

Glossary

A

Abba an informal word for *father* in Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. It is like “dad” in English. When Jesus spoke to God the Father, he called him “Abba.”

abortion the deliberate ending of a pregnancy that results in the death of the unborn child. The Church teaches that since life begins at conception, abortion is a serious crime against life and is gravely against the moral law.

Abraham the model of faith in God in the Old Testament. Because of his faith, he left his home and traveled to Canaan, where God made a covenant with him that promised him land and many descendants. He became the father of the Chosen People.

absolution the forgiveness we receive from God through the priest in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

abstain the practice of denying oneself food, drink, or other pleasures. Catholics over age 14 abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and on the Fridays of Lent.

actual grace the gift of God, freely given, that unites us with the life of the Trinity. Actual grace helps us make the choices that conform our lives to God’s will.

adore to worship God above all else because he is our Creator. The First Commandment requires us to adore God alone.

adultery an injury to the marriage bond covenant. It occurs when a man or a woman who are married to each other has sexual relations with another person. The Sixth Commandment forbids adultery because it undermines the institution of marriage and is harmful to children, who need the stability of their parents’ marriage commitment.

Advocate Jesus’ name for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comforts us, speaks for us in difficult times, and makes Jesus present to us.

Alleluia an acclamation meaning “praise God.” Alleluia is sung before the Gospel except during Lent.

altar the table in the church on which the priest celebrates Mass, where the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is made present in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The altar represents two aspects of the mystery of the Eucharist. It is the place where Jesus Christ offers himself for our sins and where he gives us himself as our food for eternal life.

ambo a raised stand from which a person reads the Word of God during Mass

Amen a Hebrew word meaning “it is so” or “let it be done.” It signifies agreement with what has been said. Prayers in the New Testament, in the Church’s liturgies, and the Creed end with *Amen*. In the Gospels, Jesus uses *Amen* to reinforce the seriousness of what he is about to say.

angel a spiritual creature who worships God in heaven. Angels serve God as messengers. They tell us of his plans for our salvation.

Angelus a prayer honoring the Incarnation of Jesus. The *Angelus* is prayed in the morning, at noon, and in the evening.

annulment a finding by a Church tribunal that at least one essential element for a real marriage was not present on the day of the wedding. The Church can declare that the Sacrament of Marriage did not take place if at least one of the parties was not freely choosing to marry, had been married before and that marriage was not annulled, or was not open to having children. An annulment cannot be considered until after a person is divorced. Catholics who receive an annulment are free to marry in the Church and can receive Communion.

Annunciation the announcement to Mary by the angel Gabriel that God had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus. When Mary agreed, the Son of God became human in her. The feast of the Annunciation is celebrated on March 25, nine months before Christmas.

anoint to put oil on things or people to dedicate them to the service of God. The anointing of the kings of Israel was a sign that they were chosen to rule God’s people.

Anointing of the Sick one of the seven sacraments. In this sacrament, a sick person has the oil of the sick applied and receives the strength, peace, and courage to overcome the difficulties associated with illness. Through this sacrament, Jesus brings the sick person spiritual healing and forgiveness of sins. If it is God’s will, healing of the body is given as well.

apostle one of twelve special men who accompanied Jesus in his ministry and were witnesses to the Resurrection. Apostle means “one sent.” These were the people sent to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Apostles’ Creed a statement of Christian belief that developed out of a creed used in Baptism in Rome. The Apostles’ Creed lists simple statements of belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The profession of faith used in Baptism today is based on the Apostles’ Creed.

apostolic one of the four Marks of the Church. The Church is apostolic because it continues to hand on the teaching of the apostles through their successors, the bishops, in union with the successor of Saint Peter, the pope.

Ark of the Covenant a portable box that held the tablets of the Ten Commandments. The Ark was the most important item in the shrine that was carried through the desert and then placed in the holiest part of the Temple in Jerusalem. Two angels are depicted on the cover of the Ark of the Covenant. The wings of the angels curve upward, representing the place where God came close to Israel and revealed his will.

Ascension the entry of Jesus into God's presence in heaven. In the Acts of the Apostles, it is written that Jesus, after his Resurrection, spent 40 days on earth, instructing his followers. He then returned to his Father in heaven.

Assumption Mary's being taken, body and soul, into heaven. Mary had a special relationship with her Son, Jesus, from the very beginning, when she conceived him. Because of this relationship, she enjoys a special participation in Jesus' Resurrection and has been taken into heaven where she now lives with him. We celebrate this event in the feast of the Assumption on August 15.

