

GLOSSARY

This Glossary is meant to be a resource/reference guide for teachers so that there is some common understanding of terms.

ABORTION the deliberate killing of a fetus or developing baby; abortion is considered a moral evil since life is a gift of God and the right of every human being and must be protected from the moment of conception. (CCC 2273)

ABSOLUTION the ritual prayer given by the priest to announce God's forgiveness or pardon of sin.

ABSTINENCE a traditional form of penance; the Church requires Catholics to abstain from eating meat on all the Fridays of Lent.

ACOLYTE name given to Mass servers or a minister who assists the priest or bishop at the altar; this is also a rite of institution.

ACT OF CONTRITION prayer said when a person is sorry for sin; two forms of this prayer follow:

My God, Lord Jesus, Son of God,
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. have mercy on me,
In choosing to do wrong a sinner.
I have sinned against you
whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help,
to do penance,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Revised Rite of Reconciliation

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES the New Testament (Christian Scripture) book that tells the story of the beginnings of the early Church.

ADVENT season beginning the liturgical year; four weeks of preparing for Jesus' coming in history, mystery and majesty.

ADVENT WREATH evergreen wreath with four candles used to symbolize the four weeks of waiting; originated with the German Lutherans; wreaths are symbolic of victory and glory and the light of the candles gradually pushes away the darkness with the coming of the Messiah, the Light of the World.

ALB the full-length white robe worn by priests and other ministers during liturgical functions.

ALTAR a table-like structure, usually made of wood or stone, where the liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated; originally, in house churches, the ordinary family table.

ALTAR CLOTH a simple cloth spread on the altar during the preparation of the gifts; at one time, these cloths were made of precious materials and three were required in case of a spilled sacred element; the antependium or large cloth “hanging in front of” the altar was originally one of these cloths.

AMBO see Pulpit; also called Lectern.

ANGELS/ARCHANGELS spiritual beings created by God, most commonly serve as messengers of God to humanity. Three archangels (high-ranking angels) are named in Scripture: Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael; belief in angels is a doctrine of the Catholic Church.

ANNULMENT Official declaration by competent authority that, for lawful reasons, a previous act or contract was invalid and consequently null and void. In ecclesiastical law, annulments mainly apply to marriage contracts over which the Church has the right to determine their validity (Modern Catholic Dictionary, Doubleday and Company, 1980)

ANNUNCIATION the visit of the angel Gabriel to Mary asking her to become the Mother of God. This feastday is celebrated on March 25.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK (Sacrament of the) the sacrament for the faithful who are in danger due to sickness or old age. It may be received more than once during a person’s life. Every priest, and only a priest, validly administers the anointing of the sick.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK (Rites of the Sacrament of the) there are two rites for this sacrament: the first rite is personal and the second rite is communal.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE a Biblical style of writing that developed during the Exile (587-538 B.C.) and especially the postexilic age. The apocalyptists wrote as though they had received a vision involving God’s cosmic kingdom and his eschatological battle to establish it. Apocalyptic evolved out of an earlier prophetic style of preaching. (New Catholic Encyclopedia, McGraw-Hill, 1967) The New Testament Book of Revelation is an example of apocalyptic literature.

APOSTLES’ CREED an early form of the baptismal creed; adopted as the common form said in the Mass during the Carolingian liturgical reform; this was changed in the liturgical reform of Vatican II:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand
of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

ASCENSION THURSDAY the day we celebrate Jesus' ascension to Heaven; celebrated 40 days after Easter; this is a holy day of obligation in the United States. The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord has been transferred from Thursday to the 7th Sunday of Easter.

ASHES used on Ash Wednesday to sign crosses on the foreheads of people as a reminder to do penance; the ashes are made by burning palm branches used on Passion (Palm) Sunday from the previous year.

ASSEMBLY the coming together of the People of God to worship; the assembly by reason of their baptism have a right and duty to full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy. (cf. Vatican II document Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #14)

ASSISTED SUICIDE a person helping another person to kill him/herself. Any act or omission which causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder which is contrary to the dignity of the human person and the respect due to God as Creator. (CCC 2277)

ASSUMPTION OF MARY the dogma that Mary was taken into heaven in both body and soul; also called Dormition (falling asleep); this feast is a holy day of obligation in the United States and is celebrated on August 15.

BAPTISM (Sacrament of) sacrament by which original sin and all personal sins committed since birth are removed. Baptism gives new life in Christ and makes a person a member of the Church; one of the three initiation sacraments along with Confirmation and Eucharist.

BAPTISM (Rite of) water poured over the person's head as the words "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" are said; the ordinary minister is the priest, but in necessity, anyone may serve as an extraordinary minister by using the words and water.

BAPTISMAL FONT the basin or bowl-like container in which baptisms are performed.

BAPTISMAL PROMISES the formal promises made by the person being baptized or by the parents and godparents, in the case of an infant or child; the

promises are renewed at Easter by the entire assembly; they are also renewed during the rite of Confirmation.

