

Cork Scripture Group



Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

www.corkscripturegroup.com

Cork Scripture Group

*Submission
on a new edition of
the Lectionary for Mass
for Ireland*

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Introduction

The Cork Scripture Group was established in 2010 by a voluntary group who wanted to share our love of the Sacred Scriptures and help others in our community to grow in their appreciation and understanding of the Word of God. Participants are usually drawn from Cork, both city and county.

In January 2021 we wrote to the Irish Episcopal Conference stressing the importance of the choice of a suitable Biblical translation for a new version of the lectionary, as an integral component of the sacred liturgy and as a noteworthy means of evangelisation of the faithful. In our letter we advocated the following:

- The establishment of appropriate criteria for the choice of any translation;
- The possibility of drawing from a variety (not just one or two) of published translations;
- A detailed process of consultation with all involved;
- A suitably devised pilot scheme before a final decision was taken.

In the event, although our suggestions were disregarded, we welcomed the announcement in March that the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* was under consideration and were eager to accept the invitation to make a submission on this very important issue.

In making a submission it was imperative to take this opportunity to educate and consult our members about the proposed new translation. The following pages outline the educational and consultative process we initiated, the survey we conducted, the results of that consultation and conclude with our recommendations. Our submission is supported by a number of appendices.

Consultation Process

Lectionary Resource

Even though it was a great disappointment that the invitation for submissions from the bishops' conference was essentially an invitation to rubberstamp a *fait accompli*, it was felt strongly that the introduction of a new translation offered a significant catechetical opportunity on an important topic and accordingly a Lectionary Resource document was prepared for wide dissemination.

This Lectionary Resource document was carefully designed with three main sections.

The first section outlines the proposed change and the reason for it; then gives a brief history of the translation of the Bible into Greek, Latin and English and discusses the main considerations that a translator must take into account, especially accuracy, readability, suitability for proclamation and inclusivity.

The second section details the consultation process and the opportunity to make a submission directly via liturgy@iecon.ie or by contributing to the Cork Scripture Group survey.

The third section offers six sample texts. These texts were chosen at random as familiar texts which are read on Sundays. They reflect the full range of readings: First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading, and Gospel. Each reading was given in both the translation from the current Lectionary and from the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*.

The final section focuses on a suitable layout and displays a reading from the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* both as a continuous passage and in sense lines.

The resource was intended to assist those who were making a response whether directly or via the Cork Scripture Group. It was painstakingly designed to be absolutely open and therefore contains no indication of the committee's views. Our approach was to be informative and plainly non-directive.

See Appendix B for the full text of the Lectionary Resource.

Survey questionnaire

To ascertain the views of those who received the Lectionary Resource it was decided to organise an anonymous survey using Microsoft Forms.

The questionnaire was deliberately planned to exclude leading questions. Four of the questions required a Yes/No answer; five required evaluation by scoring out of ten. Only the tenth question asked for a written response but was open equally to those who favoured or did not favour the use of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*.

See Appendix C for the questionnaire.

Survey Respondents

The survey was circulated to two groups:

- (a) Cork Scripture Group. These are members who have attended one or more of the Biblical courses and seminars run by the Cork Scripture Group committee.
- (b) The External Survey was shared by members of the committee with interested friends or colleagues, who were free to pass it on to others.

Number of Responses

| Cork Scripture Group | External Survey | Total |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|
| 43 | 21 | 64 |

Notes:

- Not all respondents in both groups answered all questions. Only question 1 was compulsory.
- Question 2 could be answered only by those in favour of the use of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*.

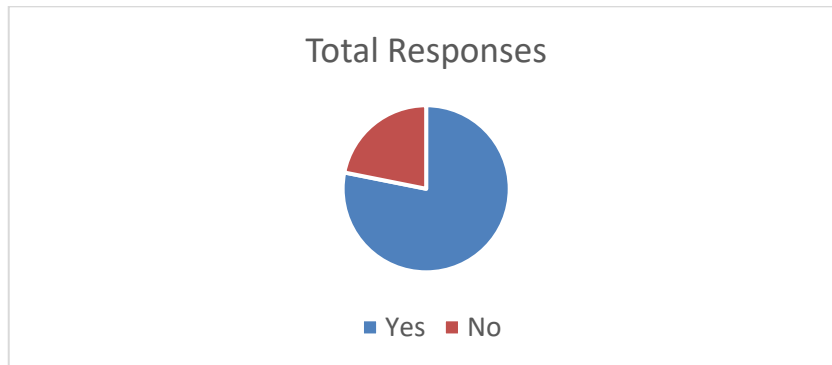
Those who completed the **external survey** were invited to answer two additional questions so that an indication of their background could be ascertained. Of the 21 respondents, 12 were lay, 4 were ordained, 4 were religious and 1 was ordained and religious. Of the 12 lay people, 10 listed current and/or past membership of various church ministries and organisations.

See Appendix D for details of the answers to these additional questions.

Results of Survey

Section 1: Choice of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible [questions 1, 2 & 10]

1. Having considered the sample passages and the reasons for change, are you in favour of using the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* for the new edition? [This question is compulsory.]



| Cork Scripture Group | | | External Survey | | | Combined Totals | |
|----------------------|-----|-------|-----------------|-----|-------|-----------------|-------|
| | No. | % | | No. | % | No. | % |
| YES | 32 | 74.42 | YES | 18 | 85.71 | 50 | 78.13 |
| NO | 11 | 25.58 | NO | 3 | 14.29 | 14 | 21.87 |

2. If you are in favour, please indicate on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is most satisfied) the strength of your approval.