B

Baptism the first of the seven sacraments. Baptism frees us from Original Sin and is necessary for salvation. Baptism gives us new life in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. The celebration of Baptism consists of immersing in water or pouring water upon a person while declaring that the person is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Beatitudes the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. The Beatitudes are eight ways of living the Christian life. They are the fulfillment of the commandments given to Moses. These teachings present the way to true happiness.

benediction a prayer service in which we honor Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and receive his blessing

Bible the collection of books containing the truths of God's Revelation to us. These writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit and written by human beings. The Bible is made up of the 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

bishop a man who has received the fullness of Holy Orders. As a successor to the original apostles, he takes care of the Church and is a principal teacher in it.

blasphemy speaking or thinking words of hatred or defiance against God. It extends to language that disrespects the Church, the saints, or holy things. It is also blasphemy to use God's name as an excuse to enslave people, to torture them, or to put them to death. Using God's name to do these things can cause others to reject religion.

Blessed Sacrament the hosts, which are the Body of Christ, that have been consecrated at Mass. They are kept in the tabernacle to adore and to be taken to those who are sick.

blessing a prayer that calls for God's power and care upon some person, place, thing, or special activity

Body and Blood of Christ consecrated by the priest at Mass. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, all of the risen Lord Jesus Christ—body, blood, soul, and divinity—is present under the appearances of bread and wine.

Buddhism a philosophy based on the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama, who was known as the Buddha, which means "Enlightened One." The Buddha was born to a royal family in northern India about five and a half centuries before Jesus. At age 29 he became disillusioned with life and left his comfortable home to find an answer to the question of why humans suffer.

C

calumny (slander) a false statement about the reputation of someone that makes other people think badly of that person. Calumny, also called *slander*, is a sin against the Eighth Commandment.

canon law the official laws that guide all aspects of Church life. Canon law assists the Church in its task of revealing and communicating God's saving power to the world.

capital sins those sins that can lead us to more serious sin. They are pride, avarice (greed), envy, wrath (anger), gluttony, lust, and sloth.

cardinal virtues the four main virtues that direct right living: prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. Cardinal comes from the Latin word *cardo*, which means "hinge."

catechumen a person being formed in the Christian life through instruction and by the example of the parish community. Through conversion and maturity of faith, a catechumen is preparing to be welcomed into the Church at Easter through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.

catechumenate the process of becoming a Christian through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). In the early Church, the process took several years.

catholic one of the four Marks of the Church. The Church is catholic because Jesus is fully present in it, because it proclaims the fullness of faith, and because Jesus has given the Church to the whole world. The Church is universal.

Catholic Social Teaching the body of teaching on social justice issues, action on behalf of justice, and work to create a more just world. The Church makes judgments about economic and social matters that relate to the basic rights of individuals and communities. The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about how to build a just society.

charity a virtue given to us by God that helps us love God above all things and love our neighbor as ourselves

chastity the integration of our physical sexuality with our spiritual nature. Chastity helps us be completely human, able to give to others our whole life and love. All people, married or single, are called to practice chastity.

chrism a perfumed oil, consecrated by a bishop, that is used in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. Anointing with chrism signifies the call of the baptized to the threefold ministry of priest, prophet, and king.

Christ a title that means “anointed one.” It is from a Greek word that means the same thing as the Hebrew word *Messiah*, or “anointed.” It is the name given to Jesus as priest, prophet, and king.

Christian the name given to all those who have been anointed through the gift of the Holy Spirit in Baptism and have become followers of Jesus Christ

Christmas the feast of the birth of Jesus (December 25)

Church the People of God throughout the whole world, or diocese (the local Church), or the assembly of those called together to worship God. The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

clergy those men who are set apart as sacred ministers to serve the Church through Holy Orders

collegiality shared decision making between the pope and the bishops

commandment a standard, or rule, for living as God wants us to live. Jesus summarized all of the commandments into two: love God and love your neighbor.

Communion of Saints the unity of all, dead or living, who have been saved in Jesus Christ. The Communion of Saints is based on our one faith, and it is nourished by our participation in the Eucharist.

confession the act of telling our sins to a priest in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. The sacrament itself is sometimes referred to as “confession.”

Confirmation the sacrament that completes the grace we receive in Baptism. It seals, or confirms, this grace through the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit that we receive as part of Confirmation. This sacrament also makes us better able to participate in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.

conscience the inner voice that helps each of us judge the morality of our own actions. It guides us to follow God's law by doing good and avoiding evil.

consecration the making of a thing or a person to be special to God through a prayer or blessing. At Mass, the words of the priest are a consecration that transforms the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. People or objects set apart for God in a special way are also consecrated. For example, churches and altars are consecrated for use in liturgy, and bishops are consecrated as they receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

contrition the sorrow we feel when we know that we have sinned, followed by the decision not to sin again. Perfect contrition arises from a love that loves God above all else. Imperfect contrition arises from other motives. Contrition is the most important act of the penitent preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

Corporal Works of Mercy kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their everyday material needs. Corporal Works of Mercy include feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and the imprisoned, and burying the dead.