BEATITUDES the main teaching of Jesus as found in Matthew's Gospel:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

BIBLE also called (Sacred) Scripture; 72 books make up the Old Testament (Hebrew) and New Testament (Christian) Scripture which were adopted at church councils in 393 A.D.; the Catholic Bible was declared canonical at the Council of Trent (1545-63 A. D.).

CANDIDATE a person who has already been baptized, either as a Catholic or in another Christian tradition, and is seeking ,through the RCIA, to become Catholic.

CANDLES used during celebrations of the Eucharist and other devotions as signs of the presence of Jesus, the Light of the World; they are also a reminder of the life of grace shared by humanity. Usually candles are made of beeswax.

CANTOR the leader of song during worship.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT inflicting the death penalty on those convicted of serious crimes; since human life is sacred, "if non-lethal means are sufficient to defend people's safety against an aggressor, public authority should limit itself to such means, as these are more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person." (CCC 2267)

CARDINAL VIRTUES see Moral Virtues

CATECHUMEN a learner, a person being instructed preparatory to receiving baptism and being admitted into the Church through the RCIA program. (Modern Catholic Dictionary, Doubleday and Company, 1980)

CATHOLIC one of the four marks of the Church; catholic means that the church is universal, of interest to all people and includes all people.

CENSER a metal container in which incense is burned. It is usually shaped like a vase or cup with a cover and is suspended by chains. (Modern Catholic Dictionary, Doubleday and Company, 1980)

CENTERING PRAYER a method of prayer designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer by preparing one's faculties to cooperate with this gift; usually the person using the centering prayer form repeats a montra (word, phrase, etc.) to help center themselves.

CHALICE the cup set aside for the wine which is consecrated during Mass.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER prayer that usually takes place within the context of a group, using Scripture and accompanied by religious experience, singing, and glossolalia (speaking in tongues).

CHASTE LIFE living chastity according to one's vocation; in marriage this means fidelity to sexuality with one's marriage partner; in the vowed religious life, the ordained priesthood, and the single life, this means celibacy.

CHASUBLE the outermost garment worn by bishops and priests during the celebration of the Mass. It represents the yoke of Christ, and is a symbol of the all-encompassing nature of Christian charity. (The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia, The Liturgical Press, 1994)

CHILDREN (respect for) the Church states that parents must regard their children as children of God and respect them as human persons; also, parents have the responsibility to educate and nurture children so that they may be able to choose their vocations in life; parents are responsible for providing for their children's physical and spiritual needs; when this does not occur, the dignity of the human person is threatened. (CCC 2221-2231) (cf. also Human Dignity, p9)

CHOSEN PEOPLE the Jewish (Hebrew) people God chose to be God's own and to whom God gave the promise of a Messiah.

CHRISM (SACRED CHRISM) perfumed oil, consecrated by the bishop, which signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit. Chrism is used for consecration in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. (CCC 1241,1289,1291,1294)

CHRISTIAN a person who believes in Jesus as Savior; the term "Christian," first used in Antioch during the early Church, referred to those who acted in a visibly loving manner; a common book that all Christians use is the New Testament.

CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE also known as the New Testament; the 27 books of the Bible that tell the story of Jesus and the beginnings of the Christian church.

CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE (books within) Gospels, Letters, Acts of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation.

CHRISTMAS the celebration of Jesus' birth and the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity becoming man. Christmas is celebrated on December 25.

CHURCH 1) God's family, a community of the faithful and a symbol of Christ's presence among us.
2) a building where prayer and liturgical celebration take place

CIBORIUM a covered container used to hold the consecrated small Hosts. It is similar to a chalice but covered and larger. (Modern Catholic Dictionary)

CONFESSION the speaking of one's sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

CONFIRMATION a Sacrament of Initiation in which a baptized Christian, through prayers, imposition of hands and the anointing with Sacred Chrism receives the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon him/herself; the Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation.

CONSCIENCE the basic outlook on life ruling all of a person's actions; an expression of the whole person that includes cognitive, volitional, affective, intuitive, and attitudinal aspects.

CONSECRATION the consecration at Mass is that part of the Eucharistic Prayer during which the Lord's words of institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper are recited by the priestly minister, making Christ's body and blood sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine. (CCC 1352,1353)

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER prayer that makes one aware of the continual presence of God; prayer in which reasoning and structure give way to a simple focus on God's presence.

CONTRITION sorrow for sin with a promise to try to avoid sin again; a desire for forgiveness of sin.

CORPORAL a square white linen cloth on which the paten and Chalice are placed during the Mass. It is also used under the monstrance at Benediction or under the Blessed Sacrament at any time. (Modern Catholic Dictionary)

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY acts directed towards others;
(Scriptural Source: Matthew 25:34-40; Isaiah 58:6-10)

- To feed the hungry
- To give drink to the thirsty
- To clothe the naked
- To shelter the homeless
- To visit the sick
- To visit the imprisoned
- To bury the dead

COVENANT a pledge or promise made by two parties which continues even when one party breaks his/her pledge; the term describes the Old Testament relationship between Yahweh and his Chosen People (the Jews); this term is used also in the Sacrament of Matrimony describing the covenantal relationship between the husband and wife.

