

# Church Latin Publishing Company

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## *Special rules for bibles or books containing sacred texts:*

1: A bible is not a 'coaster'. Do not set drinks or food on a bible. 2: Store in a clean, dry, and if possible, a prominent place so it is visible and easily accessed. 3: Avoid stacking books of lesser dignity on top of it. 4: When no longer of use to its owner, it should be given away or sold to another. 5: If it cannot be given away or sold, it should be thoroughly burned and the ashes buried in a suitable place. This will help prevent it from falling into the hands of those who might desecrate God's Word. "*Nolite dare sanctum canibus... Give not that which is holy to dogs...*" (Matthew 7:6) 6: Do not 'dog-ear' or fold the pages to mark them. Use a thin strip of paper instead. Avoid using an excessive number of thick book marks or prayer cards. This puts stress on the binding. 7: Writing notes, underlining, or highlighting in a bible is permissible if it is done discreetly and does not obscure the inspired text. Do not cross out words or cut and paste portions of the inspired text. If you do not like the translation of your bible- get a different one!

*For your benefit, here is an English translation of the*

*"Editores Lectori" or "Editors to the Reader"*

*of this bible (located just after the title and imprimatur pages):*

Receive, dear reader, from the St. John the Evangelist Press of Tournai (Belgium) the Holy Bible in Latin, most diligently corrected and in faithful accordance with the Vatican edition authorized by Clement VIII and published in 1598. Since many have expressed the wish that, following the excellent work of the eminent scholar Charles Vercellone, there might be a new edition in more elegant form which, while based on his outstanding scriptural studies, could be produced at a lesser price, we decided that it would not be uncalled-for to create this edition of ours.

Moreover the method which the editors decided to follow in this effort are with pleasure derived from the important guidelines Pope Clement VIII laid down for his edition. That is, he ordered *that no one should undertake to publish this edition of Holy Scripture without first consulting a copy of it printed at the Vatican press. The form of this copy should be inviolably followed without the least particle of the text being changed, added or subtracted, unless something is found which is clearly ascribable to typographical negligence.*

If one investigates the reasons for this precept, it becomes easily apparent how useful and wise it was. For the Pontiff was looking for nothing else than to put an end to that enormous discord among innumerable editions through which, by ignoring tradition and the authority of the Church, everyone had been wont to indulge his own inclinations.

Thus it is impermissible for anyone to change anything in the text of the Vulgate edition in any way. It is forbidden by the very notion and sacredness of an authorized text, one having been established as such by the authority of the Church. Since it is the business of this authority to see to the integrity and unity of the Scriptures, the text it has established as the noblest document of tradition must be preserved with utmost care and vigilance. So no matter how much it may seem to us that, in the light of critical scientific reasoning and rules, some things ought to be changed, there is a fear that they might involve those things *which were left unchanged deliberately.* (Preface to the Reader)

Finally, since, in the judgement of the foremost theologians and best scholars, the current readings of the Vulgate edition merit being treated cautiously and with prudent reverence even in matters minute and of small importance, our decision was never to depart from the Vatican — that is, the authorized — edition, unless by chance there was clear evidence of a manifest error on the part of the typographers. Hence we thought it best to safeguard that edition with utmost reverence as the definitive norm of the sacred text; we list here, however, a few readings which, viewed in themselves, appear to be more correct, and as a result of which everyone will be able to see how scrupulously we have striven to follow the precepts of the Holy See. [continued on other side]

II. Reg 2, 8, 12	castra	Castra
III. Reg. 11, 2	He <del>th</del> hæus	He <del>th</del> hæus
III. Reg. 11, 26	Nabath	Nabat
III. Reg. 14, 7	petram	Petram
I. Par. 6, 71	Astharoth	Astaroth
I. Par. 12, 3	Anathotites	Anathothites
I. Par. 25, 10	Zachur	Zacchur
I. Par. 27, 28	Balanam	Balanan
I. Par. 26,32	Gadditis	Gaditis
I. Par. 26, 19	coram altare	coram altari
I Esdr. 5, 6	Arphasachæi	Apharsachæi (cf. 4, 9)
II Esdr. 11, 17	Idithum	Idithun
Judith 8, 22	Abraam	Abraham
Judith 15, 19	Joachim	Joacim
Esth. 2, 21	Bagatha	Bagathan
Ps. 47, 7	apprehendit eos. Ibi	apprehendit eos ibi
IV. Reg. 25, 13	Maachati	Maachathi etc.