Council of Jerusalem the name of the meeting that happened about A.D. 50 that is described in chapter 15 of the Acts of the Apostles. The meeting was the result of a disagreement between Paul and his followers and the Jewish Christian followers of James, the leader of the Jerusalem Church. James felt that those who became Christians should also observe the rules of traditional Judaism and that the men should be circumcised. Paul said that there should be no such necessity. It was finally agreed that circumcision was not necessary for Gentiles who became Christians.

counsel one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Counsel helps us make correct choices in life through reflection, discernment, consulting, and the advising of others.

covenant a solemn agreement between people or between people and God. God made covenants with humanity through agreements with Noah, Abraham, and Moses. These covenants offered salvation. God's new and final covenant was established through Jesus' life, Death, and Resurrection. *Testament* is another word for covenant.

covet to want to take what belongs to someone else. The Ninth and Tenth Commandments tell us it is sinful to covet.

creation God's act of making everything that exists outside himself. Creation is everything that exists. God said that all creation is good.

Creator God, who made everything that is and whom we can come to know through everything he created

creed a brief summary of what people believe. The word *creed* comes from the Latin *credo*, which means "I believe." The Nicene Creed is the most important summary of Christian beliefs.

culture the activity of a group of people that includes their music, art, language, and celebrations. Culture is one of the ways people experience God in their lives.

D

deacon a man ordained through the Sacrament of Holy Orders to the ministry of service in the Church. Deacons help the bishop and priests by serving in the various charitable ministries of the Church. They also help by proclaiming the Gospel, preaching, and assisting at the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Deacons can celebrate Baptisms, witness marriages, and preside at funerals.

detraction the act of talking about the faults and sins of another person to someone who has no reason to hear this and cannot help the person. Detraction damages the reputation of another person without any intent to help that person.

devil a spirit created good by God who became evil through disobedience. The devil tempted Adam and Eve to sin and still tempts us today. But God's grace is stronger than the works of the devil.

dignity of the human person a basic principle at the center of Catholic Social Teaching. It is the starting point of a moral vision for society because human life is sacred and should be treated with great respect. The human person is the clearest reflection of God among us.

dignity of work a basic principle at the center of Catholic Social Teaching. Since work is done by people created in the image of God, it is not only a way to make a living but an important way we participate in God's creation. In work, people fulfill part of their potential given to them by God. All workers have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, and to safe working conditions.

diocese the members of the Church in a particular area, united in faith and the sacraments, and gathered under the leadership of a bishop

disciple a person who has accepted Jesus' message and tries to live as he did, sharing his mission, his suffering, and his joys

discrimination the act of mistreating other people because of how they look or act, or just because they are different

Divine Providence the guidance of God over all he has created. Divine Providence exercises care for all creation and guides it toward its final perfection.

Doctor of the Church a man or a woman recognized as a model teacher of the Christian faith

doctrine the revealed teaching of Christ, which the Magisterium of the Church has declared Catholics are obliged to believe. Growth in the understanding of doctrine continues in the Church through the prayer and study of the faithful and theologians and through the teaching of the Magisterium.

E

Easter the celebration of the bodily raising of Jesus Christ from the dead. Easter is the festival of our redemption and the central Christian feast, the one from which other feasts arise.

Eastern Catholic Church a group of churches that developed in the East (in countries such as Lebanon) that are in union with the Roman Catholic Church, but have their own liturgical, theological, and administrative traditions. They show the truly catholic nature of the Church, which takes root in many cultures.

ecumenical council a gathering of Catholic bishops from the entire world, meeting under the leadership of the pope or his delegates. Ecumenical councils discuss pastoral, legal, and doctrinal issues. There have been 21 ecumenical councils recognized by the Catholic Church. The first was the First Council of Nicaea in 325. The most recent was the Second Vatican Council, which took place between 1962 and 1965.

ecumenism the movement for unity among Christians. Christ gave the Church the gift of unity from the beginning, but over the centuries that unity has been broken. All Christians are called by their common Baptism to pray and work to maintain, reinforce, and perfect the unity Christ wants for the Church.

Emmanuel a Hebrew name from the Old Testament that means "God with us." In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is called Emmanuel.

encyclical a letter written by the pope and sent to the whole Church and sometimes to the whole world. It expresses Church teaching on specific and important issues.

epistle a letter written by Saint Paul or another leader to a group of Christians in the early Church. Of the 27 books of the New Testament, 21 are epistles. The second reading at Mass on Sundays and holy days is always from one of these books.

eternal life the never-ending life after death with God, granted to those who die as God's friends, with the grace of God alive in them

Eucharist the sacrament in which we give thanks to God for giving us Jesus Christ. The Body and Blood of Christ, which we receive at Mass, brings us into union with Jesus' saving Death and Resurrection.