CROSS BEARER the person who carries the cross in procession during the celebration of liturgy

DEVOTIONAL CELEBRATIONS all celebrations, prayer services and devotions which are not contained within the liturgical rituals and rites of the Church, (e.g., public recitation of the rosary, novenas, stations of the cross, etc.)

DOGMA the revealed teachings of Christ which are proclaimed by the fullest extent of the exercise of the authority of the Church's Magisterium. The faithful are obliged to believe the truths or dogmas contained in divine Revelation and defined by the Magisterium. (CCC 88)

EASTER Feast of the Resurrection of Christ. The most important Christian celebration; the central event of our Christian faith because Jesus saved us by dying on the cross and rising from the dead; Easter is a movable feast and is celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon after the vernal(spring) equinox.

EASTER TIME 50 days between Easter and Pentecost, including Ascension.

EASTER TRIDUUM from the Latin, meaning "three days"; highpoint of the liturgical year; the three days commemorating the Institution of the Eucharist and the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday.

ECUMENISM the efforts of the Catholic community and other Christian churches to work toward full unity.

ENCYCLICALS formal pastoral letters written by the popes to all members of the church throughout the world.

EPIPHANY Greek word meaning "manifestation" of Jesus to all people as told in the story of the Magi recorded in the Infancy Narrative of Matthew's Gospel.

EPISTLE Greek word meaning "letter" or "message." The epistles are statements of Christian belief; some were written before the gospels; many of the epistles were written by St. Paul.

ESCHATOLOGY the study of the last things (death, judgment, heaven, hell and the second coming of Christ) and the announcement of the coming reign of God, the public ministry of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. These two aspects tend to be separated but should not be if a complete understanding of eschatology is reached.

EUCCHARIST (Sacrament of the) the sacrament in which the Paschal Mystery of Jesus is commemorated by the community and made present under the appearances of bread and wine; a sacrament of initiation; the name is also used to describe Mass (Eucharistic Liturgy).

EUCCHARIST (terminology) Greek word meaning “thanksgiving”; used to describe the ritual meal of Passover at the Last Supper during which Jesus instituted the first Eucharist; sacrifice is a central aspect of the rite wherein believers are united with the sufferings and self-sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

EUTHANASIA the act or practice of putting people to death because they or others decide it will avoid pain or relieve others of the burden of caring for them; the Catholic Church teaches that this constitutes a murder contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the Creator. (CCC 2277)

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE the prayerful review of one’s life on the basis of gospel values; after Vatican II, the examination of conscience in the renewed rite of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is presented as a prayerful consideration of one’s past, but with a major focus on the future; i.e., conversion of one’s life.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF THE EUCCHARIST a person commissioned to distribute the Eucharist during the liturgy or to people who are unable to come to Mass.

FAITH one of the three theological virtues, faith is trust and confidence in God. It is both a gift from God and an act of free will to accept the gift.

FASTING the Church requires Catholics to fast (defined as eating only one full meal) on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

FREEDOM (FREE WILL) the human capacity to be responsible for one’s personal decisions and actions. God gives each person this gift which points to the dignity and uniqueness of every human being.

FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT the effects of the Holy Spirit active in human life; named in the Letter to the Galatians; enable human beings to live in a humble and unselfish manner; traditionally listed as: charity, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, mildness, faith, endurance, modesty, self-control and chastity.

A STATEMENT ABOUT FUNDAMENTALISM a literal interpretation of Scripture; it is important that we teach our students to take the Scripture seriously, to give them their full weight as revelatory of God’s will for us, God’s people, without giving them the impression that this means the Scripture must be seen as an English transcript of God’s mind, God’s unmediated directives to us today. The most important practical application of this will probably come in the question of the historicity of some of the Scriptural accounts. The distinction

between historicity and the truth is of crucial importance. Students need to know that the Scripture teaches God's truth to us infallibly, without identifying that truth with a literal correspondence between the words of the text and the scientific or historical events in question. What the Scriptures infallibly teach is the SIGNIFICANCE that God wants us to learn from those historical events: the parable of the Good Samaritan is true even though the events it narrates did not take place as a historical occurrence. Finally, the students should be taught to grasp the Word of God from the Scriptures and to "discover" the power God's word can convey.

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT named in the book of Isaiah (ch. 11:1-3), there are seven gifts: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, fortitude, counsel, piety and fear of the Lord (awe or reverence).

GLOBAL AWARENESS to be conscious of what is happening to the People of God throughout the world.

GLORY BE ancient Trinitarian prayer; also called the Doxology:

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning
is now,
and will be forever. Amen.

Glory to you, Source of all being
Eternal Word and
Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning
is now,
and will be forever. Amen. (inclusive language)

GOSPEL the word means "Good News"; used to designate the four books in the New Testament (Christian Scripture) telling the stories about Jesus: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

GOSPEL VALUES values that a person chooses because he/she believes in Jesus; some of these values are described in the Beatitudes and the listed "Fruits of the Spirit" in the Letter to the Galatians.

