acceptance of the changes during implementation, and a Post-Change Process which helps to maintain the changes (and ongoing catechesis) among the assembly once implementation is complete.

The pre-change process introduces the idea of the forthcoming change and would expose people to a taste of what is to come in a non-liturgical environment through diocesan workshops (such as are already happening in various places), parish information nights, bulletin inserts, etc. It is important that assemblies are introduced to the MR3 by meeting it, thinking it through, hearing about its rationale, anticipating its quirks, and practicing speaking and hearing the words of the new translation[48] well before they are actually called upon to pray it in a liturgical context. We all need a chance to 'walk around inside it' before we have to live in it. The pre-change process offers an important opportunity for pre-implementation catechesis regarding the renewal of the liturgy which is occurring via the introduction of the MR3. The pre-change process is also where there is an opportunity to invite the assembly to make an informed decision regarding how they wish to introduce the MR3 in their parish context (as a staged roll-out or all at once).

Once the implementation has begun, ideally, a dialogic inter-change process would be undertaken to determine through conversation with various members of the assembly whether the timing of the implementation is working, whether the changes are being understood and used effectively, whether the assembly members feel they need more time to get used to each stage of the roll-out, or whether they are finding the staged roll-out more irritating than helpful. This opportunity for employing "feedback loops"[49] would also provide a chance for local change-agents to determine whether or not the assembly is suffering from "change fatigue,"[50] which is a risk where there has been too much change, too

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[47] The focus here has been only on implementing the new responses of the assembly. Deciding on the process via which the local celebrant implements the new translations of the Presidential prayers may necessitate a different approach.

[48] See for example, the suggestions made by Gerard Moore, "Say it out loud," *The Tablet* (8 May, 2010): 16.

[49] See Clegg and Walsh, 222.

[50] Callaly and Arya, 120.

much preparation for change, a perception of no choice in the changes to come or where the change is dragging out over too long a timeframe. Adjustments to the change-process can be made as necessary during the inter-change process.

Following the implementation, a post-change process is needed to evaluate whether or to what extent the assembly has assimilated the MR3 translation at its first introduction. The post-change process needs to determine whether there are parts of the new translation with which the assembly is having difficulty or by which they are confused, and whether these need to be taught or explained again. If this is the case, stages of the implementation can be repeated as necessary, revising the rationale, reprinting the bulletin inserts, etc., so that those who may have missed the implementation of a particular stage of the roll-out the first time can be exposed to it the second time around. Repetition of the rationale underlying the MR3 can be useful, as people need to be reminded of what these changes mean, and why we have made them, even after these changes (on the surface level at least) appear to have been made successfully. In a way similar to post-baptismal catechesis (the *mystagogical* process undertaken with neophytes), engaging in a well-developed post-change process can help to support the assembly in what may be a fragile (or possibly grudging) acceptance of the MR3 translation. It might be useful to schedule a maintenance check-up with the parish, asking the assembly to identify areas of the MR3 about which they need further information; areas which they need to re-learn or for which they need to hear the rationale again. A 'customer-satisfaction' survey may be useful after six months or a year to see which areas of the liturgy are in need of further catechesis.

Preparing Local Liturgical Change-agents
Those implementing the change at the grass-roots level need to be ready for the change themselves. Parish priests, pastoral associates, diocesan/parish/school liturgy resource staff all need to begin to formulate educated answers to the basic set of questions most people will have regarding the change: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? How Much? Answering these questions personally will help leaders to determine how to respond satisfactorily when they are asked by members of the local assembly.

Front-line change-agents need to be able to communicate the objectives of this change clearly, honestly and repeatedly, and to involve those being expected to make the change in the local planning and execution of the change itself. People are more likely to accept change when it is presented to them in an attractive, coherent and logical way, and they need to 'buy-into' the change or they will

resist its implementation.[51] The attitude with which local liturgical leaders approach this task is crucial to its success. If local change-agents come across as inauthentic in asking people to make this change, its success is put at risk. Personal qualms about the translation should not be ignored, but neither should these be the first ideas that are shared with the local assembly when asking them to change their praying behaviour, lest unnecessary seeds of resistance to accepting this change be sown. Dampening or setting aside personal feelings of dislike toward the MR3 may be necessary in order for local change-agents to facilitate its successful implementation. Conversely, an over-enthusiastic or arrogant promotion of the MR3 as superior to the MR2 may well alienate members of the assembly who are strongly attached to the previous translation, setting up barriers to change acceptance.