49

Responses

8.12

Average score

| Cork Scripture Group | | External Survey | | Combined Totals |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Number of responses | Approval (out of 10) | Number of responses | Approval (out of 10) | Approval (out of 10) |
| 31 | 8.06 | 18 | 8.22 | 8.12 |

10. Why do you favour or why do you not favour the use of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*?

Summary of reasons for favouring the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*

| | |
|--|----|
| Inclusivity | 17 |
| Readability | 8 |
| Accuracy | 7 |
| Easier to understand | 5 |
| More modern language | 4 |
| Suitability for proclamation | 3 |
| Use of the LORD for the Tetragrammaton | 3 |
| More meaningful and accessible for young people | 2 |
| Similarity to/familiarity with the Jerusalem Bible | 2 |
| Reflects modern developments in Biblical scholarship | 2 |
| Beautiful language | 1 |
| Reflects liturgical changes post 2003 | 1 |
| Retention of Grail Psalms | 1 |
| <i>RNJB</i> better than the <i>Jerusalem Bible</i> | 1 |

Summary of reasons for not favouring the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*

| | |
|--|---|
| Inclusive language depersonalises the Word of God; over emphasis on gender inclusivity and gender neutral takes from the spontaneity of the language | 2 |
| <i>RNJB</i> is not inclusive enough | 2 |
| <i>RNJB</i> verbose and lacks flow and rhythm; awkward wordy language | 2 |
| Dislike of change | 1 |
| Dislike of some aspects of <i>RNJB</i> translations | 1 |
| Not readable | 1 |
| Not suitable to adapt the Word of God | 1 |
| Preference for <i>ESV</i> | 1 |
| Preference for a youth bible | 1 |
| Preference for <i>Jerusalem Bible</i> | 1 |
| Preference for <i>Revised Standard Edition</i> | 1 |

For full details see Appendix E.

Section 2: Translation Criteria

Taking the four criteria mentioned, that the translator should take into account, please rank the RNJB on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is the highest) with regard to each of them.

3. Accuracy

61

Responses

7.74

Average score

| Cork Scripture Group | | External Survey | | Combined Totals |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Number of responses | (out of 10) | Number of responses | (out of 10) | (out of 10) |
| 40 | 7.85 | 21 | 7.52 | 7.74 |

4. Readability

61

Responses

7.74

Average score

| Cork Scripture Group | | External Survey | | Combined Totals |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Number of responses | (out of 10) | Number of responses | (out of 10) | (out of 10) |
| 40 | 7.53 | 21 | 8.14 | 7.74 |

5. Suitability for Proclamation

61

Responses

7.61

Average score

| Cork Scripture Group | | External Survey | | Combined Totals |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Number of responses | (out of 10) | Number of responses | (out of 10) | (out of 10) |
| 40 | 7.43 | 21 | 7.95 | 7.61 |

6. Inclusivity

59

Responses

7.68

Average score

| Cork Scripture Group | | External Survey | | Combined Totals |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Number of responses | (out of 10) | Number of responses | (out of 10) | (out of 10) |
| 38 | 7.5 | 21 | 8 | 7.68 |

Section 3: Alternative Layout

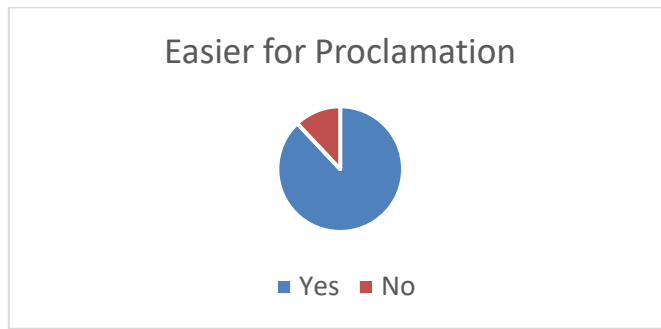
Note: In the Lectionary Resource the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* translation of 1 Peter 3:18-22 was laid out in two versions. See below. The right-hand column illustrates how a passage can be laid out in sense lines to assist the reader.

| First Sunday of Lent, Year B: Second Reading | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Peter 3:18-22 (RNJB)</p> <p>Christ himself suffered once and for all for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to lead you to God. He was put to death in the body; he was raised to life in the spirit, in which he also went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison. They had refused to believe long ago, while God patiently waited, in the days of Noah when the ark was being built, in which only a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. Baptism which this prefigured now saves you, not the removal of physical dirt but the pledge to God of a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having entered heaven with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.</p> | <p>1 Peter 3:18-22 (RNJB)</p> <p>Christ himself suffered once and for all for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to lead you to God. He was put to death in the body; he was raised to life in the spirit, in which he also went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison. They had refused to believe long ago, while God patiently waited, in the days of Noah when the ark was being built, in which only a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. Baptism which this prefigured now saves you, not the removal of physical dirt but the pledge to God of a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having entered heaven with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.</p> |

In the survey respondents were instructed as follows:

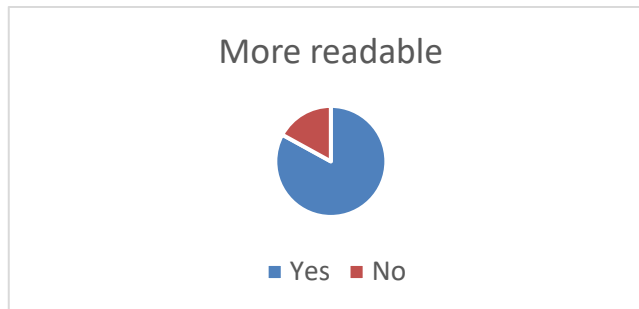
Please read 1 Peter 3:18-22 in its alternative layout (right-hand column).

7. Does the layout help you to proclaim it more easily?



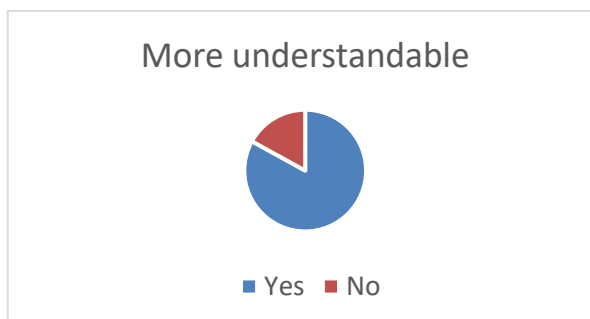
| Cork Scripture Group | | | External Survey | | | Combined Totals | |
|----------------------|--------|-----|-----------------|--------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| | Number | % | | Number | % | Number | % |
| YES | 34 | 89% | YES | 18 | 86% | 51 | 88% |
| NO | 4 | 11% | NO | 3 | 14% | 7 | 12% |

8. Is it more readable?



| Cork Scripture Group | | | External Survey | | | Combined Totals | |
|----------------------|--------|-----|-----------------|--------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| | Number | % | | Number | % | Number | % |
| YES | 32 | 82% | YES | 18 | 86% | 50 | 83% |
| NO | 7 | 18% | NO | 3 | 14% | 10 | 17% |

9. Is it easier to understand when you are listening?



| Cork Scripture Group | | | External Survey | | | Total | |
|----------------------|--------|-----|-----------------|--------|-----|--------|-----|
| | Number | % | | Number | % | Number | % |
| YES | 31 | 82% | YES | 18 | 86% | 49 | 83% |
| NO | 7 | 18% | NO | 3 | 14% | 10 | 17% |

Commentary on the Survey Results

Choice of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible

A clear majority – 78% - favoured the use of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*. This concurred with the view of the committee.