GRACE the gift of God by which we share in God's life; God dwelling within us.

GRACE AT MEALS prayers of blessing and thanksgiving that came from the Jewish tradition:

Before:

Bless us, O Lord
and these your gifts,
which we are about to receive
from your bounty
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

After:

We give you thanks, almighty God,
for these and all your gifts
which we have received
from your goodness (bounty)
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREAT COMMANDMENT taken from the Gospel of Matthew:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

HAIL MARY popular Catholic prayer to honor Mary, the Mother of God; the first part of the prayer is taken from the Gospel of Luke.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

HEAVEN eternal life with God; communion of life and love with the Trinity and all the blessed. Heaven is the state of supreme and definitive happiness, the goal of the deepest longings of humanity. (CCC 1023)

HEBREW SCRIPTURE also known as the Old Testament; the fifty four books of the Bible that portray the Chosen People and their relationship with Yahweh.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE (books of the) there are four main categories of books: Pentateuch (Torah), Historical Books, Prophetic Books, Wisdom Books

HELL the state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed; reserved for those who refuse by their own free choice to believe and be converted from sin, even to the end of their lives. (CCC 1033)

HERESY the obstinate denial after Baptism of a truth which must be believed with divine and Catholic faith. (CCC 2089; cf. 465)

HOLY DAYS days dedicated to recalling important events connected with the life of Jesus and those associated with Him; the dates for the United States' celebrations were decided by the U.S. Conference of Bishops as follows:

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God:	January 1
Ascension:	Fortieth day after Easter
Assumption of Mary:	August 15
All Saints' Day:	November 1
Immaculate Conception:	December 8
Christmas:	December 25

HOLY WATER ordinary water which is blessed by a priest and is called a sacramental; usually used as a reminder of Baptism.

HOMILY the talk that the priest or deacon gives at Mass to explain the readings and ways to live them.

HUMAN DIGNITY the irreducible element that each person has; the human person, fashioned in God's image, has inherent rights which demand protection and promotion. Respect for human life, liberty, and the quality of life are elements of human dignity. (cf. "Children, respect for," p.5)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION belief that Mary was conceived and born without original sin; this dogma was proclaimed December 8, 1854; the Feast of

the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8 and is a holy day of obligation in the United States.

INCARNATION the fact that the Son of God assumed human nature and became man in order to accomplish our salvation in that same human nature. (CCC 461,464)

INFALLIBILITY gift given to the Church by the Spirit so that the community will be protected from great error on matters of Christian faith and on matters pertaining to the moral life of the baptized; more narrowly, a dogma of the Catholic Church that states that the Pope speaks without error in matters of faith and morals.

INSPIRATION the process by which the Spirit of God has guided human beings in the composition of biblical writings. Thus we can say, Scripture is the Word of God.

INTERPRETATION Scripture is interpreted by the faith community.

JESSE TREE named for the father of King David; symbols representing the ancestors of Jesus are gradually added to the branches of a tree during the weeks of Advent; often Jesse is at the roots of the tree.

JESUS CHRIST the Son of God (second person of the Trinity) who became human, died, and rose from the dead; our Lord and Savior.

JESUS PRAYER prayer associated with hermits who have devotion to the name of Jesus, a keen sense of sorrow for sin, the discipline of frequent repetition, and imageless prayer leading to inner silence; the prayer is: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me."

JEWS also known as God's chosen people, they are the descendants of the Hebrew nation.

JUDAISM the religious perspectives, practices, and way of life of the Jewish people over the centuries; the religion of the Hebrew Bible and of the contemporary Jewish community. Those who follow Judaism believe in one God as revealed in the Torah (Pentateuch), the prophets, and the history of the Hebrew nation through the centuries. All people are thought to be part of a human family under one God. Morality comes from God's law as reflected in the Torah. Worship centers on prayer, reading of the Scriptures, observance of the Sabbath, and observance of certain religious festivals. There are still expectations of a messiah fulfilling the covenant made between God and humanity, the judgment by God of human beings, and the establishment of God's everlasting reign.

JUSTICE that which is right, fair, honest; social justice is that area of justice which works for right relationships among persons and groups by applying the

Gospel to the structures, systems and institutions of society in order to promote the well-being of all people.

KOHLBERG'S LEVELS OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT a process of developing moral reasoning developed by Lawrence Kohlberg at Harvard University; the levels are:

LOWEST LEVEL:

0. Right or good is that which is pleasant or exciting.

PRE-CONVENTIONAL:

1. Right is obedience to authority so as to avoid punishment.

2. Right is what I do to you so as to get goods, favors, etc. in return; I scratch your back, you scratch mine; fairness.

CONVENTIONAL:

3. Right is conformity to stereotypical images of appropriate behavior as defined by one's own group including avoidance of disapproval by others; a wanting to be accepted; concern for others, but usually limited to family, friends, approved people, and the less fortunate.

