

## Dictionary of Terms

**Abba** the Aramaic word for father

**Abbess** the feminine counterpart of abbot, the spiritual superior of a community of nuns

**Abbey** another name for a monastery

**Abbot** the head of a group of monks living in a monastery

**Abortion** the taking of an unborn child's life

**Abraham** the father of the Jewish people, with whom God made a covenant

**Absolution** the act by which the priest forgives sins in the Sacrament of Penance

**Absolve** to free from sin, to forgive

**Abstain** to keep from doing, or from eating something, as flesh meat

**Abstinence** not doing or eating something

**Accidents** a term for describing certain aspects of a thing, for example, its shape, its size, its weight, its color

**Acolyte** another name for an altar server

**Acts of the Apostles** the book in the New Testament written by St. Luke which tells us some of the important events in the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul and the early Church

**Actual sin** any thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to God's law

**Adam** the first man; He was created in the image and likeness of God.

**Addiction** the state of being physically dependent on something

**Administer** to give

**Adore** to praise and worship God as our Creator and Savior

**Adultery** sexual intercourse of a married person and another who is not their wife or husband

**Advent** the time of preparation for Christmas

**Advent wreath** a circle of green foliage surrounding four candles which represent the four weeks of the Advent season

**Age of reason** the time of life at which a person is assumed to be able to distinguish between right and wrong. Usually about the age of seven.

**Alb** a full length, white vestment worn under the vestments of a priest at Mass

**Alleluia** Hebrew meaning "praise God"

**All Saints** a holy day of obligation now celebrated on November 1 in which we remember all those who are with God

**All Souls** a feast celebrated on November 2 in which we remember all the faithful departed

**Alms** material or financial assistance given to a needy person or cause because we love God

**Altar** a table or stand on which the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. It is made of suitable material.

**Amen** a Hebrew word which we use to conclude prayers meaning "so be it" or "it is true" and even "I believe."

**Amice** a vestment worn over the shoulders of the priest, under all the other vestments.

**Angel** a pure created being with immense powers of mind and will but no body. They are sometimes used by God as messengers to human beings

**Angel Gabriel** the archangel who told the Virgin Mary that she was to become the Mother of God

**Angelus** a devotion in honor of the Angel Gabriel's visit to the Blessed Virgin Mary announcing she was to be the mother of the Savior. It is recited in the early morning, at noon, and at 6:00 p.m.

**Anno Domini** Latin for "in the year of our Lord." It is abbreviated as AD as in 1993 AD

**Annulment** a declaration by the Church that what appeared to be a sacramental marriage was never in fact one. A civil marriage may have existed, but a sacramental one did not

**Annunciation** the feast observed on March 25 remembering the announcement from the Angel Gabriel that Mary was to be the mother of the Savior

**Anoint** to rub or spread with oil; a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit

**Anointing of the Sick** one of the seven sacraments given to us by Christ to give the sick spiritual aid and strength and, if God wills, to restore them to physical health, and to forgive their sins. A person should receive this as soon as they begin to be in danger of death from sickness or old age.

**Apocalypse** the last book of the Bible, also known as the book of Revelation

**Apologetics** the branch of theology that deals with the explanation of religious doctrines

**Apostasy** rejection of one's faith

**Apostles** the men selected by Christ to preach the Gospel to the world

**Apostolate** broadly speaking, any work undertaken to carry out the mission of the Church according to one's gifts and talents. It is considered as the work of the Church as a whole, and as the work of individuals or individual groups within the Church

**Apostolic** relating to Christ's Apostles and their times

**Apparition** an appearance to people on earth of a heavenly being, usually of the Blessed Virgin Mary or one of the saints

**Appearances** (of bread and wine) what we know through the senses, such as color, weight, taste, smell

**Archangel** second lowest choir of angels in the nine choirs. There are three named in the Bible: Michael, Raphael, and Gabriel.

**Archbishop** a bishop who presides over one or more dioceses

**Ascension** Christ's going up into heaven forty days after Easter

**Ash Wednesday** the first day of Lent in which Catholics receive ashes on their foreheads

**Ashes** the remains of burned palms, from the last Palm Sunday, placed on the forehead on Ash Wednesday

**Assumption** the taking up into heaven of the body and soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**Atheist** a person who denies the existence of God

**Atonement** the doing of penance for sins committed

**Attribute** a quality belonging to a person or thing

**Authority** one of the three chief attributes of the Church: the power given by Christ to teach, to sanctify, and to govern in spiritual matters

**Auxiliary Bishop** an assistant bishop who assists the diocesan bishop in a larger diocese

**Ave Maria** the Latin for Hail Mary

**Baptism** the sacrament which takes away original and actual sin and gives the life of Christ, sanctifying grace, to the soul

**Bear false witness** to lie about one's neighbor

**Beatification** the declaration of the Pope that someone is blessed, or living in the happiness of heaven. They will be canonized after this.

**Beatitudes** the standards or conditions for perfect happiness given by Our Lord. Beatitude means "perfect happiness"

**Before Christ** human history before the coming of Christ, abbreviated as BC

**Believe** to accept truth on the word of another

**Benediction** (of the Blessed Sacrament) the service in which Jesus Christ is adored in the consecrated Host exposed on the altar, and in which the priest blesses the faithful with the Sacred Host

**Bethlehem** the city where Jesus was born, located about six miles from Jerusalem

**Bible** (Sacred Scripture) the book written under God's inspiration

**Bishop** the head of a diocese, who possesses the power to confirm, ordain, and consecrate; a successor to the Apostles who were the first bishops

**Blasphemy** the use of insulting words in reference to God and His Church

**Blessed Sacrament** the consecrated Host in which Christ dwells in the tabernacle

**Blessed Trinity** One God in three divine Persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)

**Blessed Virgin Mary** the Mother of Jesus

**Body of Christ** the physical male body of Jesus Christ that developed in Mary's womb, was crucified, and rose again three days after the crucifixion. It is this same Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is mysteriously made present in the consecration of the Eucharist.

**Breviary** a book of prayers which priests and other Christians use to recite morning prayer, evening prayer, and night prayer

**Brother/Sister** in light of Christ as our Brother, God the Father as our Father, we are spiritually all brothers and sisters in the one family of God. Also the title given to someone in a religious order.

**Calumny** false statements that injure the reputation of another, also called slander

**Calvary** the place where Jesus was crucified

**Candidates** (RCIA) one who is baptized as a Christian who is going through the RCIA process to become Catholic. Candidates receive a time of instruction, and then receive the Sacraments of Initiation.

