

Catholic bishops remove 'booty' from the Bible

by [Cathy Lynn Grossman](#) in the [April 5, 2011](#) issue

Catholic bishops have kicked the "booty" out of the Bible. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has brought about a new translation of the Bible, one it says is more accurate, more accessible and more poetic.

Booty, a word that sets off snickers in Sunday school, has been replaced by *spoils of war* in the newest edition of the New American Bible, the English-language Catholic Bible.

"We needed a new translation because English is a living language," says retired auxiliary bishop of Milwaukee Richard Sklba, part of the NAB review and editing team. The new version, updated from the 1970 edition, was published March 9.

While Catholics may read from any of two dozen English translations, the New American Bible is the one used by U.S. bishops for prayer and study. It can take decades for the Vatican to approve the scriptures to be read during mass.

One change that may set off alarms with traditionalists is in a passage that many Christians believe foreshadows the coming of Christ and his birth to a virgin. The 1970 version of Isaiah 7:14 says "the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel."

The new text refers instead to "the young woman," as is the case also with the New Revised Standard Version Bible. The Hebrew word *almah* may or may not signify a virgin, the NAB explains. Some other changes:

- The 1970s version of the 23rd Psalm—"even when I walk through a dark valley"—becomes a "walk through the valley of the shadow of death."
- Proverbs 31:10, an ode to "The Ideal Wife," is now a "Poem on the Woman of Worth."

"Women

will like this: being measured by their own accomplishments, not in terms of a husband's perspective," says Mary Elizabeth Sperry of the bishops' organization. "Some people will be gravely distressed and others will be absolutely ecstatic and some will just say, 'I liked it the old way.'" —*USA Today/RNS*