Eucharistic Liturgy the public worship, held by the Church, in which bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ which we receive in Holy Communion. The Sunday celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy is at the heart of Church life.

euthanasia an act with the intent to cause the death of a handicapped, sick, or dying person. Euthanasia is considered murder and is gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, our Creator.

evangelist anyone engaged in spreading the gospel. Letters in the New Testament, along with the Acts of the Apostles, list evangelists along with apostles and prophets as ministers in the Church. The term is principally used to describe the writers of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

evangelization the sharing of the good news, by word or example, of the salvation we have received in Jesus Christ. Jesus commissioned his disciples to go forth into the world and tell the good news. Evangelization is the responsibility of every Christian. The New Evangelization calls believers to a deeper faith and invites those who have heard the Gospel but not been transformed by it to have a true encounter with Christ.

examination of conscience the act of prayerfully thinking about what we have said or done in light of what the Gospel asks of us. We also think about how our actions may have hurt our relationship with God or others. An examination of conscience is an important part of our preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

excommunication a severe penalty that is imposed by Church authorities for serious crimes against the Catholic religion. A person who is excommunicated is excluded from participating in the Eucharist and the other sacraments and from ministry in the Church.

Exile the period in the history of Israel between the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. and the return to Jerusalem in 537 B.C. During this time, many of the Jewish people were forced to live in Babylon, far from home.

Exodus God's liberation of the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt and his leading them to the Promised Land

F

faith a gift of God that helps us believe in him. We profess our faith in the Creed, celebrate it in the sacraments, live by it through our good conduct of loving God and our neighbor, and express it in prayer. It is a personal adherence of the whole person to God, who has revealed himself to us through words and actions throughout history.

fasting limiting the amount we eat for a period of time to express sorrow for sin and to make ourselves more aware of God's action in our lives. Adults 18 years old and older fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The practice is also encouraged as a private devotion at other times of penitence.

fear of the Lord one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This gift leads us to a sense of wonder and awe in the presence of God because we recognize his greatness.

fortitude the strength to choose to do the right thing, even when it is difficult. Fortitude is one of the four central human virtues, called the cardinal virtues, by which we guide our conduct through faith and the use of reason. It is also one of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

free will the ability to choose to do good because God has made us like him. Our free will is what makes us truly human. Our exercise of free will to do good increases our freedom. Using free will to choose sin makes us slaves to sin.

G

Gentiles the name given to foreign people by the Jews after the Exile. They were nonbelievers who worshiped false gods. They stand in contrast to the Jewish people, who received God's law.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit the permanent willingness, given to us by the Holy Spirit, that makes it possible for us to do what God asks of us. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

Gospel the good news of God's mercy and love that we experience by hearing the story of Jesus' life, Death, and Resurrection. The story is passed on in the teaching ministry of the Church as the source of all truth and right living. It is presented to us in four books in the New Testament—the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

grace the gift of God, given to us without our meriting it. Sanctifying grace fills us with God's life and makes it possible for us always to be his friends. Grace is the Holy Spirit alive in us, helping us live out our Christian vocation. Grace helps us live as God wants us to.

Great Commandment Jesus' commandment that we are to love God and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Jesus tells us that this commandment sums up everything taught in the Old Testament.

greed too great a desire for wealth, material possessions, or power. It is also called *avarice* and is one of the seven deadly, or capital, sins.

H

heaven union with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in life and love that never ends. Heaven is a state of complete happiness and the goal of the deepest wishes of the human heart.

Hebrews the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were enslaved in Egypt. God helped Moses lead these people out of slavery.

hell a life of total separation from God forever. In his infinite love for us, God can only desire our salvation. Hell is the result of the free choice of a person to reject God's love and forgiveness once and for all.

heresy a religious belief that opposes or denies any divinely revealed truth of the Catholic faith

holiness the fullness of Christian life and love. All people are called to holiness, which is made possible by cooperating with God's grace to do his will. As we do God's will, we are transformed more and more into the image of the Son, Jesus Christ.

holy one of the four Marks of the Church. It is the kind of life we live when we share in the life of God, who is all holiness. The Church is holy because it is united with Jesus Christ.

Holy Communion the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ during holy Mass. It brings us into union with Jesus Christ and his saving death and Resurrection.

holy days of obligation the principal feast days, other than Sundays, of the Church. On holy days of obligation, we celebrate the great things that God has done for us through Jesus and the saints. Catholics are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on these days, just as we are on Sundays.

Holy Family the family of Jesus as he grew up in Nazareth. It included Jesus; his mother, Mary; and his foster father, Joseph.

Holy of Holies the holiest part of the Temple in Jerusalem. The high priest entered this part of the Temple once a year to address God and to ask God's forgiveness for the sins of the people.

Holy Orders the sacrament through which the mission given by Jesus to his apostles continues in the Church. The sacrament has three degrees: deacon, priest, and bishop. Through the laying on of hands in the Sacrament of Holy Orders, men receive a permanent, sacramental mark that calls them to minister to the Church.