**Canon Law** the laws of the Church

**Canonization** a declaration by the Pope that the deceased person is a saint

**Cantor** the lead singer in a church choir

**Capital sins** the seven sins that lead to all sin: pride, avarice (greed), lust, wrath, gluttony, envy, sloth

**Cardinal** a high official of the Church ranking next to the Pope. These men form the College of Cardinals, which elects the next Pope. These men are appointed by the Pope and wear red cassocks. They are considered the equivalent of princes

**Catacombs** the underground burial grounds of the early Christians

**Catechesis** literally "to echo or resound" the Word of God; it is the transmission of God's Word to invite people to personal faith (CCC 5); an education in the Faith

**Catechumen** a person who is preparing for Baptism

**Catechumenate** the period of instruction in the Faith before baptism and admission of converts to the Church

**Cathedral** the official church of the bishop

**Catholic** 1. universal: affecting all mankind at all times; 2. (with Capital C) a member of the Roman Catholic Church

**Catholic Faith** all that the Church officially teaches, believes, and holds to be true. These are in the forms of dogma, doctrine, and discipline, as well as Tradition and liturgy.

**Celibacy** the state of never being married for the sake of the Kingdom of God. All bishops, priests and religious take this vow

**Chalice** the cup used at Mass to contain the Precious Blood of Christ. It is usually made of some precious metal

**Chancery, Diocesan** the offices of the bishop and those who assist him

**Chapel** a very small church or place for worship

**Chaplain** the priest assigned to an institution such as a school or hospital

**Charity** love, the theological virtue which enables us to love God above all things, and to love our neighbor for the love of God

**Chastity** the virtue of purity in thought, word, and act; also the integration of sexuality within the person. It includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery.

**Chasuble** the large outer garment worn by the priests at Mass of various colors

**Chrism** the consecrated oil used in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders

**Christ** Messiah; the One anointed or sent by God to redeem the world

**Christian** one who has been baptized and, therefore, is a follower of Christ

**Christmas** the day on which Christ, our Savior, was born, celebrated on December 25

**Church** the Mystical Body of Christ, founded by Christ and governed by the successors of the Apostles chosen by Christ to do His work

**Ciborium** a covered container used to hold consecrated small hosts which will be distributed at Holy Communion

**Cincture** the cord that binds the alb by circling the waist

**Commandment** a law of God

**Commit** to do

**Commitment** a promise to oneself or another to do something

**Communal Penance** a group celebration of the sacrament of penance in which the people gather for a Scripture service before going to individual confession

**Communion** a union with, a joining with, a sharing; see also Holy Communion

**Communion of Saints** the sharing of grace among all members of Christ's Church, whether on earth, in purgatory, or in heaven

**Community** (as in faith community) people who relate to one another because of a similarity of belief. (i.e., parish, religion, etc.) for the purpose of reinforcing and living out these beliefs among each other

**Compline** the official night prayer of the Church

**Concelebrant** a priest who offers Mass along with one or more other priests

**Conception** the beginning of human life

**Conclave** the meeting of the College of Cardinals to elect a new Pope

**Concordat** an official treaty between the Catholic Church and another country, usually governing the various rights of the Church within that society

**Confession** the telling of our sins to an authorized priest in the Sacrament of Penance

**Confessional** the enclosure or box where the priest hears confessions

**Confessor** a priest who hears confessions

**Confirmation** the sacrament, administered by the bishop, in which a baptized person receives added strength from the Holy Spirit, enabling him to be strong in his Faith and in its defense

**Conscience** the judgment of our reason as to whether an act is good or bad

**Consecrate** to set apart a person or thing for sacred service or sacred use. It has special meaning when referring to the Consecration of the Eucharist, here meaning the changing of the bread and wine into the divine body and blood of Christ.

**Consecration** that part of the Mass in which the priest, using the words of Our Lord, changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ

**Consent** (of the will) agreement, permission, acceptance

**Contraception** a directly willed act which renders procreation impossible within sexual intercourse

**Contrition** sorrow for sin with the intention of not committing the sin again

**Conversion** from the Latin, "to turn around". The conversion of a soul is a spiritual event of turning away from sin and evil and turning towards God by a deepening acceptance of the truths of Revelation, a deeper realization of Who God is, and a bettering of the morality in our lives. It is a continuous process for a Christian, but may happen more suddenly or powerfully at certain times of a person's life.

**Corporal works of mercy** acts of love to care for the physical needs of our neighbor, such as feeding the hungry

**Corpus Christi** Latin for "the Body of Christ"

**Correct conscience** a conscience which corresponds to reason and your relationship with God

**Covenant** an agreement or promise, as the covenant between God and His people

**Covetousness** a strong desire for possessions, especially those of another; one of the seven capital sins

**Creation** all that is not God. There is God, and then there is all that He created. We are the pinnacle of His creation.

**Creator** God, the Maker of all things

**Creatures** all things, living and non-living, that God has made

**Credo** Latin for “I believe”

**Creed** a set of beliefs, as the Apostles’ Creed, containing the chief truths taught by Christ to the Apostles

**Crosier** the staff of the Bishop, shaped like a shepherd’s staff. It represents the duty and authority of the Bishop in protecting the flock of Christ.

**Cross** the Roman device of execution that was used to kill Jesus. Because Jesus’ death and Resurrection is the source of our salvation, the cross has become the symbol of our faith

**Crucifix** a cross bearing the image of the suffering Christ

**Crucify or crucifixion** to put to death by fastening to a cross

**Curia, Roman** the administrative offices of the Catholic Church located in Rome

**Cursing** wishing evil upon a person or thing

**Deacon** the third rank of Holy Orders (one--bishop, two--priests, three--deacons). A deacon assists priests in preaching, conferring baptism, performing marriage, helping in the administration of parishes and other duties. There are two kinds of deacons: A transitional deacon, in which a man is a deacon for approximately a year before being ordained a priest and a permanent deacon in which a man remains permanently in the third rank of Holy Orders. Some permanent deacons are married .