4. Right is defined by the laws and standards of one's society, the maintenance of laws, societal values and one's society, avoidance of censure by society and subsequent guilt, doing one's duty.

POST-CONVENTIONAL:

5. Right is defined by standards agreed upon by a whole society: social contract, the protection of individual rights, seen in terms of universal principles such as human rights and the greatest good for the greatest number, emphasis on consistency and rationality in decision-making.

6. Right is equal consideration of claims of all persons in a situation, with persons as ends, not means.

LAWS OF THE CHURCH also called Precepts; official number set worldwide by St. Robert Bellarmine in 1589; U.S. bishops added the seventh to the list:

1. To keep holy the day of the Lord's resurrection; to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation; to avoid those activities that would hinder renewal of soul and body on the Sabbath.
2. To lead a sacramental life; to receive Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter season.
3. To study Catholic teaching in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to be confirmed, and then to continue to study and advance the cause of Christ.

4. To observe the marriage laws of the Church; to give religious training, by example and word, to one's children; to use parish schools and catechetical programs.
5. To do penance, including observing the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence.
6. To strengthen and support the Church--one's own parish community, the parish priests, the worldwide Church, and the Pope.
7. To join in the missionary spirit and apostolate of the Church.

LECTERN see PULPIT; also called Ambo.

LECTIONARY book of Scripture readings used during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass and the celebration of the sacraments.

LECTOR or **READER**, the person who proclaims the First or Second Reading during the Liturgy.

LESSER SIN (cf. Venial Sin); a moral transgression not considered serious enough to rupture a person's relationship with God.

LITURGY the word used to describe the official public worship of the Church; this includes Mass, all seven sacraments, and the Liturgy of the Hours (Divine Office). The Eucharist is the Church's central liturgical act.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS also called the Divine Office; the Church's official prayers during the day and night, especially morning and evening prayers.

LITURGICAL POSTURES and GESTURES

BOWING the custom of Catholics in the Eastern church instead of genuflecting; symbolic of one's smallness or humility, in the presence of the Lord; borrowed from the court etiquette of the Roman Empire; popular tradition in the Western church was to bow slightly when the name of Jesus and Mary occurred in prayer;

FOLDING HANDS traditional prayer gesture; symbolic of placing joined hands between those of the local lord when taking an oath of allegiance; borrowed from the German people during the Middle Ages.

GENUFLECTING a sign of adoration and greeting directed toward Jesus' presence in the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle; since Vatican II, the Blessed Sacrament and tabernacle are often located in a special chapel.

KNEELING a sign of penance, supplication and adoration; a popular devotional position for private prayer that was gradually introduced into the Mass during modern times because of a growing emphasis placed on the divinity of Christ and the unworthiness of the human person.

STANDING a natural expression of respect, reverence and readiness; one of the most ancient of liturgical positions; to the early Christians it had a special meaning of freedom as baptized children of God in a world where kneeling was the position of servitude and slavery.

LITURGICAL SEASONS the cycle of seasons and feasts celebrated by the Church: the seasons are Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time. The three-day Easter Triduum (q. v.) forms a bridge between the seasons of Lent and Easter.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST second of the two main parts of the Eucharistic celebration (Mass); includes the Eucharistic prayer, the consecration of the bread and wine, the Lord's Prayer and the sharing of the Eucharist by the assembly.

LITURGY OF THE WORD first of the two main parts of the Eucharistic celebration (Mass); Scripture verses are proclaimed and a homily is preached, followed by the profession of the Nicene Creed (on Sundays and Feastdays) and concluding with the general intercessions (formerly called "Prayers of the Faithful").

MAGISTERIUM teaching authority and teaching office of the Church.

MARTYR a witness to the truth of the faith, in which the martyr endures even death to be faithful to Christ. (CCC 1258,2473)

MASS also called the Eucharistic Liturgy; the name comes from the Latin missa or "being sent" of those assembled.

MATRIMONY (Sacrament of) also called Marriage; a sacrament uniting a man and a woman in a loving covenant as husband and wife; the couple become a visible loving sign of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

MEDITATION a prayer form which consists of resting on the words of a text (e.g., a Scripture passage) while thinking about its meaning and significance in one's life.

MESOPOTAMIA land between the rivers; a crescent-shaped area located in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, it runs along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Egypt; also called the Fertile Crescent because of the rich farmland; a part of modern Iraq, all of Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan.

MINISTRY all works that advance the kingdom of God; also applied to Church-designated and commissioned service.

MIRACLE an extraordinary and astounding event that goes against the laws of nature.

MISSIONARY a baptized person called to proclaim the reign of God; this takes place in three ways: 1) to the unchurched in our own society and culture; 2) to cultures in other societies; and 3) nourishing and deepening the Gospel for others already committed to it.

MONSTRANCE a special container designed to hold a consecrated host and used to exhibit the Eucharist for people to see and adore; the monstrance originated in fourteenth-century Germany and France and is used most often today to hold the host during Benediction.

MORALITY the way of living out human deeds and actions; Christian doctrine would say that the way is based on Jesus' words "Love one another as I have loved you."