Of those who were in favour the approval rating (out of 10) varied from 4 to 10 but the overall average was 8.12.

The top three reasons for favouring its use were inclusivity, readability and accuracy.

Of those who were not in favour, two rejected it because of the emphasis on inclusivity while two others rejected it because it was not inclusive enough. The reasons offered by those who rejected it fell into three main categories:

- Various shortcomings of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*;
- Preference for a different translation;
- Other reasons, e.g. a dislike of change; and a belief that a tiny word change takes from the Word of God.

Translation Criteria

All four criteria scored over seven out of ten: suitability for proclamation (7.61); inclusivity (7.68) accuracy (7.74); readability (7.74).

As already recorded, inclusivity is a very important issue and attention should be given to it in all translations and Church communications. The considerable dismay caused by the titles of Pope Francis' encyclical letter, *Fratelli Tutti*, and the Pontifical Biblical Commission's document, *What Is Man? A Journey Through Biblical Anthropology*, should be noted. In relation to the latter it is disappointing to know that efforts by some members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission and one of its English translators to suggest an alternative title were overruled.

The accuracy rating of 7.74 is probably an underestimation. One translation which caused a respondent distress was "for the length of days unending" instead of "forever and ever" in Psalm 23:6, but it is undeniably a very accurate translation of the Hebrew. Careful comparison of the sample readings with the Greek and Hebrew originals reveals a significant fidelity to the original texts. A 9.5 score would be more correct. Where some minor variations have been noted these are partly due to the translator's efforts to clarify the meaning of the passage and partly due to variant readings and accordingly are acceptable.

The accuracy rating may also have been affected by the fact that some of the respondents appeared to have judged the accuracy on the basis of similarities with the *Jerusalem Bible* rather than with the Hebrew or Greek originals.

Alternative Layout

A feature of the *New Revised Jerusalem Bible* as a whole is the use of longer sentences with a number of clauses, where the *Jerusalem Bible* used a number of shorter sentences. This can pose considerable difficulties for appropriate proclamation and consequent understanding by the congregation, as is already evident from many prayers in the revised *Roman Missal*.

To avoid these difficulties for both reader and listener it is essential that passages be laid out in the new Lectionary in sense lines whenever necessary. The sample version of 1 Peter 3:18-22, laid out in sense lines, was strongly approved, and was scored highly by the survey respondents for being easier to proclaim (88% agreed), more readable (83%) and easier to understand when listening (83%). It is also worth noting that the Bishops of England and Wales have decided that in their lectionary “all the readings will be given in sense lines as an assistance to the reader.”

Incipits and other editorial work

The issue of incipits and other editing required for the inclusion of Biblical passages in a lectionary was not addressed in the Lectionary Resource nor was it included in the survey. It was felt to be too specific and too complex to be raised in a short resource or survey, but that is not to deny its undoubted importance.

Inevitably there will need to be some adjustments to the texts to make them intelligible and suitable for proclamation. It is imperative that the opportunity is taken to correct the errors in the current lectionary. The solutions applied in the current texts cannot be applied to the new lectionary willy-nilly. All readings that require incipits or editing must be thoroughly reviewed by the relevant biblical and theological experts before the text of the new lectionary is finalised.

A typical example which needs correction is in the first reading of the Feast of Pentecost: Acts 2:1-11. In the current lectionary it begins as follows: “When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room”. The *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* translation is as follows: “When Pentecost day had come, they were all together...” The Greek text states simply, ἦσαν ἅπαντες. “they were all” with no explicit subject, but it is clear that the gathering consisted of the twelve, Mary, Jesus’ family, other women and men disciples, about 120 in all.

Other Important Issues

Revision of Lectionary Contents

As well as the proposal to use the new translation, we also strongly recommend a revision of the contents of the Lectionary as there are obvious gaps and weaknesses in the present selection. It is imperative that the Irish Episcopal Conference begins discussions as a matter of urgency with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on such a revision.

The following examples indicate some of the difficulties which need to be resolved.

Choice of Readings:

The results of our research showed that of the criteria listed, the lack of inclusivity in the translations was of greatest concern.

This also holds true of the selection of readings, for example: the gospel of the healing of the Gerasene demoniac, which is in all three synoptic gospels, is never read on Sundays. Yet it is a very important example of Jesus broadening his ministry to reach out to the outsider/the excluded.

There are numerous examples of the exclusion of women.

There is no reference to the prophet and judge, Deborah, even though Gideon, Jotham and Jephthah are all included from the Book of Judges. The bravery of Esther and Judith are not recognised either.

Romans 16, where Paul lists 11 women as co-workers, apostles and deacons, is never proclaimed on Sunday.

Independent qualitative research carried out by one of our committee members with young adults, who are practising Catholics, revealed significant concerns about omissions from the Lectionary of notable passages concerning faith women/female disciples. As the recipients of the Word at Liturgies they felt that seeing women's contributions and interaction in Scripture was just as relevant as seeing men's, and that just tweaking language would not go far enough to address the issues raised.

Exclusion of certain verses from readings:

When the first chapter of Exodus is read on weekdays, the story of the midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, who saved many Israelite babies, is excluded (verses 15-21 are omitted from Ex 1: 8-22).

The passages immediately before and after Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus after the resurrection (John 20:1-9, 19-31) are read on the first and second Sundays of Easter but

the section about Mary is excluded, thus ignoring her Christ-commissioned role as 'apostle to the apostles.'

Optional passages in readings:

On the feast of the Presentation, there is a full account of the meeting with Simeon while the section on the prophet Anna is considered optional.

There are two problems in the Lectionary (11th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C) with regard to the story of the Galilean women disciples who follow Jesus (Luke 8:1-3). Firstly, it is taken as one passage with the story of the woman who anoints Jesus and over the years this has led to the misconceived notion that Mary Magdalene is a sinner and prostitute. Secondly that section on the Galilean women is considered optional and so quite often, the story of the faithful women disciples who remained with Jesus from Galilee right through to the resurrection is never proclaimed on a Sunday.