**Decade** the name for one of the sections of the Rosary. It consists of one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory Be. The common Rosary consists of five decades

**Decalogue** (the Ten Commandments) the ten chief laws given by God to man

**Demon** another name for an evil angel

**Desecration** the misuse of a sacred person, place or thing

**Despair** giving up hope in salvation and in the forgiveness of sins; a sin against hope

**Detraction** hurting a person’s reputation by revealing his faults without necessity

**Devil** a fallen angel, especially Satan, the chief of the bad angels

**Devotions** prayers and other expressions of piety which extend the liturgical life of the Church

**Diaconate** literally, “servanthood”. From Apostolic times, the diaconate was a position of ministry. Today deacons are first among ministers who help the priest. They participate in administering the Sacraments, and preaching the Gospel. The diaconate is an ordained ministry, one of the degrees of Holy Orders

**Diocese** the territory, comprising many parishes, over which a bishop rules

**Disciple** firstly this refers to the Apostles and the seventy-two who received instruction from Christ (Lk 10:1-24). More generally, it refers to all who accept Jesus’ message and follow Him.

**Dishonesty** lying, cheating, stealing, lack of truth

**Disobedience** not fulfilling the commands of God or lawful superiors

**Dispensation** a special exception or exempting from a law granted by one in authority

**Dispositions** attitude of mind and heart (when receiving the sacraments)

**Disrespect** failure to show honor, esteem, or courtesy

**Distractions** anything that turns our attention away from what we are doing

**Divine Office** another name for the breviary. This is the official prayer of the Church

**Divorce** the claim of dissolution of a marriage; A civil divorce does not free persons from a valid marriage before God. An annulment is not a divorce, but rather a declaration that the marriage never existed.

**Doctor of the Church** canonized saint who is given this title because of their holy lives and high level of learning, as shown by their writings

**Doctrine** the revealed teachings of Christ, as proclaimed by the Church

**Dogma** A truth revealed by Sacred Tradition, that must be believed by the faithful. It is a truth to be held absolutely, unconditionally, since it is a self-communication of God by God

**Doxology** a prayer of tribute or praise offered to God, i.e., the “Glory to God” in the Mass, the passage 2 Peter 3:18 in Scripture, etc.

**Easter** the day on which Christ rose from the dead

**Easter Triduum** the three days prior to the celebration of Easter Sunday; begins with Holy Thursday

**Ecumenical Council** a worldwide council called by the Pope with the participation of Bishops. Thus far the Church has had twenty-one such councils. Vatican II is an example of an Ecumenical Council.

**Ecumenism** the movement toward Christian unity

**Emmanuel** literally, “God with us”. The title of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and thus a title of Jesus Christ

**Emmaus** a town mentioned in the Bible, on the road to which two of the disciples met Jesus after His Resurrection.

**Encyclical** a letter from the Pope to all the bishops and Catholics of the world on an important topic of faith or morals

**Envy** willful discontent, or even resentment consented to, at another’s good fortune; one of the seven capital sins

**Epiphany** the revelation of Christ as God, made to the Magi, made at His Baptism by John in the Jordan, and at His first miracle during the wedding feast at Cana

**Episcopacy** the union of Bishops. It is the fullness of ordination, the highest level of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and gives to the one receiving it the fullness of priestly powers, including the authority to ordain and confirm

**Epistle** a letter of instruction, information, or command. Specifically, this refers to the Books of the Bible that were written as letters to the different communities at the time.

**Eternal** lasting forever

**Eternity** endless duration

**Eucharist** literally, “thanksgiving”. It refers to the consecrated host and wine, the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ which makes present and offers up Christ’s redemptive suffering along with the sacrifice of the Church to the Father. The Real Presence of Christ is made present in the bread and wine

**Eucharistic Fast** to abstain from food and drink (except water) for one hour before receiving Holy Communion. This is a serious obligation unless you are infirm or of an advanced age

**Eucharistic Minister or Extraordinary Minister** one who ministers by giving the Body or Blood of Christ at Mass. It is normally the priest, deacon, or acolyte, but can, if need be, be an extraordinary minister who has been properly trained and commissioned.

**Eucharistic Prayers** The prayers used in the celebration of the liturgy of the Eucharist. Though there are several different ones, they are identical in their parts, and differ only in length of expression.

**Euthanasia** killing a living person because it is deemed better for them to die than to live. This is wrong and is considered to be murder by the Church’s moral teaching.

**Evangelical Counsels** the teachings proposed by Our Lord for those seeking perfection in the spiritual life: voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and perfect obedience

**Evangelist** one who proclaims the Gospel. The four great evangelists are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

**Evangelization** the proclamation of Christ and his Gospel in order to bring others to Christ and His Church

**Eve** the first woman God created

**Everlasting** without end

**Evil** bad, the opposite of good

**Examination of Conscience** the prayerful practice at the end of the day in which we reflect upon our words and deeds in light of the Gospel to determine how we may have sinned against God

**Excommunicate** to cut off from the sacraments and communion with the Church

**Exorcisms** the driving away of devils by the power of Christ

**Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** the ceremony in which a priest or deacon removes the Sacred Host from the Tabernacle and places it on the altar for adoration

**Extraordinary Minister** the person who in the case of real need is permitted to help distribute Holy Communion. The ordinary minister of Holy Communion is the priest or deacon.

**Faith** 1. the theological virtue by which we believe all that God has revealed; 2. also, the body of truths which we believe

**Faithful** those who have been incorporated into Christ in Baptism

**Fast** to take no food or liquid within a prescribed period of time

**Father** first Person in the Blessed Trinity

**Fervent** having great devotion

**Fidelity** loyalty, faithfulness to duty and to pledges

**Forgive** to pardon an offense

**Fortitude** 1. a cardinal virtue which disposes us to do what is good in spite of any difficulty; 2. a gift of the Holy Spirit which gives us a Christ-like courage to love God in the face of all obstacles, even death

**Foster Father** one who takes the place of a father and assumes his duties

**Free Will** the power to make a choice

**Fruits of the Holy Spirit** spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit to sanctify the person and equip him for the Christian life and ministry. The tradition of the Church identifies twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, peace, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, self-control, joy, patience, goodness, gentleness, modesty, and chastity.

**Gabriel** the angel who announced to Mary that she was chosen to be Mother of God

**Garden of Paradise** the Biblical place in which our first parents experienced the happiness the human family possessed before the Fall

**Gluttony** overeating, or overdrinking; eating greedily; one of the seven capital sins

**God** the Supreme Being, who created all things but even more, who loves us as His children. He is pure goodness, truth, holiness, and love, and is one in Being but Three in Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Godparents** the sponsors of one who is baptized. They assume a responsibility to assist the newly-baptized on the road of Christian life.