MORAL VIRTUES the habits of living with prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance; also called Cardinal Virtues.

MORTAL SIN sin which involves a serious condition and is committed with deliberate consent and full knowledge and destroys our relationship with God; thus, the three conditions for a mortal sin are: serious matter; full knowledge; free consent.

NICENE CREED developed at the Council of Nicea in 325 and modified in 381 at the Council of Constantinople; said at Sunday Eucharist:

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered, died and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in fulfillment of the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

NEW COVENANT established by Jesus through his death and resurrection, the new covenant promises life and friendship with God forever if human beings accept Jesus' teachings, follow him, and live their lives in accord with the values and challenges of the gospel.

NOVENA a period of prayer that may last either for nine days or for one day per week for nine weeks. Normally the prayer (or form of prayer) is repeated each of the nine times for a particular intention.

OLD COVENANT established between Yahweh and the Hebrew community, the old covenant promised friendship with God and was to last forever. History shows that great misfortune and sorrow fell upon the people of Yahweh whenever they made choices that broke the covenant with Yahweh. Yet, Yahweh continued to remain faithful to the covenant and restored the broken friendship again and again.

ORAL TRADITION the passing of stories told orally; oral tradition preceded the writing of the Old and New Testaments.

ORDERS (Sacrament of) the sacrament in which men are received into the ministry of a deacon, priest, or bishop. The person is united with the ministry of Jesus and the apostolic Church and empowered to minister in Christ's name.

ORDINARY TIME the 33 or 34 weeks of the Liturgical year between the other liturgical seasons; not the Advent, Christmas, Lent, or Easter seasons; form the word "ordo" which means order or pattern.

ORDO a calendar which schedules the daily and weekly celebration of the proper Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours in use throughout the Roman rite. ([New Catholic Encyclopedia](#))

ORIGINAL SIN the basic condition or state of the world affected by sin into which every member of the human race (except Jesus and Mary) is born.

OUR FATHER THE example of prayer that Jesus used to teach his disciples how to pray:

Our Father
who art in heaven,

hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come;
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
(For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.)

PALM branches from this tree (common in Israel) are blessed and used to remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on Passion (Palm) Sunday; blessed palms are often taken home on Passion Sunday and used as a sign of God's protection of homes.

PARABLES stories drawn from ordinary life or nature that Jesus used to teach a lesson, to make an important point and to illustrate a moral truth.

PASCHAL CANDLE or Easter Candle; a candle that is lit from the new fire at the Easter Vigil, burns until the feast of Pentecost; it is also used at baptisms and funerals to symbolize Christ as Light.

PASCHAL CANDLE (symbols on the) the Easter candle is "decorated" at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday and in the following way: a cross is cut or traced into it with the proclamation: "Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end"; the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, "Alpha and Omega" are also traced on the candle; the numbers of the current year are added in the four angles of the cross with the proclamation:

"All time belongs to him and all the ages; to him be glory and power through every age forever. Amen." Four grains of incense, sealed in red wax nails, are inserted at the ends of the cross and one is inserted where the crossbars meet as these words are said: "By his holy and glorious wounds may Christ our Lord guard us and keep us. Amen."

PASCHAL MYSTERY phrase used to include Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

PASSOVER the Jewish feast, celebrated with a Seder meal, that remembers Yahweh's saving action of leading the Israelites from slavery in Egypt; the Exodus event.

PATRIARCH a title given to the venerable ancestors or "fathers" of the Semitic peoples, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who received God's promise of election. (CCC 887)

PEACE a right relationship with God; a final, full realization of God's salvation when all creation will be made whole.

PENANCE a part of the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by which a sinner makes some kind of atonement for the sins committed; examples of penances are prayers, almsgiving, etc.

PENANCES practices to heal the damage done by sin; initially, a program of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving which gave concrete expression to inner conversion, strengthened and developed the conversion and helped to undo the damage caused by sin; Augustine listed penances as: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, endurance of the sufferings of daily life, forgiveness of insults, works of service and praying the Our Father in the liturgical assembly.

PENTATEUCH the first 5 books of the Bible, also called the Law/Torah; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

PENTECOST the day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit sent by God as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. the day given as the birthday of the Christian church; this feast is celebrated fifty days after Easter.

PERMANENT DEACONS men who receive the Sacrament of Orders and are ordained to serve the needs of the community. Permanent deacons can be married, may not remarry or marry after being ordained a deacon.

PERSONAL SIN a conscious turning away from God's offer of friendship, freely chosen, and done by accountable and free persons; see also Sins of Commission.

POLLUTION that which makes the environment unclean; the stewardship granted by the Creator over the mineral, vegetable and animal resources of the universe cannot be separated from respect for moral obligations, including those toward generations to come, to respect the earth as tenants. (CCC 2456)

POPE leader of the Catholic Church; the word "Pope" is from the Latin papa, a term of affection for father; the Pope is also known as the Bishop of Rome; since 1073 only the Bishop of Rome can use this title.