The story of the woman with the haemorrhage, which is found in all three synoptic gospels, is an intercalation with the story of the raising of Jairus' daughter and the evangelists placed them like this to further elucidate both events. The Markan version is proclaimed on 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time in Year B but the section on the woman is optional, thus ignoring the fact that her faith was so powerful that she could draw healing from Jesus without his knowledge. Furthermore, Jesus was willing to be touched by her even though she was considered ritually unclean, yet another example of his reaching out to the excluded and marginalised.

In the proclamation of Mark's Passion in year B, the story of the woman who anoints Jesus on the head in preparation for his death (as distinct from the Lukan anointing, the theme of which is love and forgiveness) as well as the story of the women at the crucifixion are considered optional. This is ironic as Jesus himself states of the anointing woman: "I tell you solemnly, wherever throughout all the world the Good News is proclaimed, what she has done will be told also, in remembrance of her" (Mark 14:9). Maybe those who compile the new Lectionary should take notice of the Lord's words!

Some key passages that are only read on weekdays:

While the Magnificat, Mary's great prayer, is proclaimed on the feasts of the Visitation and Assumption, it is not proclaimed in the Sunday liturgy.

Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus (John 20:10-18) is removed to the Tuesday of Easter week, even though the passages immediately before and after are read on the first two Sundays of Easter. What does that say about Jesus' appearance to her in comparison with the men who meet Jesus after the resurrection?

Some notable Old Testament women whose stories are never read on Sundays include Miriam, the prophetess, and Ruth, the ancestress of Jesus, who appear only in weekday readings in Year 1.

It is an accepted fact that for the majority of practising Catholics in Ireland their main contact with Sacred Scripture is through listening to the readings at *Sunday* Mass. Therefore, in the context of a revised Lectionary particular attention should be paid to ensuring that key passages, such as those listed above, are read on Sundays, rather than on weekdays.

On a more general level, there are 144 male saints commemorated in the Liturgy, but only 28 female saints.

Exclusion of Women

Independent research carried out by one of our committee members with young adults, who are practising Catholics, revealed significant concerns about omissions from the Lectionary of notable passages concerning faith women/female disciples. As the recipients of the Word at Liturgies they felt that seeing women's contributions and interaction in Scripture was just as relevant as seeing men's, and that just tweaking language would not go far enough to address the issues raised.

Specific readings have not been selected for newer feasts:

For example, the Season of Creation in September/October and the Sunday of the Word of God (3rd Sunday in ordinary time) do not have specific readings assigned to them.

Membership of Council of Liturgy

We propose that the Council of Liturgy should always count among its members two biblical scholars (one Old Testament specialist and one New Testament specialist) to ensure that the centrality of the Word of God in our worship is always respected and honoured.

Promotion of Sunday of the Word of God

We propose that the Sunday of the Word of God, which was instigated by Pope Francis only two years ago should be promoted by the Liturgy Commission. A ceremony of Enthronement of the Word should be recommended and commissioning ceremonies for Ministers of the Word should be held on that day.

It should also be suggested that dioceses and parishes emphasise the centrality of the Word of God by running biblical gatherings, talks, sharing, etc., on that day.

Support for and Promotion of Biblical Education and Study

Support, including financial support, should be available for individuals, lay and ordained, who wish to do further Biblical Studies.

Support (including promotion, financial assistance) for parish Scripture sharing groups (Lectio Divina, Unfolding the Word, etc.)

Training courses for Ministers of the Word should be available on a regular and ongoing basis in each diocese/parish.

Recommendations

We recommend the following:

1. The use of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* for the revised translation of the Lectionary, paying particular attention to the appropriate editorial work required and to the layout of the readings in sense lines;
2. Immediate action by the Irish Episcopal Conference to initiate the long overdue revision of the selections of the Lectionary itself;
3. Mandatory representation of Biblical Scholars on the Council of Liturgy;
4. A comprehensive promotion of Sunday of the Word of God;
5. A properly planned and resourced programme of support for and promotion of Biblical education and study at national, diocesan and parish levels.

APPENDIX A

Introduction to Cork Scripture Group



Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

Cork Scripture Group was established in 2010 by a voluntary group who wanted to share our love of the Sacred Scriptures and help others in our community to grow in their appreciation and understanding of the Word of God. Participants are usually drawn from Cork, both city and county.

Our first initiative was an Introduction to the Bible Course which consisted of 4 modules run over two years. We ran three of these courses, two in Cork city and one in West Cork and participants received a Diocesan Certificate of Recognition, co-signed by the bishops of Cork and Ross and Cloyne, on their completion. Each year since then we host two Bible Study programmes on different aspects of biblical literature. These are run on a modular basis each spring and autumn, with each module typically consisting of four or five presentations, one evening a week, by local biblical scholars as well as members of our own committee. We also host two half-day Bible Workshops annually, which we invite a nationally recognized scripture scholar to facilitate discussion on a particular aspect of our Sacred Scriptures.

Since we started we have had wonderful support for both our modules and workshops from Scripture scholars including Fr. Charles Conroy MSC, Dr. Siobhán Dowling Long, Sean Brennan, Fr. John Newman, Mons Ned Goold, Dianne Corkery, Dr. Kieran O'Mahony OSA, Pauline Byrne, Fr Peter McVerry SJ, Dr Jessie Rogers, Fr Michael Mullins, Sr Mary T. Brien PBVM, Dr Luke Macnamara OSB, Rev Geraldine Gracie, Fr Gerry O'Hanlon SJ, Fr Ciarán O'Callaghan Csr, Sr Celine Mangan OP, Fr. Sylvester O'Flynn OFM Cap., Pauline Sheehan, Fr Stephen Cummins OP and members of our own committee.

In addition to these structured programmes, we also seek to support individuals and groups in Cork who are involved in or interested in Bible Study and are happy to share resources and meet with local communities who wish to run parish-based programmes, like 'Unfolding the Word.' Last year, in response to Pope Francis' launch of the Sunday of the Word of God, we promoted it by distributing a ceremony for the enthronement of the Bible at mass.

For the past two years, we have collaborated with members of the local Church of Ireland community and the Methodist Church in Cork in organizing Cork Ecumenical Bible Week.

The Covid-19 pandemic proved a new challenge for Cork Scripture Group as we wanted to continue to connect with our Scripture community. Therefore, we offered weekly biblical reflections over the course of the lockdown and have moved our modules to home Bible study modules until we can meet again in person.