**Golgotha** Calvary, the place where Christ died

**Good Friday** the Friday of Holy Week, a day of the year when Mass is not said. There is a liturgy of the Word, veneration of the cross, and Holy Communion, but the prayers of consecration are not said. It is a day especially devoted to reflection on Christ's death on the cross for our sins

**Goodness** all the qualities and virtues which make us what God wants us to be

**Good works** actions performed for love of God or our neighbor

**Gospel** the "good news" of God's mercy and love revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ; one of the four authentic accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus which the Church teaches have been divinely inspired. These are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

**Grace** God's great gift of His divine life in our soul (sanctifying grace); God's help to conform our lives to His will (actual grace)

**Grave sin** another name for mortal or serious sin

**Grievous** serious, severe

**Guardian Angel** the unseen but always present angel that every person has been given by God. Our guardian angel protects us and intercedes for us.

**Hail Mary** the most familiar of all prayers addressed to the Blessed Virgin

**Hallowed** sacred, holy

**Heaven** eternal life with God; the state of eternal happiness

**Hell** the state of self-exclusion from God; for those who refuse to believe in God and be converted from sin, even to the end of their lives

**Heresy** the denial of a truth of the Catholic Faith

**Hermit** one who lives alone and apart from society for purpose of devoting himself to prayer and the spiritual life

**Hierarchy** the successors of the Apostles under the Pope as successor of St. Peter

**Holiness** like God; in the state of sanctifying grace

**Holy Chrism** consecrated oil used in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders

**Holy Communion** the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ

**Holy Days of Obligation** feast days on which we are obligated to attend Mass; a precept of the Church

**Holy Eucharist** the sacrament in which we receive Our Lord's Body and Blood under the appearances of bread and wine

**Holy Father** another name for the Pope

**Holy Land** the name given to the area where Jesus lived while on this earth

**Holy Oils** the oils blessed by the bishop; There are three kinds of Holy Oils: Oil of the Catechumens, Holy Chrism, and the Oil of the Sick

**Holy Orders** the sacrament through which men become deacons, priests, or bishops; by the imposition of the bishop's hands

**Holy Saturday** the eve of Easter

**Holy See** another name for the diocese of the Pope

**Holy Souls** another name for the souls in Purgatory

**Holy Spirit** the third Person of the Blessed Trinity

**Holy Thursday** the day in Holy Week in which we commemorate the Last Supper

**Holy water** water blessed by a priest; used as a reminder of Baptism and as a means of sanctification

**Holy Week** the week preceding Easter from Palm Sunday through Holy Saturday inclusive

**Homily** the teaching and explaining of Scripture. It is an important part of the liturgy and thus reserved for the priest or deacon. It should put forth guiding principles of the Christian life and the mysteries of the Faith.

**Honor** reverence or respect for someone

**Hope** the theological virtue which enables us to trust firmly in God and His promise of eternal life to those who love and obey Him

**Host** the bread which is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass

**Human Dignity** the worth of every human person that gives each person certain inviolable rights; It stems from the fact that we are rational creatures of free will, made in the image of God and meant to live in communion with God now and in the next life

**Humility** freedom from pride; a virtue enabling a person to see himself as he is and in relation to God

**Idolatry** the giving of worship to any creature or thing instead of to God

**Ignorance** lack of knowledge, or imperfect knowledge, about something

**Image** (of God) the likeness of man to God

**Images** (sacred) pictures or statues representing Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, or the saints

**Immaculate Conception** the special privileges granted by God to the Blessed Virgin Mary whereby she was free from original sin from the first moment of her conception; the feast is on December 8th

**Immodesty** unbecoming dress or conduct

**Immortal** never dying, lasting forever

**Impediment** (to marriage) any reason or fact that would make impossible a valid marriage under the laws of God and the Church; an obstacle to marriage

**Imperfect** having a defect, incomplete

**Imposition of hands** when the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, Anointing of the Sick, and Reconciliation are conferred, the priest or Bishop solemnly lays his hands on the head or body of the person. It is the way Jesus and the Apostles transmitted to others the Holy Spirit.

**Impurity** misusing sex in thought, word, or deed, alone or with others

**Incarnation** the taking of a human nature by God the Son, when He became Man and was born of the Virgin Mary

**Incense** a powder which gives off a fragrant smoke which is burned at certain Masses to symbolize our prayers rising to God

**Inclination** a tendency, bent or leaning toward something

**Indefectibility** an attribute of the Church, ensuring that it will last until the end of time

**Indelible** lasting, cannot be removed

**Indifferentism** lack of interest as to what is true or false in regard to religion; denial that the worship of God is a duty of human beings or acting in this way

**Indissoluble** cannot be broken, separated, disunited, or annulled

**Indulgence** the taking away by the Church of some or all the temporal punishment that one must suffer, in this life or in purgatory, for sins committed; indulgences are either *plenary* (full remission of punishment) or *partial* (part of the punishment is remitted)

**Infallibility** the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church which ensures the freedom from error from the pope and bishops in union with him on matters of faith and morals

**Infinite** without limit or end

**Innocence** (original) freedom from sin; the state of Adam and Eve before they disobeyed God's command

**Inspire** to influence the soul directly to act

**Inspiration** (of the Bible) the gift of the Holy Spirit which moved the Sacred Writers to write what God wanted them to write

**Intelligence** the power of knowing, understanding, and reasoning; the mind in operation

**Intention** the application of the merits of a Mass, prayers, and the sacraments to a particular person or purpose

**Intercession** a prayer of petition on behalf of another; for example, we often obtain blessings from God through the intercession of a saint to whom we have prayed

**Interior** inside, within, spiritual

**Involuntary** not willed

**Irreverence** lack of due honor and respect for someone or something sacred

**Israelites** the descendants of Jacob whose name was changed by God to Israel. They are the nation of people God first made His covenant with. Since Christ came, the Church is the New Israel

**Jerusalem** city in Palestine which was the religious center in the time of Christ and the site of His suffering and death

**Jesus Christ** the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who became Man and suffered and died on the Cross to redeem us

**Joseph** the spouse of Mary and the foster father of Jesus Christ

**Judgment** the eternal reward or punishment received at the moment of death (the "particular judgment"); The "Last Judgment" is God's triumph over the revolt of evil which will coincide with the Second Coming of Christ.