Holy Spirit the third Person of the Trinity, who is sent to us as our helper and, through Baptism and Confirmation, fills us with God's life. Together with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit brings the divine plan of salvation to completion.

homily the explanation by a bishop, a priest, or a deacon of the Word of God in the liturgy. The homily relates the Word of God to our life as Christians today.

hope the confidence that God will always be with us, make us happy now and forever, and help us live so that we will be with him forever

I

idolatry The worship of false gods, either a person or a thing, in place of worshiping God. Idolatry is worshiping a creature, which could be power, pleasure, or money, in place of the Creator. Idolatry is a sin against the First Commandment.

Immaculate Conception the Church teaching that Mary was free from Original Sin from the first moment of her life. She was preserved through the merits of her Son, Jesus, the Savior of the human race. It was declared a belief of the Catholic Church by Pope Pius IX in 1854 and is celebrated on December 8.

Incarnation the Son of God, Jesus, becoming human without the loss of his divinity in order to save us. The Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, is both true God and true man.

indulgence a lessening of the punishment due for sins that have been forgiven. Indulgences move us toward our final purification, when we will live with God forever.

inerrancy the teaching of the Church that the Bible teaches the truths of the faith necessary for our salvation without error. Because God inspired the human authors, he is the author of the Sacred Scriptures. This gives us the assurance that they teach his saving truth without error, even though certain historical and scientific information may not be accurate. With the help of the Holy Spirit and the Church, we interpret what God wants to reveal to us about our salvation through the sacred authors.

infallibility the gift the Holy Spirit has given to the Church that assures that the pope and the bishops in union with the pope can proclaim as true the doctrines that involve faith or morals. It is an extension of the fact that the whole body of believers cannot be in error when it comes to questions of faith and morals.

Infancy Narrative accounts of the infancy and childhood of Jesus that appear in the first two chapters of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels. Each Gospel contains a different series of events. They have in common that Jesus was born in Bethlehem through the virginal conception of Mary. The intention of these stories is to proclaim Jesus as Messiah and Savior.

inspired influenced by the Holy Spirit. The human authors of Scripture were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The creative inspiration of the Holy Spirit makes sure that the Scripture is taught according to the truth God wants us to know for our salvation.

intercession prayer or petition on behalf of another or others. Intercession for others in prayer knows no boundaries and includes even those who might wish to do us harm.

interpretation explanation of the words of Scripture, combining human knowledge and the teaching office of the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

interreligious dialogue the work to build a relationship of openness with the followers of non-Christian religions. The Church's bond with non-Christian religions comes from our common bond as children of God. The purpose of this dialogue is to increase understanding of one another, to work for the common good of humanity, and to establish peace.

Islam the third great religion, along with Judaism and Christianity, professing belief in one God. *Islam* means "submission" to that one God.

Israelites the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to "Israel," and Jacob's 12 sons and their children became the leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel. (See Hebrews.)

J
Jesus the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin Mary and who died and was raised from the dead for our salvation. He returned to God and will come again to judge the living and the dead. His name means "God saves."

Jews the name given to the Hebrew people, from the time of the Exile to the present. The name means "the people who live in the territory of Judah," the area of Palestine surrounding Jerusalem.

Joseph the foster father of Jesus, who was engaged to Mary when the angel announced that Mary would have a child through the power of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, Joseph was the son of Jacob who was sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers and then saved them from starvation when famine came.

Judaism the name of the religion of Jesus and all the people of Israel after they returned from exile in Babylon and built the second Temple

justice the virtue that guides us to give to God and others what is due them. Justice is one of the four central human virtues, called the cardinal virtues, by which we guide our Christian life.

justification being in a right relationship with God through moral conduct and observance of the Law. We have merit in God's sight and are able to do this because of the work of God's grace in us. Paul speaks of justification in a new way that is no longer dependent on observance of the Law. It comes through faith in Jesus and in his saving Death and Resurrection. To be justified or made righteous in Jesus is to be saved, vindicated, and put right with God through his grace.

K

Kingdom of God God's rule over us, announced in the Gospel and present in the Eucharist. The beginning of the kingdom here on earth is mysteriously present in the Church, and it will come in completeness at the end of time.

knowledge one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This gift helps us know what God asks of us and how we should respond.

L

laity those who have been made members of Christ in Baptism and who participate in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ in his mission to the whole world. The laity is distinct from the clergy, whose members are set apart as ministers to serve the Church.

Last Judgment the final judgment of all human beings that will occur when Christ returns in glory and all appear in their own bodies before him to give an account of all their deeds in life. In the presence of Christ, the truth of each person's relationship with God will be laid bare, as will the good each person has done or failed to do during his or her earthly life. At that time God's kingdom will come in its fullness.