All the programmes and supports offered by the Cork Scripture Support Group are run on a non-profit, self-financing basis with participants' contributions serving to meet the costs incurred for the venues used, as well as the cost of invited speakers. Subventions are also available, so that modules are accessible to all who are interested.

Committee Members: Lorna Downey, Ben Hegarty OP, Rosalie Moloney, Marian Mortell, Phil Mortell, Seán O Sullivan.



Cork Scripture Group

Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

The Lectionary and the Word of God

For many Christians, our primary encounter with the Sacred Scriptures is often through hearing the Word of God proclaimed in the readings that are part of our public prayer and worship. The Lectionary is the name given to the collection of biblical readings proclaimed at Mass, arranged in order of the liturgical year. The current Lectionary was established in 1981 and the English translation of the bible used during that time has been the *Jerusalem Bible*, first published in 1966, and *The Grail Psalms*, published in 1963.

Proposed change to the Lectionary in Ireland

The Irish Bishops' Conference, like many other English-speaking Conferences, is currently considering changing the translation of the Bible used in the Lectionary. The Irish bishops are considering using the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*, as the basis for a new edition of the Lectionary for Mass in Ireland. They are asking us to express our opinion on this proposal. The choice of biblical readings will remain the same.

We hope that these short background notes and sample texts, which compare the current Lectionary and the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*, will assist your understanding of what such a change would involve. We also hope that they will help you to formulate your views and encourage you to take part in the consultative process.

Translation and the Bible

The original manuscripts which today collectively form the Christian Bible were written in three languages: Hebrew and Aramaic for the Hebrew Bible, which we commonly refer to as the Old Testament, and Greek for the New Testament.

Even before the Christian era, translation has always been part of the history of the Sacred Scriptures. After the conquests of Alexander the Great [333 BCE], most of the ancient world spoke Greek. In time, Jews living outside of Palestine could no longer read Hebrew, so the Hebrew texts were translated into Greek. This version was called the *Septuagint*. It is frequently cited in the New Testament and remained the most widely read translation of the Old Testament among Christians for centuries.

In the fourth century CE, Saint Jerome translated the entire Bible into Latin, partly drawing on the Hebrew texts and on the Septuagint, since by that time Latin had replaced Greek as the common language in the Western half of the Roman Empire.

Jerome's translation into Latin was called the *Vulgate* and became the standard Bible used by Western Christianity for over a thousand years or more.

Translation of the Bible into English

In the centuries before the Protestant Reformation there were several attempts to translate the Bible into English from the original Hebrew and Greek texts, but these were condemned by the Church in the West, which forbade the use of the Bible in any language apart from Latin. Since the Reformation, the *King James Version* [1611], together with subsequent revisions, continues to be the principal translation used within Protestant Churches. In the Catholic Church, the *Douay-Rheims Bible* [1610], based on Jerome's Vulgate, remained the only approved English translation until modern times.

By the nineteenth century CE, the discovery of ancient documents and artifacts helped scholars to better understand the original biblical languages and therefore produce more accurate translations. In recent years, the most commonly used English translations (*NRSV*, *NIV* and the different editions of the *Jerusalem Bible*) have all been translated from the original biblical languages.

In 1943, Pope Pius XII wrote an encyclical entitled *Divino Afflante Spiritu* which encouraged Catholic biblical scholars to use all the best methods and scholarship to produce new translations of the Bible from the best Hebrew and Greek texts available. The Second Vatican Council continued this direction and encouraged all Catholics to study the Bible and promoted the use of the vernacular in the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of Mass.

New translations continue to be required to reflect the fresh insights which are gained from analysis of archaeological and other discoveries and from new methods of study. In their proposal for change, the Irish bishops highlight the "new understandings in relation to fidelity to the texts in their original languages" and also "developments in the English language over the last fifty years".

Considerations in translating Biblical texts

When translating the Sacred Scriptures from one language into another there are a number of considerations that the translator must take into account. Among the most important criteria applied are the following:

- + Accuracy
- + Readability
- + Suitability for Proclamation
- + Inclusivity.

Different translations will vary in the emphasis and significance they give to each of the above criteria.

Accurate:

All translations seek to faithfully and accurately translate the Sacred Scriptures into the language of the reader. Generally speaking, for English Bibles, there are two dominant translation methodologies: formal-equivalence and dynamic-equivalence.

In formal-equivalence translations, translators attempt to translate each word in the original language into an equivalent English word. These translations are generally considered more “literal” as they try to stay as close as possible to the original in vocabulary, structure, and grammar.

In dynamic-equivalence translations, translators attempt to translate the message/meaning of the original-language texts into an equivalent English word or expression. These translations are generally less literal on a word-for-word basis but still seek to respect and transmit the meaning of the original-language texts.

Having said all that, in actuality, all translations incorporate elements of both methods.

Readable:

A good translation, however, must be readable as well as accurate so that its message and its meaning can be readily understood by the reader or listener.

Suitable for proclamation:

The translation should be suitable for proclamation within prayer and liturgy so that its meaning can be easily conveyed and understood.

Inclusive:

Hebrew and Greek both use masculine generics, linguistic forms that are used both for males specifically and generically in reference to mixed groups of males and females. This presents a challenge for translators who must consider whether current *English* masculine generics convey the same inclusive sense that their Hebrew and Greek counterparts once did. Do terms such as “men,” “sons,” “fathers,” and “brothers” convey the same inclusive sense to the modern reader that the original language did? Should more inclusive words such as “person,” “children,” “ancestors,” and “brothers and sisters” be used to better reflect the original sense of the passage.

A simple definition of a gender-inclusive translation is *a translation that seeks to avoid masculine terminology when the original author was referring to members of both sexes.*

Express your view!

We invite you to take time to compare the following comparative translations of well-known passages from the Bible. They are taken from the *Jerusalem Bible* [1966] and the Revised New Jerusalem Bible [2019] respectively. We encourage you to actively participate in the consultation about the proposed adoption of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* translation for the new edition of the Lectionary in Ireland.

You can communicate your views directly to the Secretariat for Liturgy at liturgy@iecon.ie or we will be happy to include your feedback as part of our collated response on behalf of Cork Scripture Group. Thank you.

Feedback via the Cork Scripture Group

If you wish us to incorporate your opinion in our response, please complete our short **online** Lectionary Questionnaire, using the **link** which has been emailed to you, before **Monday, 10th May**. [For your information, the survey questions are listed below.]

Choice of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible

1. Having considered the sample passages and the reasons for change, are you in favour of using the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* for the new edition? [This question is compulsory.]
2. If you are in favour, please indicate on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is most satisfied) the strength of your approval.

