Vatican



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Pope Francis has issued a public correction to an article by Cardinal Robert Sarah about the changes the pontiff made last month to how the Catholic Church's liturgies are to be translated from the original Latin into local languages.

In the correction, which takes the form of a letter to Sarah but the pope asks to be posted at the same websites where the cardinal's article first appeared, Francis makes clear the Vatican is no longer to undertake a "detailed word-by-word exam" of translations they receive from the world's local bishops' conferences.

Francis says the new motu proprio *Magnum Principium* ("The Great Principle"), released Sept. 9, "grants the episcopal conferences the faculty to judge the worth and coherence of one or another phrase in the translations from the original."

"The process of translating relevant liturgical texts into a language ... must not bring a spirit of 'imposition' over the episcopal conferences with a translation handed down from the Dicastery, as that would betray the right of bishops as set forth in canon law," the pope tells the cardinal.

Sarah is the prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, which traditionally has had authority over liturgical translations.

Francis' correction, sent out by the Vatican press office Oct. 22, is a response to an article by Sarah that appeared in the Oct. 14 edition of the French magazine *L'Homme Nouveau* and was then posted in Italian on several other websites.

In his article, Sarah had claimed that the pope's motu proprio did not change his congregation's authority to impose new translations on bishops' conferences when the congregation decided the bishops' efforts did not match the original Latin texts closely enough.

Francis says in his correction to Sarah that *Magnum Principium* presumes that portions of a 2001 instruction from the cardinal's congregation, known as *Liturgiam Authenticam*, will need to be "re-considered" and that some paragraphs of the instructions have been "abrogated" by the new motu proprio.

The 2001 instruction specified that translations from Latin were to be made "in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content."

"*Magnum Principium* no longer supports [the idea] that translations must conform at all points to the norms of *Liturgiam Aauthenticam*, as was done in the past," states the pope in the correction. He says specifically that paragraphs 79-84 of the 2001 document need to be "re-considered."

Francis also tells Sarah that liturgical translations should have a "triple fidelity:" to the original Latin text, to the language into which it is being translated, and "to the comprehensibility of the text for those who will use it."

*Magnum Principium* went into effect Oct. 1 and moves most responsibility for liturgical translation from the Vatican to local bishops' conferences.

Francis said in the document that he made the change to translation procedure so that the Second Vatican Council's call to make the liturgy more understandable to people is "more clearly reaffirmed and put into practice."

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