Last Supper the last meal Jesus ate with his disciples on the night before he died. At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine, blessed them, and they became his Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity. Jesus' Death and Resurrection, his sacrifice that we celebrate in the Eucharist, were anticipated in this meal.

Law the first five books of the Old Testament. The Hebrew word for *law* is *Torah*. The ancient law is summarized in the Ten Commandments.

Lectionary the official book that contains all the Scripture readings used in the Liturgy of the Word

Lent the 40 days before Easter (not counting Sundays) during which we prepare, through prayer, fasting, and giving aid to the poor, to change our lives and to live the Gospel more completely

liturgical year the celebrations throughout the year of all the mysteries of Jesus' birth, life, Death, and Resurrection. The celebration of Easter is at the heart of the liturgical year. The other feasts celebrated throughout the year make up the basic rhythm of the Christian's life of prayer.

liturgy the public prayer of the Church that celebrates the wonderful things God has done for us in Jesus Christ, our high priest, and the way in which he continues the work of our salvation. The original meaning of *liturgy* was "a public work or service done for the people."

Liturgy of the Eucharist the second half of the Mass, in which the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, which we then receive in Holy Communion

Liturgy of the Hours the public prayer of the Church to praise God and to sanctify the day. It includes an office of readings before sunrise, morning prayer at dawn, evening prayer at sunset, and prayer before going to bed. The

chanting of psalms makes up the major portion of each of these services.

Liturgy of the Word the first half of the Mass, in which we listen to God's Word from the Bible and consider what it means for us today. The Liturgy of the Word can also be a public prayer and proclamation of God's Word that is not followed by the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Lord the name used for God to replace *Yahweh*, the name he revealed to Moses, which was considered too sacred to pronounce. It indicates the divinity of Israel's God. The New Testament uses the title *Lord* for both the Father and for Jesus, recognizing him as God himself. (*See* *Yahweh*.)

Lord's Day Sunday is the day Christians set aside for special worship of God. Each Sunday Mass commemorates the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Besides requiring us to offer God the worship owed him, the Third Commandment tells us Sunday is a day to relax the mind and body and to perform works of mercy.

M

Magisterium the living, teaching office of the Church. This office, through the bishops and with the pope, provides an authentic interpretation of the Word of God. It ensures faithfulness to the teaching of the apostles in matters of faith and morals.

Magnificat Mary's song of praise to God for the great things he has done for her and planned for us through Jesus

Marks of the Church the four most important aspects of the Church found in the Nicene Creed. According to the Nicene Creed, the Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

martyrs those who have given their lives for the faith. *Martyr* comes from the Greek word for "witness." A martyr is the supreme witness to the truth of the faith and to Christ to whom he or she is united. The seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles recounts the death of the first martyr, the deacon Stephen.

Mary the mother of Jesus. She is called blessed and "full of grace" because God chose her to be the mother of the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity.

Mass the most important sacramental celebration of the Church, established by Jesus at the Last Supper as a remembrance of his Death and Resurrection. At Mass, we listen to God's Word from the Bible and receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion.

Matrimony a solemn agreement between a woman and a man to be partners for life, both for their own good and for bringing up children. Marriage is a sacrament when the agreement is properly made between baptized Christians.

meditation a form of prayer using silence and listening that seeks through imagination, emotion, and desire to understand how to adhere and respond to what God is asking. By concentrating on a word or an image, we move beyond thoughts, empty the mind of contents that get in the way of our experience of God, and rest in simple awareness of God. It is one of the three major expressions of the life of prayer.

Mendicant Order a unique variety of religious order that developed in the 13th century. Unlike monks who remain inside a monastery, members of Mendicant Orders have ministries of preaching, teaching, and witnessing within cities. They are called *mendicant* from the Latin word for “begging,” which is their main means of supporting themselves. The two main Mendicant Orders are the Dominicans, founded by Saint Dominic de Guzman, and the Franciscans, founded by Saint Francis of Assisi.

Messiah a title that means “anointed one.” It is from a Hebrew word that means the same thing as the Greek word *Christ*. Messiah is the title that was given to Jesus as priest, prophet, and king.

miracles signs or acts of wonder that cannot be explained by natural causes but are works of God. In the Gospels, Jesus works miracles as a sign that the Kingdom of God is present in his ministry.

mission the work of Jesus Christ that is continued in the Church through the Holy Spirit. The mission of the Church is to proclaim salvation in Jesus’ life, Death, and Resurrection.

missionary one who proclaims the Gospel to others and leads them to know Christ. Missionaries are lay, ordained, and religious people engaged in mission.

monasticism a form of religious life in which men and women live out their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in a stable community life in a monastery. The goal of monasticism is to pursue, under the guidance of a rule, a life of public prayer, work, and meditation for the glory of God. Saint Benedict of Nursia, who died around A.D. 550, is considered the father of Western monasticism.

moral choice a choice to do what is right or not do what is wrong. We make moral choices because they are what we believe God wants and because we have the freedom to choose what is right and avoid what is wrong.

moral law a rule for living that has been established by God and people in authority who are concerned about the good of all. Moral laws are based on God’s direction to us to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. Some moral laws are “written” in the human heart and can be known through our own reasoning. Other moral laws have been revealed to us by God in the Old Testament and in the new law given by Jesus.

mortal sin a serious decision to turn away from God by doing something that we know is wrong. For a sin to be mortal it must be a very serious offense, and the person must know how serious the sin is and freely choose to do it anyway.