Translation criteria

Taking the four criteria mentioned, that the translator should take into account, please rank the *RNJB* on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is the highest) with regard to each of them.

3. Accuracy
4. Readability
5. Suitability for Proclamation
6. Inclusivity

Alternative Layout

Please read 1 Peter 3:18-22 in its alternative layout (right-hand column).

7. Does the layout help you to proclaim it more easily?
8. Is it more readable?
9. Is it easier to understand when you are listening?

Sample Texts

These texts have been chosen at random as familiar texts which are read on Sundays. They reflect the full range of readings: First Reading, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading, and Gospel.

In the **left-hand column** is the reading taken from the **current Lectionary**. In the **right-hand column** is the same passage from the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*.

| CURRENT LECTIONARY | REVISED NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Third Sunday of Lent, Year C</i></p> <p>First Reading</p> <p>Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15</p> <p>Moses was looking after the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, priest of Midian. He led his flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in the shape of a flame of fire, coming from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing but it was not being burnt up. 'I must go and look at this strange sight,' Moses said 'and see why the bush is not burnt.' Now the Lord saw him go forward to look, and God called to him from the middle of the bush. 'Moses, Moses!' he said. 'Here I am' he answered. 'Come no nearer' he said. 'Take off your shoes, for the place on which you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father,' he said, 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses covered his face, afraid to look at God.</p> <p>And the Lord said, 'I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt. I have heard their appeal</p> | <p><i>Third Sunday of Lent, Year C</i></p> <p>First Reading</p> <p>Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15</p> <p>Moses was looking after the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led it to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame blazing from the middle of a bush. Moses looked; there was the bush blazing, but the bush was not being burnt up. Moses said, 'I must go over and see this strange sight, and why the bush is not being burnt up.' When the LORD saw him going over to look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, saying, 'Moses, Moses!' He answered, 'Here I am!' Then he said, 'Come no nearer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.' And he said, 'I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' At this Moses covered his face, for he was afraid to look at God.</p> <p>Then the LORD said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying for help</p> |

CURRENT LECTIONARY

to be free of their slave-drivers. Yes, I am well aware of their sufferings. I mean to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land to a land rich and broad, a land where milk and honey flow.'

Then Moses said to God, 'I am to go, then, to the sons of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you". But if they ask me what his name is, what am I to tell them?' And God said to Moses, 'I Am who I Am. This' he added 'is what you say to the sons of Israel: "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for all time; by this name I shall be invoked for all generations to come.'

REVISED NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE

because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to rescue them from the hands of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that land, to a land rich and broad, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

Moses then said to God, 'Look, if I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your ancestors has sent me to you," and they say to me, "What is his name?", what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I am who I am.' And he said, 'This is what you are to say to the Israelites, "I am has sent me to you."' God further said to Moses, 'You are to tell the Israelites, "The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is my name for all time, and this is my title for all generations.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, Year A

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 22:1-3, 5-6. R/ v.1

R/ The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.

2. Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, Year A

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 23:1-3, 5-6. R/ v.1

R/ The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.

2. Near restful waters he leads me;
he revives my soul.

He guides me along the right path,
for the sake of his name.

| <p>CURRENT LECTIONARY</p> <p>3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.</p> <p>4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell forever and ever.</p> | <p>REVISED NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE</p> <p>3. You have prepared a table before me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.</p> <p>4. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. In the LORD's own house shall I dwell for the length of days unending.</p> |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Pentecost Sunday</i></p> <p>Second Reading</p> <p>Acts 2:1-11</p> <p>When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. 'Surely' they said 'all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and</p> | <p><i>Pentecost Sunday</i></p> <p>Second Reading</p> <p>Acts 2:1-11</p> <p>When Pentecost day had come, they were all together, when suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of a rushing wind, filling the entire house in which they were sitting; and there appeared to them tongues as of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak different languages as the Spirit gave them power to express themselves.</p> <p>Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, and they were bewildered because each one heard them speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished, saying, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? How is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and</p> |

| <p>CURRENT LECTIONARY</p> <p>Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.’</p> | <p>REVISED NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE</p> <p>Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our own language about the marvels of God.’</p> |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C</i></p> <p>Second Reading</p> <p>1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13</p> <p>Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them.</p> <p>If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fulness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.</p> <p>Love is always patient and kind: it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.</p> | <p><i>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C</i></p> <p>Second Reading</p> <p>1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13</p> <p>Be eager for the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.</p> <p>If I speak in the tongues of human beings and of angels but do not have love, I have become a sounding bronze or a cymbal clashing. If I have the power of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I distribute all my possessions, and if I hand over my body to be burnt, but do not have love, I gain nothing.</p> <p>Love is patient; love is kind; love is not jealous; love is not boastful, or puffed up or rude; it does not insist on its rights, it does not take offence, it does not plan evil, it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It puts up with everything, it believes everything, it hopes everything, endures everything.</p> |

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Love does not come to an end. But if there are gifts of prophecy, the time will come when they must fail; or the gift of languages, it will not continue for ever; and knowledge – for this, too, the time will come when it must fail. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesying is imperfect; but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will disappear. When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and think like a child, and argue like a child, but now I am a man, all childish ways are put behind me. Now we are seeing a dim reflection in a mirror; but then we shall be seeing face to face. The knowledge that I have now is imperfect; but then I shall know as fully as I am known.

In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year B

Gospel**Luke 1:26-38**

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son,

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Love never falls away. If there are prophecies, they will become superfluous; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will become superfluous; for we know only in part and we prophesy only in part, but once perfection comes, the partial will be superfluous. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I thought as a child, I reasoned as a child. When I became a man, I put aside the things of childhood, for now we see in a mirror, confusedly, but then we shall see face to face. Now I know only partially, then I shall know fully, just as I am fully known. Now faith, hope and love abide, the three of them, but the greatest of them is love.

Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year B

Gospel**Luke 1:26-38**

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, full of grace! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and pondered what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Look! You will conceive in your womb and bear a son,

CURRENT LECTIONARY

and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

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and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?' In answer the angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. And see, your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she who was said to be barren is now in her sixth month, *for nothing is impossible to God.*' Mary said, 'Here I am, the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said.' And the angel left her.

*Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time,
Year B*

Gospel**John 6:24-35**

When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into those boats and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus. When they found him on the other side, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered:

'I tell you most solemnly, you are not looking for me because you have seen the signs but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat.