PRAYER the act by which one enters into conscious, loving communion with God; talking and listening to God

PRECEPTS of the CHURCH see Laws of the Church

PRESIDER one who leads a Christian assembly in some form of prayer and/or worship; e.g., the Eucharist, the liturgy of the hours, litanies, liturgies of the Word, prayer services. At Mass, only the priest may be the presider.

PROPHET one sent by God to form the people of the Old Covenant in the hope of salvation; prophets were messengers and interpreters of God's will to the people. The prophets are often authors of books of the Old Testament. (CCC 702)

PROVERBS short, popular sayings expressing obvious truths; also the title of one of the books of the Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament).

PULPIT also called the lectern and ambo; the podium from which the Scripture readings and the homily are proclaimed.

PURGATORY a state of final purification after death and before entrance into heaven for those who died in God's friendship but were only imperfectly purified; a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven. (CCC 1031: cf. 1472)

PURIFICATOR a small piece of white linen, marked with a cross in the center, used by the priest in the celebration of Mass; folded in three layers and used by the priest to dry his fingers and the chalice and paten after Holy Communion. (Modern Catholic Dictionary)

PYX any metal box or vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept or carried. It is usually a small round metal case (generally gold-plated) used by a priest or Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist to carry a few hosts on his visitation to the sick. (Modern Catholic Dictionary)

RCIA "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults" is the process by which adults are received into the Church. Catechumens journey through the process until they receive the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil. Candidates who wish to be received into full communion with the Catholic church also participate in the process, but are not baptized.

REAL PRESENCE dogma that the bread and wine consecrated by a priest become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ; he is really present under the form of bread and wine.

RECONCILIATION (rites of) there are three different forms that the sacrament takes: (1) communal: celebrated with the community with individual confession offered; (2) individual: celebrated with just the priest and the individual; and, (3) communal with general absolution.

RECONCILIATION (Sacrament of) means to "restore to friendship"; one of the seven sacraments through which sinners are reconciled with God, the Church, and one another; also commonly called confession and/or penance. The essential elements of this celebration are contrition, confession, absolution, penance.

REDEMPTION the process by which humanity is brought back, through the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, into full relationship with the Creator.

REFLECTIVE PRAYER also called Contemplative Prayer (q .v.)

RESURRECTION the event at the core of all Christian beliefs and practices which proclaims that Jesus of Nazareth after his suffering and death was raised to a new life with God.

REVELATION the act by which God reveals him/herself in the history of salvation, especially in the Bible; God, who knows us perfectly, wishes us to know Godself; all else that God reveals--of ourselves, of creation, of commandments, of scripture and sacraments--is intended to lead us to God who is our Life. The fullness of Divine Revelation is in Jesus Christ who is himself both the mediator and the sum total of Revelation.

REVERENCE a quality of deep respect, love and awe.

RITE another name for ritual; rituals are symbols that include language, actions, gestures, prayers, vessels, or movements used in worship. Like other symbols, they have deeper meanings than immediately meet the eye. Ritual is contrasted with practical action and routine.

ROSARY a Catholic prayer devotion dedicated to the honor of Mary; the name implies a garland of flowers; the rosary combines meditation on the mysteries of faith with the recitation of vocal prayers; a "decade" of the rosary consists of ten Hail Mary's which are preceded by an Our Father and followed by a Glory to the Father. Altogether there are fifteen mysteries commemorating some aspects of the lives of Jesus and Mary: five joyful mysteries; five sorrowful mysteries; and five glorious mysteries.

SACRAMENT one of the seven principal liturgical rites through which participants experience the love and power of God (grace) that flows from Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection; a sacred, visible sign of God's life (grace) given to humanity.

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist conferred to make a person a member of the church.

SACRAMENTALS objects, prayers or blessings that are identified by the community as sacred to Christian spirituality and tradition in a unique way. These include holy water, Christian medals, the rosary, the Sign of the Cross, blessed palm, blessed ashes, the crucifix, blessed oils, candles, holy pictures, statues and icons, the Way of the Cross (Stations), Grace before and after meals, and more.

SACRAMENTARY the liturgical book containing the prayers used in the celebration of the Eucharist along with guidelines about the rites; the Presider's book; the formal title is the Roman Missal.

SACRISTY a part of the church where the clergy vest for sacred functions and where the vestments and sacred vessels used in divine worship are kept. (Modern Catholic Dictionary)

SALVATION a permanent union with God and union with all others who are united in loving relationship with their Creator.

SANCTUARY the area in Catholic church buildings where the main altar is placed and the Eucharistic Liturgy is celebrated.

SANCTUARY LAMP/LIGHT also called the Tabernacle Light; the light kept burning before the presence of Christ reserved in the Eucharist; tradition began in England in the 13th century and was made obligatory everywhere in the 17th century.

SEAL OF CONFESSION any sin revealed to the priest must be kept completely secret for all time.

SEDER MEAL sacred meal eaten by the Jews during the Passover and the meal from which the ritual elements of the Mass were taken.

SERIOUS SIN also called Mortal Sin (q.v.)