Mother of God the title for Mary proclaimed at the Council of Ephesus in 431. The council declared that Mary was not just the mother of Jesus, the man. She became the Mother of God by the conception of the Son of God in her womb. Because Jesus’ humanity is one with his divinity, Mary is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

Muslim a follower of the religion of Islam. *Muslim* means “one who submits to God.”

mystagogy the last stage of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, in which the newly initiated reflect on the deep meaning of the sacraments they have celebrated and on living the Christian life fully

mystery a religious truth that we can know only through God’s Revelation and that we cannot fully understand. Our faith is a mystery that we profess in the Creed and celebrate in the liturgy and sacraments.

Mystical Body of Christ the members of the Church formed into a spiritual body and bound together by the life communicated by Jesus Christ through the sacraments. Christ is the center and source of the life of this body. In it, we are all united. Each member of the body receives from Christ gifts fitting for him or her.

N

natural law the moral law that is “written” in the human heart. We can know natural law through our own reason because the Creator has placed the knowledge of it in our hearts. It can provide the solid foundation on which we can make rules to guide our choices in life. Natural law forms the basis of our fundamental rights and duties and is the foundation for the work of the Holy Spirit in guiding our moral choices.

New Testament the 27 books of the second part of the Bible, which tell of the teaching, ministry, and saving events of the life of Jesus. The four Gospels present Jesus’ life, Death, and Resurrection. The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of the message of salvation as it spread through the growth of the Church. Various letters instruct us in how to live as followers of Jesus Christ. The Book of Revelation offers encouragement to Christians living through persecution.

Nicene Creed the summary of Christian beliefs developed by the bishops at the first two councils of the Church, held in A.D. 325 and 381. It is the Creed shared by most Christians in the East and in the West.

O

obedience the act of willingly following what God asks us to do for our salvation. The Fourth Commandment requires children to obey their parents, and all people are required to obey civil authority when it acts for the good of all. To imitate the obedience of Jesus, members of religious communities make a special vow of obedience.

Old Testament the first 46 books of the Bible, which tell of God's Covenant with the people of Israel and his plan for the salvation of all people. The first five books are known as the Torah. The Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament, but God's covenant presented in the Old Testament has permanent value and has never been revoked.

one one of the four Marks of the Church. The Church is one because of its source in the one God and because of its founder, Jesus Christ. Jesus, through his Death on the Cross, united all to God in one body. Within the unity of the Church, there is great diversity because of the variety of the gifts given to its members.

Ordinary Time the part of the liturgical year outside of the seasons and feasts and the preparation for them. *Ordinary* means not common but counted time, as in ordinal numbers. It is devoted to growth in understanding the mystery of Christ in its fullness. The color of Ordinary Time is green to symbolize growth.

ordination the rite of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, by which a bishop gives to men, through the laying on of hands, the ability to minister to the Church as bishops, priests, and deacons

Original Sin the consequence of the disobedience of the first human beings. They disobeyed God and chose to follow their own will rather than God's will. As a result, human beings lost the original blessing God had intended and became subject to sin and death. In Baptism, we are restored to life with God through Jesus Christ, although we still experience the effects of Original Sin.

P

parable one of the simple stories that Jesus told to show us what the Kingdom of God is like. Parables present images drawn from everyday life. These images show us the radical choice we make when we respond to the invitation to enter the Kingdom of God.

parish a stable community of believers in Jesus Christ, who meet regularly in a specific area to worship God under the leadership of a pastor

particular judgment a judgment made by Christ received by every person at the moment of death that offers either entrance into heaven (after a period of purification, if needed) or immediate and eternal separation from God in hell. At the moment of death, each person is rewarded by Christ in accordance with his or her works and faith.

Paschal Mystery the work of salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ through his passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. The Paschal Mystery is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church, and we experience its saving effects in the sacraments. In every liturgy of the Church, God the Father is blessed and adored as the source of all blessings we have received through his Son in order to make us his children through the Holy Spirit.