**Justice** 1. that cardinal virtue which disposes us to give God and neighbor their due 2. original justice refers to the state of holiness in which God created our first parents

**Kingdom of God** the participation in divine love in heaven; the Church is the beginning of the kingdom on earth; the kingdom of God will be fulfilled at the end of time

**Knowledge** a gift of the Holy Spirit which enables us to see God reflected in all creatures and to praise Him in them, but yet to see the incompleteness and fragility of creatures in themselves so that we will desire God alone

**Laity** all the members of the Church aside from the clergy and religious

**Last Supper** the last meal, a Passover supper, which Jesus ate with his disciples on the night before he died, at which He took bread and wine and changed them into His Body and Blood, and gave to the Apostles to eat and to drink, telling them to do the same in remembrance of Him

**Lectionary** the book containing the readings which is used at Mass

**Lector** one who proclaims the readings at Mass

**Lent** the forty-day period of prayer and fasting beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending with the Easter Triduum

**Lie** a statement which one knows to be untrue when he makes it

**Liturgy** the public worship that the faithful gives to Christ, and through Him to the Father, in the Holy Spirit. It includes the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Sacraments, the Divine Office, and the liturgical year.

**Liturgical year** the annual cycle in which the Church remembers the life of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, the angels, and the saints. The main parts of the liturgical year are Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time

**Liturgy of the Eucharist** the second major part of the Mass. The most solemn part of the Mass from the Presentation of the Gifts until Communion is concluded

**Liturgy of the Hours** another name for the divine office or the breviary

**Liturgy of the Word** the first major part of the Mass in which the readings from the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Gospel are proclaimed

**The Lord's Prayer** another name for the Our Father

**Lourdes** a place in France where the Blessed Mother appeared in 1858

**Love** to will good to another and to want to do only what is good for another; also, the theological virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbor by ourselves

**Lucifer** another name for the devil or Satan

**Lust** the desire for unlawful bodily pleasure; one of the seven capital sins

**Madonna** another name for the Blessed Virgin Mary, an Italian word literally meaning "My Lady"

**Magi** the three wise men who came to visit Christ after His birth and presented him with gifts

**Magisterium** the official teaching authority of the Church. It is exercised by the Pope and the bishops in union with him

**Marriage** the indissoluble bond between a man and a woman; elevated to a sacrament by Christ; Its purpose is the giving of the spouses to Christ through each other, and the procreation of children

**Martyrdom** the giving up of one's life for the Faith; the word *martyr* means "witness"

**Mary** the woman who conceived Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. She is the Mother of God, and Mother of the Church. She is the perfect Christian, the highest example of a human follower of Christ. She was married to Saint Joseph, but remained a virgin. She was conceived by Saint Ann without sin. She was assumed into heaven, body and soul.

**Mass** the celebration of the Eucharist, which was established by Jesus at the Last Supper; the Sacrifice of the Cross is re-presented; the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ

**Matrimony** the sacrament in which a baptized man and woman bind themselves in marriage for life; it is ordered to the well-being of the spouses and to the procreation and upbringing of children

**Mediator** one who acts on behalf of others; one who links or reconciles opposing parties; Christ is the Mediator between God and man. The Church is rightly called mediator, as well as Mary

**Meditation** a form of prayer in which we try to understand God's revelation of the truths of faith and the purpose of the Christian life, and how it should be lived, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking

**Memorial** a commemoration; memorials of saints are often celebrated in conjunction with the weekday Masses

**Mental prayer** (meditation) uniting our hearts with God and thinking about Him and the truths of our religion in order to increase our love of God

**Messiah** the Hebrew word for "Anointed One"; the promised Redeemer, Jesus Christ

**Minister** literally, servant. Officially, one who has the authority to administer to others. i.e., the priest is the administrator of the Sacraments

**Miracle** a sign or wonder brought about by the direct action of God

**Missionary** anyone who helps with the mission of the Church

**Miter** the tall hat worn by the Pope and bishops during Mass

**Mixed marriage** a marriage between a Catholic and one who is not a Catholic

**Monastic life** consecrated life marked by the public profession of religious vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and by a stable community life; The purpose is to perfect their love of God

**Monstrance** a large sacred vessel which contains the Sacred Host when it is exposed on the altar or carried in procession. It is usually made of metal and plated with gold.

**Moral** conforming to God's laws about what is right and good; also, a teaching, a maxim

**Morality** relation of a human act and the final destiny of a human being; a human act is either good or bad according as it leads to or detracts a person from his or her heavenly goal

**Mortal** fatal, deadly, destructive to life

**Mortal Sin** a serious sin which is done with sufficient knowledge and freedom. One's relationship with God cannot be the same until one has made a good confession. Those in mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion until they have gone to confession.

**Mother of God** a title of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a result of her being the physical parent of Jesus, who is God

**Motive** any emotion or desire which spurs a person to action

**Mount Sinai** the mountain in the Sinai desert where Moses received the Ten Commandments

**Mystery** (supernatural) a truth of our Faith which we cannot fully understand but which we accept as true because God has revealed it

**Mystagogy** the last period of the RCIA process where the neophyte (new convert) continues to fully participate in the Eucharistic liturgy, embraces a deeper understanding of the Sacramental mysteries and continues the celebration of faith and conversion. The period extends to the anniversary of full Christian initiation.

**Mystical Body of Christ** the Church; called so because the bond of union existing between Christ as the Head and the faithful as members resembles the bond of union in a human body

**Nativity** the birthday of Jesus Christ, Christmas (celebrated on December 25)

**Natural Law** the moral instincts placed within a person by God

**Nature** the essence of a thing; what it is

**New Covenant** the means by which we become children of God. It is the fulfillment of the Old Law by the coming of Christ, who gives us in the gift of His Spirit the power to keep the commandments. Christ summarizes the Law with two rules, to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself.