Do not work for food that cannot last,

*Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time,
Year B*

Gospel**John 6:24-35**

When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into those boats themselves and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus.

Finding him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you get here?' Jesus answered:

'Amen, Amen I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw the signs, but because you ate your fill of the bread.

Do not work for food that corrupts,

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but work for food that endures to eternal life,
the kind of food the Son of Man is offering you,
for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal.'

Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to do the works that God wants?' Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent.' So they said, 'What sign will you give to show us that we should believe in you? What work will you do? Our fathers had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

Jesus answered:

'I tell you most solemnly,
it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven,
it is my Father who gives you the bread from heaven,
the true bread;
for the bread of God
is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.'

'Sir,' they said, 'give us that bread always.' Jesus answered:

'I am the bread of life.
He who comes to me will never be hungry;
he who believes in me will never thirst.'

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but work for food that endures for eternal life,
which the Son of man will give you,
for on him God the Father has set his seal.'

Then they said to him, 'What should we do to perform the works of God?'

Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you should believe in the one he has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign will you do, that we may see and believe in you? What work will you do? Our fathers ate manna in the desert, as it is written, *Bread from heaven he gave them to eat.*'

Jesus said to them:

'Amen, Amen I say to you,
it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven,
it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven,
for the bread of God
is the bread which comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.'

They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus answered them:

'I am the bread of life.
No one who comes to me will ever be hungry;
No one who believes in me will ever be thirsty.'

Alternative layouts for a sample Revised New Jerusalem Bible passage

The right-hand column illustrates how a passage can be laid out in sense lines to assist the reader.

| First Sunday of Lent, Year B: Second Reading | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Peter 3:18-22 (RNJB)</p> <p>Christ himself suffered once and for all for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to lead you to God. He was put to death in the body; he was raised to life in the spirit, in which he also went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison. They had refused to believe long ago, while God patiently waited, in the days of Noah when the ark was being built, in which only a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. Baptism which this prefigured now saves you, not the removal of physical dirt but the pledge to God of a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having entered heaven with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.</p> | <p>1 Peter 3:18-22 (RNJB)</p> <p>Christ himself suffered once and for all for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to lead you to God. He was put to death in the body; he was raised to life in the spirit, in which he also went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison. They had refused to believe long ago, while God patiently waited, in the days of Noah when the ark was being built, in which only a few, that is eight souls, were saved through water. Baptism which this prefigured now saves you, not the removal of physical dirt but the pledge to God of a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having entered heaven with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.</p> |

APPENDIX C

Survey Questions

Choice of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible

1. Having considered the sample passages and the reasons for change, are you in favour of using the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* for the new edition? [This question is compulsory.]
2. If you are in favour, please indicate on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is most satisfied) the strength of your approval.

Translation criteria

Taking the four criteria mentioned, that the translator should take into account, please rank the *RNJB* on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 10 is the highest) with regard to each of them.

3. Accuracy
4. Readability
5. Suitability for Proclamation
6. Inclusivity

Alternative Layout

Please read 1 Peter 3:18-22 in its alternative layout (right-hand column).

7. Does the layout help you to proclaim it more easily?
8. Is it more readable?
9. Is it easier to understand when you are listening?

Additional Information

10. Why do you favour or why do you not favour the use of the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible*?

Tell us about yourself

11. Please select all that apply.
 - Member of Bible Group
 - Member of Liturgy Group
 - Member of Parish Assembly/Pastoral Council
 - Member of Prayer Group
 - Minister of the Eucharist
 - Minister of the Word
 - Other
12. Please select all that apply.
 - Lay
 - Ordained
 - Religious

APPENDIX D

Respondents to External Survey

| TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES TO QUESTION 11 | 18 |
|--|-----------|
| | |
| | Number |
| Minister of the Eucharist | 7 |
| Minister of the Word | 7 |
| Member of Prayer Group | 5 |
| Member of Liturgy Group | 3 |
| Member of Parish Assembly/Pastoral Council | 2 |
| Member of Bible Group | 1 |
| | |
| <i>Other</i> | |
| Member of a Third Order; OCDS; Secular order | 3 |
| Parish Member; Ordinary lay person of church | 2 |
| Priest | 2 |
| Coordinator of the rota for Readers in the Parish for three Masses | 1 |
| Member of Adoration Group | 1 |
| Member of Faith in Action Group | 1 |
| Theologian | 1 |
| Former Minister of Eucharist | 1 |
| Former Funeral Minister | 1 |

Note: Of the 18 responses 11 indicated multiple roles/memberships.

| TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES TO QUESTION 12 | 21 |
|---|-----------|
| | |
| | Number |
| Lay (+ ID 10) ¹ | 12 |
| Ordained | 4 |
| Religious | 4 |
| Ordained and Religious | 1 |

¹ Respondent ID 10 identified themselves as lay in question 10 but did not answer question 11.

APPENDIX E

Responses to Question 10

Why do you favour or why do you not favour the use of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible?

IN FAVOUR

CORK SCRIPTURE GROUP

| Survey ID | |
|-----------|---|
| 9 | it uses more modern terms although the word 'Man ' still continues to be used? |
| 10 | Language changes with time and will need to be updated, however I do not like the word cretin being used in either . |
| 11 | My personal preference would be the NRSV but comparing the two JB's the language of the RNJB is more modern and less grandiose which renders it easier to read and to listen to. |
| 12 | I appreciate that it is more inclusive and more readable. I am glad to see that Tetragrammaton is translated LORD as that was a concern of mine - that choosing inclusive translations might bring a translation requiring readers to pronounce the Tetragrammaton (or to know to replace it themselves). Reading the texts provided, it doesn't read as beautifully as the prior version, but it is only a matter of familiarity! |
| 13 | It is an improvement on the present version. I would hope it is closer to the original. It also seems closer to the spoken language of today. |
| 14 | it's like the old Jerusalem. Women are included a bit more. |
| 15 | The original Jerusalem Bible translation was very readable/listenable; this Revised New JB is slightly better in a few ways than the NJB. |
| 16 | I favour its use because it uses gender-inclusive language. |
| 17 | More inclusive language and better reflects modern developments in Biblical scholarship |
| 18 | Because it's an improvement on the current Lectionary... |
| 19 | I think it is time for a new edition of the Lectionary, to make the readings more accessible and to encourage people to re-engage with the Word of God. I particularly like the inclusive language and the use of "the LORD" in the RNJB. In some cases, the language is less polished & more difficult to proclaim - but this can be offset by the use of an alternative layout, and the readings certainly regain some of their original energy and vitality. |
| 21 | Difficult to say. I presume that since there has been debate about the accuracy of the older (present) version, the new version will be preferable. It is more inclusive anyway. Sometimes not easy to choose as the old one is familiar and its cadences too. The new one sounds slightly different. |
| 24 | Generally more suitable for all. |