Local change-agents have a responsibility to determine the readiness and receptivity for change of those being asked to make that change. As facilitators of this change process, local liturgical leaders may need to don a mental flack-jacket to provide some protection from the hits and bruises that may well be a part of the process. Local change-agents may be called upon to bear the brunt of local feeling over a hierarchical decision into which most have had no input.

Grief Management
It is important for local liturgical leaders to recognise that many people may grieve the loss of the MR2, their familiar liturgy, their familiar work of prayer. There are both human and praxis/technical changes to be negotiated in this transition process. People need to be able to express their feelings on this change, because many of them will care deeply about this change in their prayer life. They also need to be aided to move beyond those initial feelings, reactions and thoughts and through the stages of grief (in relation to the loss of the MR2): denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally acceptance.[52] What is crucial is that people must be permitted to reach their own conclusions in relation to the MR3. As the old saying goes, "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

The attitude with which local liturgical leaders facilitate implementation of the MR3 may help with the grieving process to some extent. If people are permitted gradually to farewell the MR2, while concurrently they are being introduced gradually to the MR3, the transition from the old to the new may be a little easier to take. People are being asked to change/alter a pattern of ritual prayer

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[51] Callaly and Arya note: "Ultimately resistance to change will be overcome only by making attractors to the change strong enough to overcome it," 122.

[52] See Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying: What the dying have to teach doctors, nurses, clergy and their own families* (New York: Scribner, 1997).

behaviour that is so familiar as to have gotten into their bones – undergoing a bone-transplant is a slow and painful process.

There will be a need for everyone making the transition to the MR3 to be prepared to endure a considerable period of liturgical disruption in order to proceed through to the end point of full implementation. Indeed, this transition, as with most transitions, "may have a desirable conclusion and a well-considered technical order (but) may nevertheless impose frustrating temporary difficulties on the participants and appear to them to be an incomprehensible chaos."[53] The knowledge that the period of change eventually will come to an end will ameliorate the sense of disruption to some extent.

What has been explored here is simply one idea of how the change to the MR3 might be managed. The manner in which each local parish ends up implementing the MR3 appropriately may well be unique to its own particular needs and circumstances. What is important is that local liturgical leaders engage in a process of practical strategizing in active dialogue with their local communities regarding how the MR3 implementation might be accomplished given the local limitations of personnel, resources, energy levels, planning ability, etc. The process via which implementation of the MR3 is accomplished will determine to a large extent the success or failure of its reception by each local parish assembly. Considering new ways of thinking about the manner in which our assemblies are encouraged to transition to the MR3 may reveal that the most appropriate strategic approach to managing this change may also be the most appropriate pastoral approach.

Conclusion

According to *Sacrosanctum Concilium* what we are doing in the liturgy (especially the Eucharist), is enacting "the real nature of the true church."[54] The body of Christ is only fully constituted when all of its members come together in the act of worship/liturgy. The actions and words we utilize to pray our liturgy both affect and confect our ecclesial identity. This is why changing the words with which we express our beliefs is not merely changing the liturgical 'window-dressing' if we take seriously the notion that "...liturgical services pertain to the whole Body of the Church. They manifest it, and have effects upon it."[55] In making the transition to the new translation of the Mass, the assembly is being asked to re-imagine itself (to change its self-perception and expressed ecclesiology) through its praying of the new imaginational categories

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[53] Lynch, 196.

[54] Catholic Church, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*," in *The Liturgy Documents: A Parish Resource Volume 1* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2004), SC#2, p.3.

[55] SC#26, ibid., p.9.

generated by the altered words of the MR3. The way in which local change-agents approach the task of helping celebrants and assemblies to learn to pray the liturgy anew is of vital importance in achieving the goal the Catholic hierarchy has set for realisation: the successful implementation of the MR3 in every English-speaking Catholic parish.

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