**New Testament** the second part of the Bible, containing the words, deeds, and events of Christ's life

**Nicene Creed** the creed or statement of the chief doctrines of the faith developed at the Councils of Nicaea (325 AD) and Constantinople (381 AD)

**Novena** nine days of public or private prayer for some special occasion or intention

**Novice** a person formally admitted to a religious institute to prepare for eventual religious profession

**Nun** another name for a sister in religious life; more specifically, one living a cloistered, contemplative life in a monastery

**Nuncio** the official representative of the Pope in a country. He is usually an archbishop

**Nuptial** relating to marriage or the wedding ceremony

**Oath** asking God to witness the truth of a statement or promise

**Obedience** the keeping of God's commandments; also following the orders of parents and lawful superiors

**Obligation** duty imposed by the laws of God or of man

**Observe** to fulfill the law or obey the rules; to celebrate, as to observe a feast

**Occasion of sin** any person, place, or thing which may lead us into sin

**Old Covenant** the agreement between God and his chosen people Israel that God would make them a nation, and that they would obey His laws. The Ten Commandments are the laws of the Old Covenant made with Moses. Christ gives the power to finally obey the old laws and fulfills these laws by teaching the Beatitudes. (Mt 5ff)

**Old Testament** the first part of the Bible, telling the history of salvation from creation through God's covenant with Israel in preparation for Christ

**Ordained** having received the Sacrament of Holy Orders

**Original sin** our inherited condition from the sin of Adam and Eve by which we are born without grace and inclined to love ourselves more than God

**(Eastern) Orthodox** Eastern Churches not in full communion with the Catholic Church; Christians of the Orthodox Churches are separated from the Catholic Church, yet are in an imperfect but deep communion with the Catholic Church by reason of our common Baptism, the profession of the Creed, and the possession of true sacraments by reason of the apostolic succession of their priesthood.

**Our Father** the prayer given to us by Christ; also called the Lord's Prayer

**Our Lord** Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity

**Papacy** a term applied to the office and jurisdiction of the Pope; the office of the successor of St. Peter

**Parable** a short story based on a familiar experience used to teach a spiritual lesson

**Paraclete** another name for the Holy Spirit

**Paradise** another name for heaven

**Pardon** to forgive, to remit the penalty for an offense

**Parish** a division of a diocese with a priest, designated by the bishop, as its pastor or administrator

**Parousia** the glorious return and appearance of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as judge of the living and the dead, at the end of time; the second coming of Christ, when history and all creation will achieve their fulfillment

**Partial** incomplete, affecting only a part

**Partial Indulgence** the partial remission of the temporal punishment due for sins

**Paschal candle** a large candle which symbolizes Christ as the light of the world. It is blessed on Holy Saturday and used throughout the Easter Season. It is also used at baptisms and funerals.

**Paschal Mystery** Christ's work of redemption accomplished principally by his Passion, death, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension

**Passion** 1. the sufferings of Christ from the Last Supper until His Death on the Cross; 2. lust, a strong desire for bodily pleasure, also any of the emotions

**Passover** The first Passover happened when the angel of death passed over the Israelite homes that were marked by the blood of the lamb, thus sparing the firstborn son. ( Ex 11 and 12) Jesus celebrated this feast at the Last Supper, but it took on new meaning in Christ Who is God's sacrifice of His firstborn Son, in order to set us free from the slavery of sin and to make us His children by adoption.

**Pastor** the priest appointed by the bishop to govern a particular parish

**Paten** the circular, shallow dish that holds the bread to be consecrated

**Patron Saint** the saint who has been chosen as a special intercessor with God for a particular person, place, community, or organization

**Patron of the Universal Church** Saint Joseph was given the role of protecting and raising Jesus Christ. So too, he is the protector, guide, and chief intercessor of the Catholic Church.

**Patroness of the Americas** At the apparition of Guadalupe, the Blessed Virgin declared herself as the special patroness of the Americas. She intercedes especially for its needs

**Peace** not only the absence of strife, but also the presence of a fullness of life. Its source is God and friendship with Him. Peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

**pectoral cross** the cross, usually of gold, worn around the neck of a bishop, cardinal, or pope

**Penance** 1. the sacrament in which all sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through the power received by the priest from Christ; 2. the prayers or good works assigned by the priest after one has confessed his sins; 3. self-denial; controlling our body to obey our will

**Pentateuch** the first five books of the Bible, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

**Pentecost** the day on which the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles, fifty days after Easter

**People of God** the members of the Church; composed of all baptized believers in Christ throughout the world; Their degree of membership depends on their degree of faith, obedience to the Church's precepts, and sanctity or union with God.

**Perfect** without defect or fault; whole or complete

**Perjury** calling on God to witness a lie; lying under oath

**Perpetual** continuous, lasting forever

**Persecution** harm, suffering, and even death, inflicted upon a person because of his religious beliefs

**Perseverance** continuous performance of a good act despite great difficulty; remaining in the state of grace until the end of life

**Person** a being having intellect and free will

**Peter** the Apostle chosen by Christ to be the head of the Church He founded; our first Pope

**Peter's Pence** the annual collection taken up throughout the world to help the Pope with his charities

**Pharisees** the religious group of the Jewish community at the time of Christ, who practiced the Mosaic Law, refused Christ's teachings, and had Him crucified by Pontius Pilate

**Piety** 1. one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit by which we are attracted to revering God as our Father and all others as His children, our brethren; 2. special love and devotion to God and his saints; 3. zeal in prayer and worship

**Pilgrimage** a journey to a sacred place or shrine because of religious devotion

**Pilgrim People** We are meant for God, and are in our earthly lives only temporarily. We are, in this sense, in the world but not of it, passing through to the next life. This title is used to remind us to seek the spiritual, and see past this world.

**Plenary** complete, entire

**Plenary Indulgence** the full remission of the temporal punishment due for sins

**Pontius Pilate** the Roman governor of Judea during the time of Christ's suffering and death, who sentenced Jesus to death even though he himself believed Him innocent

**Poor souls** another name for those who are in Purgatory

**Pope** Christ's representative on earth as lawful successor of St. Peter and visible head of the Church

**Poverty** 1. the vow by which religious give up the right to personal property; 2. poverty of spirit signifies detachment from worldly things and voluntary humility; 3. lack of the necessities of life

**Prayer** the lifting up of the mind and heart to God; conversation with God

**Prayers of Aspiration** An aspiration, sometimes called an ejaculation, is a short prayer meant to be memorized and repeated throughout the day. The word comes from the Latin *aspirare*, "to breathe upon." In this way, we can heed Saint Paul's injunction to "Pray without ceasing" and continually turn our thoughts toward God.

**Precepts of the Church** the commandments of the church; They are obligatory laws set by the Church to establish the absolute minimum spiritual requirements of a Catholic. For a list, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, article 2041 and following.

**Precious Blood** another name for the consecrated wine at Mass

**Presbyter** another name for a priest

**Presumption** the belief that one can save himself without God's help, or that God's help alone will save without the efforts of the individual

**Pride** esteeming ourselves as more than we are and desiring to be treated as more than we are; one of the seven capital sins

**Priest** a mediator between God and man; one who has received Holy Orders and takes the place of Christ, the High Priest

**Principle** a basic law, a fundamental truth or doctrine

**Procreation** the joining of the human role and the divine role in the conception and bringing to life of a new person. God and man work together to create life.