| | |
|----|---|
| 26 | I favour the Revised New Jerusalem Bible version for its use of inclusive language. |
| 27 | Most up to date translation and the language is more accessible to the young generation |
| 30 | The only real difference I can see is in the use of somewhat more inclusive language therefore I favour it. |
| 32 | I favour the Revised New Jerusalem Bible because of its inclusive language and its use of the Grail translation of the psalms. As it is a later version of the Jerusalem Bible, many of the readings still sound quite familiar. |
| 33 | The Revised version is better, particularly in readability and suitability for proclamation without compromising accuracy. |
| 34 | I feel the new version is good but I wonder if it is worth the enormous expense and work involved. Lectionaries and Missals are all relatively new and in very good condition. |
| 35 | It takes account of new research findings |
| 36 | I think the inclusive nature of the RNJB is a factor, at least from the samples that were sent to us. Not sure about the accuracy as I don't have enough knowledge. I did find that whilst I am more inclined towards the RNJB that the translation of Psam 23 didn't sit well with me, but that could be just my familiarity or that for me preparing a table and preparing a banquet are two different things with the latter conveying a deeper meaning. |
| 37 | It is more readable and to understand |
| 38 | My previous answers will indicate this. I am in favour of the Revised NJB. As I understand it, it responds to a certain criticism of the accuracy of the older version, though I can't judge this. |
| 40 | I Prefer the use of the Revised New Jerusalem Bible, because it is more readable, more understandable to listeners, and has a better layout. |
| 41 | mainly because of its inclusivity |
| 42 | To reflect the liturgical changes post 2003. |

EXTERNAL SURVEY

| Survey ID | |
|-----------|---|
| 3 | A translation that is faithful to the original, though not literal, reads well in modern English (not American) and is inclusive in its language. It is much better than ESV for proclamation and does have the tendency to a conservative protestant slant of ESV's translation. though ESV is good for study it is not suitable as a lectionary. I would miss the style of translation especially of the psalms of the original Jerusalem version, Tolkein's English style is hard to beat there. |
| 4 | At long last an effort has been made at inclusivity and I'm happy to see an end to lip service "you're all included in that" |
| 5 | The layout of the new version is good. Concerning the text in relation to the various criteria, the new text flows well. However - and these are just a few examples- certain words and phrases of the older version, seem more appropriate, e.g Virgin(Luke 1 26-38) rather than "knowledge of man" In the |

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| | same passage of the new version, "in your womb" seems an unnecessary addition. In John 6 24-38: the old version "food that cannot last" sounds better than the new "food that corrupts". |
| 6 | I favour the inclusivity offered by the Revised version -for example the term "men" is broadened to include others |
| 7 | Easier for general reader to understand, more inclusive and therefore more personal, less stilted, makes Scripture more meaningful and less "ancient" and "other". Scripture is for now, today and having the language as modern as possible helps reinforce that concept. |
| 11 | For all the reasons mentioned, accuracy, readability, suitability for Proclamation and Inclusivity. |
| 12 | I am in favour of the RNJB translation for all the reasons given above, particularly for the Readers sake. It is easier to understand which makes better proclamation. I think the new format would also help them make sense of what they are speaking. |
| 15 | As per rating of each question above [Accuracy 8; Readability 9; Suitability for Proclamation 10; Accuracy 10] |
| 16 | I favour the use of THE REVIDED NEW JERUSALEM BIBLE because (1) It changes the name of the Most Holy One from "YAHWEH" to "The LORD". This avoids continuing a source of offence to our Jewish brothers and sisters. (2) The notes supplied in the margins and in the footnotes are probably the very best that I have ever seen in any translation of the Bible. (3) The language used is very beautiful, and so easy to read and understand. It is so very different to the older Douai-Rheims and the Revised Standard Version (Catholic Editions) versions that I grew up with. |
| 17 | RNJB more inclusive than the former translation |
| 18 | More readable for younger people therefore more meaningful |
| 20 | I believe it is an improvement on the Jerusalekm Bible version in terms of readability |

NOT IN FAVOUR

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| 20 | NOT IN FAVOUR .e.g Ps 23. the ending which everyone knows and understands ie. in the Lords own house shall I dwell for ever and ever” now becomes “in the Lords own house shall I dwell for the length of days unending” try explaining that to a primary class. I think in other readings the over emphasis on gender inclusivity and gender neutral takes from the spontaneity of the readings. Also as children we were often told take off your shoes, and as parents we say it, so when the Lord says to Moses “Take off your shoes” we know He means business this now becomes “ remove the sandals from your feet” not much sense of vitality or urgency there. I think if anything the RNJB is awkward and while it seeks to make the readings more accessible, I fear it may well end up doing the opposite. I honestly think the English Bishops got it right in choosing the ESV edition and I hope Ireland will follow suit. |
| 22 | While I recognise the merits of some changes, I’m not satisfied with its level of inclusivity, hence I am not in favour. I would like it and would favour it if this step had been taken |
| 23 | HAVE TO admit I USE A DIFFERENT BIBLE. I am in possession of a Jerusalem pocket edition, and I just read Peter 3 passage. Guess I am not educated enough in bibles to voice a strong opinion. Always heard jerusalem bible being the reliable one, but I have been using a youth bible ^& it speaks to me with everything I look up |
| 25 | I dont like change |
| 29 | I do not favour RNJB as I feel it is formal non inclusive awkward wordy language. |
| 31 | I prefer the current Jerusalem Bible to the proposed RevNJB because: 1. the inclusive language depersonalises the Word of God making it abstract, uninviting and less personally relevant to the listener. 2. the JB has a greater immediacy and eminence; it is more impactful. |
| 39 | Do not find it readable |

EXTERNAL SURVEY

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| 8 | I prefer the revised standard.edition |
| 9 | Even a tiny word change takes from The Holy Word of God. It isn't suitable to adapt the word of God to our changing times but that we adapt to the Word of God |
| 19 | This RNJB version is often verbose and lacks flow and rhythm. |