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IRISH CATHOLIC
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
COMHDHÁIL EASPAG CAITLICEACH ÉIREANN

Press Release - Wednesday 11 December 2024, Feast of Saint Damasus I -
Immediate

Attention: Newsdesks, Photodesks and Religious Affairs Correspondents

Bishops' Conferences of Ireland, Australia and New Zealand collaborate on 'Joint Lectionary Project'



Caption Martin Foster in Saint Mary's Oratory of Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, during the Irish Bishops' Winter 2024 General Meeting, with Sandra Garry, PA to the Chief Operating Officer of the Bishops' Conference (Catholic Communications Office archive)



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE



IRISH CATHOLIC
BISHOPS' CONFERENCE



Te Huinga o ngā Pihopa
Katorika o Aotearoa
New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

For over fifty years, parishes and communities across the island of Ireland, Australia and New Zealand have listened to the scripture readings proclaimed in church from the same translations which are given in the *Lectionary* for Mass. Many of these books are now in a poor state and in need of replacing. The bishops have recognised that this is an opportunity for a new edition of the *Lectionary*, taking advantage of a revised translation of the readings, which is both accessible and faithful to the evolving nuances of the English language and contemporary biblical scholarship.

After consultation with experts in both scripture and liturgy, and also amongst the faithful, the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* was chosen as the text for the *Lectionary*. This translation recognises the need for the text to be proclaimed in the liturgy, to be faithful to the original biblical texts and it is sensitive to inclusivity. For the psalms in the *Lectionary*, the *Abbey Psalms and Canticles* will be used. This is a sympathetic revision of the familiar *Grail Psalter* and the revised text has already been adopted in several English-speaking countries.

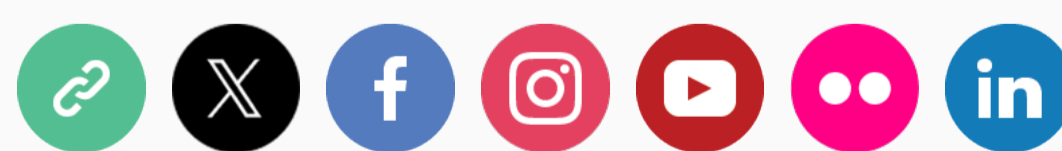
The three Bishops' Conferences will pool their expertise and resources in this 'Joint *Lectionary* Project'. The editorial leadership for the project will be provided by Martin Foster, an experienced editor who previously oversaw the preparation of the *Lectionary* for England and Wales. Mr Foster will work with experts from all three conferences to ensure the quality and liturgical appropriateness of the final text.

The first draft texts, the Sundays of Advent and Christmas, will be sent to bishops for review early in 2025, with the rest of the *Lectionary* following over the next couple of years. This 'Joint *Lectionary* Project' is a major collaboration and it is hoped that it will enrich the celebration of the Eucharist in parishes and communities into the future across Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.

ENDS

For media contact the Catholic Communications Office, Maynooth:

Martin Long +353 (0) 86 172 7678 and Chah Garde +353 (1) 505 3017



Catholic Communications Office

Irish Bishops' Conference
Columba Centre
Maynooth
Ireland
W23P6D3

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