**Prophet** a messenger sent by God

**Providence** God in His love and care for us; divine guidance

**Prudence** a cardinal virtue which helps us to make practical judgments on what to do and what not to do

**Psalm** a sacred hymn of praise, usually sung or chanted from the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament

**Publican** a tax collector for the Roman Empire who was despised by the people. Saint Matthew was a publican before Jesus called him to follow.

**Purgatory** the state of temporary punishment where the souls of those who die in the state of grace must be cleansed before entrance into heaven, if their love for God is not yet perfect

**Purity** the moral virtue which controls our inclinations toward sinful pleasures of the body

**Rash Judgment** a deliberate judgment concerning a fault of another without sufficient evidence

**Reconciliation** 1. to ask for forgiveness and to be forgiven for a wrong. This happens between persons, and between a person and God; 2. the Sacrament of Reconciliation, whereby, through God's mercy and forgiveness a sinner is reconciled with God and with the Church

**Redeemer** the One who saved us, Jesus Christ, who offered His sufferings and death to God the Father as an infinite satisfaction for our sins and, thus, reopened heaven to us

**Redemption** Christ's satisfaction (His suffering and death) for the sins of mankind which freed man from the bondage of sin and restored Him to friendship with God

**relic** the body, or part of the body, of a saint, or anything, such as clothing, associated with the saint which the Church venerates because of the sanctity of the person while on earth

**Religion** the relationship between God and man; all the teachings and practices of the Church by which we join ourselves to God

**Religious** a person who is a member of a congregation or religious order, dedicated to serving God through the voluntary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience

**Reparation** the making of amends for wrong or injury done; the repairing of harm done to another or damage to another's property

**Repent** to have sorrow for one's sins and a firm intention of not committing the sins again

**Resolve** to decide; to make up one's mind

**Restitution** the return of found or stolen property to its rightful owner; payment for injury to a person or property damage

**Resurrection** 1. the rising of the body to be united with the soul at the end of the world; 2. (with capital R) the bodily rising of Jesus from the dead on the third day after his death on the cross and burial in the tomb (Easter Sunday)

**Retreat** a time set aside for focused religious activity (prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, instruction, etc.) for the purpose of growing in holiness or amending one's life and drawing closer to God

**Revelation** Sacred Scripture (the Bible) and Tradition (what has been handed down from age to age) which contain the sum of revealed doctrine, the revealed Word of God

**Revenge** to inflict harm or injury in return for a wrong

**Reverence** honor and respect given to persons such as the saints, the clergy and religious, great men, parents, or to sacred places or objects because of their relation to God

**Rite** the words and actions used in a religious ceremony

**Roman Catholic** a Catholic who belongs to the Roman rite

**Rosary** 1. a prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, accompanied by meditation on the mysteries of Christ's life; this prayer is said with the use of beads, consisting of the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be 2. the string of beads used to pray the rosary, consisting of five sets each of ten small beads separated by one single bead, with the addition of a crucifix and four more beads

**Sabbath** Sunday, the day of rest from labor. One should cease from labor in order to spend more time in prayer and rejoicing, and service of neighbor.

**Sacrament** an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace

**Sacramental Character** the imprint on the soul of a lasting spiritual mark by the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders which, for this reason, can be received only once

**Sacramental Confession** the telling of one's sins to an authorized priest in the Sacrament of Penance

**Sacramentals** special prayers, actions or objects, the use of which obtains spiritual benefits through the prayers of the Church to God

**Sacraments of Healing** The life as a child of God can be lost by sin. The Sacraments of healing, Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, are to restore and heal us from the effects of sin in our life.

**Sacraments of Initiation** Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. To be a full member of the Catholic Church, these Sacraments must be received. They lay the foundations of every Catholic's life, bringing us to the life of a child of God and a vocation of holiness.

**Sacraments of Vocation** Marriage and Holy Orders. They are Sacraments of consecration or setting apart of a Christian life for a specific mission and the receiving of sacramental graces to fulfill this mission.

**Sacred Heart** the symbol of Christ's love for the Father and for us, usually represented by the physical heart of Christ in a statute, picture, or holy card

**Sacred Scripture** the inspired written record of God's Revelation; consists of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible

**Sacrifice** an act by which we hand ourselves over to God, imitating the ultimate Sacrifice of Christ on the cross. It is a means of self-giving.

**Sacrilege** irreverent treatment or mistreatment, of sacred persons, places, or things; also, the reception of any of the sacraments unworthily

**Saint** a very holy person, one who loves God perfectly and is now in heaven

**Salvation** the forgiveness of sins and restoration of friendship with God, which can be done by God alone

**Sanctify** to make holy

**Sanctifying Grace** Divine life in the soul; It makes us holy.

**Sanctuary** the part of the building of the church where the altar is located

**Sanhedrin** The highest court of justice in Jerusalem in Christ's time. It acted regarding religious matters, collected taxes, and acted as a civil court for Jerusalem. It ended in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed

**Satan** another name for the devil or Lucifer; the chief of the fallen angels

**Savior** Jesus Christ who died to save all people

**Scandal** any word or deed that may be the occasion of sin to our neighbor

**Scapular** two small squares of cloth joined by string so that they can be worn over the shoulders, one to the back and one to the front

**Schism** a separation from the Church by refusal to recognize the authority of the Pope in Rome

**Scourging** a lashing or whipping; the sufferings of Our Lord as He was tied to a pillar and beaten until covered with wounds

**Seal of Confession** the priest's obligation to keep absolutely secret what a penitent has told him in the Sacrament of Penance

**Seder Meal** another name given for the Passover meal described in Ex. 13 and involves: eating unleavened bread and bitter herbs, the dipping of the latter into haroseth (relish) and the parsley in salt water, and the reclining at the Seder table. The meal celebrates the miracle of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage.

**Seminary** a school for the academic and spiritual training of candidates for the priesthood

**Sepulcher** a tomb

**Sexuality** Sexuality affects all aspects of one's body and soul. It especially concerns the capacity to love

and to procreate. Man and woman are created different, but complimentary; both are equal in dignity.

**Shema** the first two words ("Hear [O] Israel") of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 – "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God. The Lord is one." It is considered the most important prayer of the Jewish people and is a foundational principle of our Catholic Faith.