The authors of the Vatican edition had not taken it upon themselves to print anything new and recently discovered, nor, likewise, did we ourselves undertake to do anything other than render with utmost exactitude the edition of 1598 (of which a copy lay before us). That edition is the last one of the three published under the auspices of Clement VIII, and through it the authorized text, with three appended lists of corrections, has been perfectly preserved.

In no way could we be unaware of the weight with which certain readings are typically supported, like the famous *proficiens* [“advancing, making progress”] for *proficiscens* [“departing”] of II Samuel 3, 1, or the *affigentes* [“affixing, nailing” (to the cross, i.e., crucifying)] for *affligentes* [“striking or smashing against, striking down”] of Acts 2, 23. But no matter how much they appeal to us — in our private judgement preferring a different reading than the one presented by the Vatican text — we have not ventured to accept them. But because there are praiseworthy scholars — as the Venerable Cardinal Bellarmine has proved — who, well equipped with scholarly knowledge and other aids, devote their efforts to examining and confirming original readings even in all the smallest particulars, we did not think we should reject the emendations contained both in the publications of the best authors and in other, modern editions. Among the latter, we have put much effort into comparing especially the edition which the famous Charles Vercellone oversaw under the auspices of the most holy Pius IX; and in addition to other editions, those of greatest authority in France, Italy and Germany. We have employed these and others in figuring out obscure passages; in determining punctuation — whenever, that is, we feared that the sense might be altered or where it seemed to us that greater clarity might be obtained; and, finally, in correcting the addition of so-called citations, and other things of this kind. Quite often, for example, in the Vatican edition you will find a period followed by a lower-case letter; in Vercellone’s edition you will find this unchanged, even though he did not hesitate to alter some elements in many things of easily greater importance. So it had to be determined — often from the sources or from other editions or publications — whether the sentence in the preceding phrase was completely finished. Besides this it is clear that, due to printer negligence, one of two periods has sometimes been lost. All these things are found to be of small or, rather, no importance, if you look at the matter itself; however in issues of greater importance we have never rejected the Vulgate edition on any pretext whatsoever, as we have stated.

It remains for us to explain certain other things we did in preparing this edition.

The prefaces of St. Jerome according to the Vallarsi edition, generally included as one might expect, have been emended. — As for proper names, whose spelling in the Vulgate edition is by no means consistent, we have deliberately refrained from changing and rewording them in accordance with a fixed standard. — We have corrected and expanded so-called biblical concordances or cross-references of parallel passages (placed in the margin according to ancient custom), since they are largely erroneous in the Vatican edition; *for the hard work of those who have inserted these kinds of things and other items of the same type in other editions is not condemned* by the Apostolic See. — For the same reason we thought the captions, too, which head individual chapters, should be retained *as aids for ease of use by students*. — We have not shrunk from the incredible labor of cleaning up biblical indices, which the famous Vercellone left out, *as though it were intolerable drudgery and labor to correct them properly*, given that many preachers, students of theology, and others have earnestly desired them.

May, finally, this edition of the Sacred Bible be published, and may it bear exceedingly rich fruits of knowledge and piety; we humbly pray that St. John the Evangelist, our great patron, who drew his stream of divine eloquence from the sacred font itself of the Lord’s breast and, inebriated with the grace of the Holy Ghost, more deeply revealed to others the hidden things of Divinity, might obtain these results for us through his kind intercession with the most sacred Heart of Jesus.

Tournai, Belgium, on the feast of our Holy Father Benedict, 1885