SIGN OF THE CROSS a sacramental action that is associated with the Trinity made on the body in several forms (ways) since the early centuries; it is popular to add the Trinitarian formula: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" while signing the forehead, heart, and shoulders with a cross.

SIN (definition) a conscious turning away from God's loving offer of friendship/relationship, which leads to a weakening or total breakdown of one's relationship with God and with others; choosing, with freedom and knowledge, what is unloving and immoral.

SIN OF COMMISSION an act in which a person knowingly does something sinful; some examples of this might be manipulating another person; cooperation in another's wrong- doing such as gang-related things, encouraging the fast driver, securing alcohol or tobacco for a minor, shop-lifting, cheating, vandalism, character assassination, etc.

SIN OF OMISSION failure to do what a person knows is the right; some examples of this might be failing to defend another person, not helping another in need, etc.

SOCIAL SIN the evil that creeps into organizations, structures, communities or societies as a result of human choices, actions, inactions and attitudes, thereby doing harm to individuals as well as communities.

SINAI the sacred place where the covenant between God and the Israelites was inaugurated. Sinai is the name of the triangular peninsula between Africa and Asia. It designates the wilderness in which Mount Sinai is located. On the mountain itself God delivered the law to Moses. (The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism, HarperSanFrancisco, 1995)

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

-To instruct the ignorant
-To counsel the doubtful

- To admonish sinners
- To bear wrongs patiently
- To forgive offenses
- To comfort the afflicted
- To pray for the living and the dead

STATIONS OF THE CROSS also called the Way of the Cross, a devotion that consists of walking with Jesus and remembering the people and sites he met on his way to his death on Calvary; originally this devotion substituted for the pilgrimage made to the Holy Land in order to walk in the footsteps of Jesus to Calvary; Stations began in the Middle Ages and were walked out-of-doors; Stations have varied in number from five to twenty until Pope Clement XII set the number at fourteen; in the mid-18th century, Stations were allowed in church; in the 1960's it became popular to add a fifteenth station representing the Resurrection.

STEWARDSHIP a concept of social justice that earth and all of creation belong to God and that human beings are to care for and share the fruits of creation today and to conserve these gifts for the generations to come.

TABERNACLE a boxlike container found in the church or chapel of repose in which the consecrated Eucharist is reserved; comes from the Latin meaning "little house."

TEN COMMANDMENTS the ten commands found in the Hebrew Scriptures (Ex. 20:2-17; Dt. 5:6-21) revealed by Yahweh to Moses for the moral and religious welfare of God's chosen people; ten short guidelines for human conduct.

THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES spiritual habits of acting in faith, hope and love; see also "Virtues." (cf. I Cor. 13:13)

TRADITION the rich and dynamic process by which the entire story of the people of God is handed on to diverse peoples, communities, and human cultures; this also includes doctrine, unique customs, values and practices, moral rules, rituals, witness and contemporary attitudes of the Catholic Christian tradition. Tradition is inseparably united with the Scriptures, which were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who guides the Church in handing on tradition.

TRANSITIONAL DEACON a person who is on the way to being ordained as a priest; the transitional diaconate follows after the ministries of acolyte and lector.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION the scholastic term used to designate the unique change of the Eucharistic bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. (CCC 1376)

TRIDUUM see Easter Triduum

TRINITY (Holy Trinity) the central/core doctrine of the faith which states that God is one divine nature expressed as three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the term “Trinity” is a specifically Christian way of speaking of God.

VATICAN II worldwide council of the Catholic Church called by Pope John XXIII and held from 1962-1965. Sixteen documents were promulgated emphasizing renewal and modernization of the Church, as well as ecumenism among Christian churches.

VENIAL SIN (cf. Lesser Sin) sin committed without full knowledge or without complete consent that does not damage our fundamental relationship with God.

VESTMENTS clothing that is worn to identify the leaders of liturgy from the rest of the community; vestments include: the alb, a basic white tunic; the stole, a long strip of cloth (worn over the shoulders down the front by priests, and over one shoulder and under the arm by deacons); the chasuble, a cloak-like overgarment, the colors of which are changed to correspond with the Liturgical Seasons.

VIATICUM the Eucharist received by a dying person. It is the spiritual food for one’s “passing over” to the Father from this world. With Penance and the Anointing of the Sick, the reception of Holy Communion as Viaticum constitute the “last sacraments” of the Christian. (CCC 1524)

VIRGIN BIRTH the belief that Mary remained a virgin before, during, and after she gave birth to her Son Jesus; Jesus became a human being without the participation of a human father; God is Jesus’ father, Joseph is Jesus’ foster father.

VIRTUE good habit of acting; an enduring quality of character or intellect, through which an individual is enabled to live a good, moral life; a term taken from philosophy and applied to Christianity. (cf. Moral [Cardinal] Virtues, Theological Virtues)

VOCATION the living out of one’s baptismal commitment in a Christian lifestyle as called by God: single, married, ordained, vowed religious.

YAHWEH proper name of the God of Israel as revealed to Moses. (Ex. 3:14)

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