**Shrine** a holy place

**Sign** an action or object that leads to something else; Among the sacred signs within the Church, the most important are the sacraments, which not signify God's presence, but also give grace.

**Sign of the Cross** a sign in the form of a cross made by the Christian as a prayer honoring the Blessed Trinity, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

**Simony** a grave sin which consists of buying or selling something spiritual

**Sin** an offense against God; a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to God's law

**Sincere** genuine, real, free from deception

**Slander** harming another person's reputation by telling lies about him or by distorting the truth

**Sloth** one of the seven capital sins; laziness that causes neglect of duty

**Solemnity** days of greatest importance in the celebrations of the Church. For example, Easter and Christmas, each which are celebrated for eight days.

**Son** the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who became Man and suffered and died on the Cross to redeem us

**Soul** the spiritual part of man; The soul is immortal (does not die) and is individually created by God.

**Sovereign Pontiff** the Pope, the Vicar of Christ on earth, the visible head of the Church

**Spiritual works of mercy** acts of love to care for the spiritual needs of our neighbor; See the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #244.

**Sponsor** In Baptism, it is the one(s) who speaks for the one being baptized, and accepts certain spiritual responsibilities. In Confirmation, it is the one who stands for the confirmand. He or she takes on the duty of helping the parents and being spiritually responsible for the person.

**State of Grace** the presence of sanctifying grace (God's special gift) in one's soul; freedom from mortal sin

**Stations of the Cross** A devotion performed by meditating on the Passion of Christ. It consists of fourteen representations of events during the passion and death of Christ, which appear on the walls of the Church.

**Steal** to take as our own something which does not lawfully belong to us; an offense against the seventh commandment of God

**Stipend** an offering of appreciation made by the faithful to the clergy on the occasion of weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc.

**Stole** a vestment. A long, narrow strip of cloth hung around the neck of the priest, as a sign of his priestly office. (Deacons wear theirs diagonally across the left shoulder and chest.) Its color depends on the liturgical season or the Sacrament being celebrated. i.e.: red for Confirmation, purple for Lent, etc.

**Supernatural** above nature, beyond the natural order of things; a result of God's gracious initiative

**Superstition** The attribution of a kind of magical power to certain practices or objects, like charms or omens. Reliance on such power, rather than on trust in God, constitutes an offense against the honor due to God alone, as required by the first commandment.

**Supreme Being** God, the perfect and highest Being

**Swear** to call on God to witness the truth of what we say or the promises we make; also, to curse

**Symbol** In general, any object that stands for or represents something else. Christian symbols represent some sacred truth or mystery of the faith.

**Synagogue** the meeting place and house of worship of the Jewish faith

**Synoptic Gospels** the first three Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke

**Tabernacle** a box-like receptacle where the Blessed Sacrament is kept outside of Mass

**Temperance** one of the cardinal virtues which enables us to control the desires of the senses and to use them according to the designs of God

**Temple of the Holy Spirit** The Holy Spirit dwells within each baptized Christian. Thus, the human body is a temple for the Holy Spirit. Just as the Temple in Christ's time was to be the house of God, so too is the human body and soul the house of God.

**Temptation** a strong inclination to sin which may come from the devil, from something outside us, or from man's tendency toward evil as a result of Adam's fall

**Ten Commandments** the ten chief laws given by God to Moses

**Theological** relating to God

**Tithes** our contribution to the support of the Church; typically one-tenth of one's yearly income, given to the Church

**Torah** the first five books of the Old Testament. Another name for the Pentateuch

**Tradition** The living transmission of the message of the Gospel in the Church. Both the living Tradition and the written Scriptures have their common source in the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

**Transubstantiation** the change of the entire substance of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ at the Consecration of the Mass

**Trespasses** sins or offenses against God and others

**Triduum** a 3 day period of prayer. The time of Holy Thursday to the Easter Vigil is known as the Easter Triduum, and it the most sacred time of the liturgical year

**Trinity** the three distinct Persons in one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, all having the same Divine nature

**Truth** the conformity of what we say or do with reality

**Unchaste** impure in thought or act, immodest

**Understanding** the gift of the Holy Spirit which gives us an insight into the mysteries of faith so that we may live by them

**Universal** referring to the whole world, to all people of all time

**Vatican** the location where the Pope lives. The group of buildings surrounding St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The Vatican city-state is an independent nation governed by the Pope.

**Vatican II** The 21st ecumenical council which took place from 1962-1965. Its documents are authoritative teachings relating to the life of the Church and her faithful

**Venerate** to honor, to regard with respect and admiration. This is different from adoration or worship, which are due to God alone.

**Vengeance** the infliction of punishment on someone who has done moral wrong, In this sense, only God has the right to avenge wrongdoing. He may delegate this right to those in legitimate authority.

**Venial Sin** an offense against the laws of God which is not so grievous as mortal sin; it does not deprive the soul completely of sanctifying grace, but lessens God's grace in the soul

**Vestments** the garments worn by priests and assistants at Mass. Their historical significance dates back to the garments worn by priests and laymen in the early Church. Their form and material are prescribed by Canon and liturgical laws. In the Roman rite, the vestments are the outer vestments of the chasuble, dalmatic, and stole, and the inner vestments of the amice, alb, and cincture

**Viaticum** Holy Communion given to those in danger of death

**Vicar of Christ** the Pope who is visible head of the Church and the representative of Christ on earth

**Vigil** the day before certain feasts, such as the day before Christmas or Easter

**Virgin Birth** Mary conceived Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, and not by sexual intercourse. She also gave birth to Jesus while physically remaining a virgin. She remained a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus.

**Virtue** the habit of doing good and avoiding evil

**Vocation** A call from God to a distinctive state in life, such as marriage, the priesthood, religious life, or single life. All are called to love and serve God. All are called to holiness.

**Voluntary** of one's own free will or choice

**Vow** a promise made to God to do something that is good and pleasing to Him

**Womb** that place in a woman's body where her child is nourished and developed until it is ready to be born

**Word of God** all that God has revealed to us in both word and deed. It is contained in both Scripture and Tradition, and protected and promulgated by the Magisterium. Jesus Christ is the sum total of God's revelation of Himself, and John's Gospel describes Jesus as the Word made Flesh. (Jn 1:1)

**Worship** the adoration and honor which we give to God alone; It is the first act of the virtue of religion.

**Wrong** all that is not in accord with the laws of God; the opposite of right