Passover the Jewish festival that commemorates the delivery of the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt. In the Eucharist, we celebrate our passover from death to life through Jesus' Death and Resurrection.

penance the turning away from sin with a desire to change our life and more closely live the way God wants us to live. We express our penance externally by praying, fasting, and helping the poor. This is also the name of the action that the priest asks us to take or the prayers that he asks us to pray after he absolves us in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. (See Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.)

Penitential Act that part of the Mass before the Liturgy of the Word in which we ask God's forgiveness for our sins. The Penitential Act prepares us to celebrate the Eucharist.

Pentateuch Greek for "five books." It refers to the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Pentateuch tells of Creation, the beginning of God's special people, and the Covenant. In Hebrew it is called *Torah*, which means "law."

Pentecost the 50th day after Jesus was raised from the dead. On this day, the Holy Spirit was sent from heaven, and the Church was born. It is also the Jewish feast that celebrated the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai 50 days after the Exodus.

perjury lying while under oath or making a promise under oath without planning to keep it. Perjury is both a sin and a crime. Perjury is a violation of the Second and Eighth Commandments.

personal sin a sin we choose to commit, whether serious (mortal) or less serious (venial). Although the consequences of Original Sin leave us with a tendency to sin, God's grace, especially through the sacraments, helps us choose good over sin.

Pharisees a party or sect in Judaism that began more than 100 years before Jesus. They saw Judaism as a religion centered on the observance of the Law. The Gospels present a picture of mutual hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees. Pharisees were later found in the Christian community in Jerusalem. (Acts of the Apostles 15:5) Paul was proud to call himself a Pharisee.

piety one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. It calls us to be faithful in our relationships, both with God and with others. Piety helps us love God and behave responsibly and with generosity and affection toward others.

pope the Bishop of Rome, successor of Saint Peter, and leader of the Roman Catholic Church. Because he has the authority to act in the name of Christ, the pope is called the Vicar of Christ. The pope and all the bishops together make up the living, teaching office of the Church, the Magisterium.

poverty a vow taken by religious men and women to live a simple lifestyle and to give up control of material possessions

prayer the raising of our hearts and minds to God. We are able to speak to and listen to God in prayer because he teaches us how to pray.

prayer of petition a request to God asking him to fulfill a need. When we share in God's saving love, we understand that every need is one that we can ask God to help us with through petition.

precepts of the Church those positive requirements that the pastoral authority of the Church has determined are necessary to provide a minimum effort in prayer and the moral life. The precepts of the Church ensure that all Catholics move beyond the minimum by growing in love of God and love of neighbor.

pride a false image of ourselves that goes beyond what we deserve as God's creation. Pride puts us in competition with God. It is one of the seven capital sins.

priest a man who has accepted God's special call to serve the Church by guiding it and building it up through the ministry of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments

priesthood all the people of God who have been given a share of the one mission of Christ through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. The ministerial priesthood, which is made up of those men who have been ordained bishops and priests in Holy Orders, is essentially different from the priesthood of the faithful because its work is to build up and to guide the Church in the name of Christ.

prophet one called to speak for God and to call the people to be faithful to the Covenant. A major section of the Old Testament presents the messages and actions of the prophets.

Protestant Reformation a religious, political, and economic movement that swept Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries and separated Protestants from the Catholic Church. The Catholic Reformation, or Counter-Reformation, was an attempt to respond to the major concerns of the Reformers by a sincere reform within the Catholic Church.

prudence the virtue that directs us toward the good and helps us choose the correct means to achieve that good. When we act with prudence, we carefully and thoughtfully consider our actions. Prudence is one of the cardinal moral virtues that guide our conscience and influence us to live according to the law of Christ.

psalm a prayer in the form of a poem, written to be sung in public worship. Each psalm expresses an aspect of the depth of human prayer. Over several centuries, 150 psalms were assembled into the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament. Psalms were used in worship in the Temple in Jerusalem, and they have been used in the public worship of the Church since its beginning.

purgatory a state of final cleansing after death of all our human imperfections to prepare us to enter into the joy of God's presence in heaven

R

racism the opinion that race determines human traits and capacities and that a particular race has an inherent, or inborn, superiority. Discrimination based on a person's race is a violation of human dignity and a sin against justice.

rationalism an approach to philosophy developed by René Descartes. It dominated European thought in the 17th and 18th centuries. The main belief of rationalism was that human reason is the principal source of all knowledge. It stresses confidence in the orderly character of the world and in the mind's ability to make sense of this order. Rationalism recognizes as true only those religious beliefs that can be rationally explained.

real presence the way in which the risen Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist under the appearances of bread and wine. Jesus Christ's presence is called real because in the Eucharist, his Body and Blood, soul and divinity, are wholly and entirely present.

reconciliation the renewal of friendship after that friendship has been broken by some action or lack of action. In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, through God's mercy and forgiveness, we are reconciled with God, the Church, and others.

Redeemer Jesus Christ, whose life, sacrificial Death on the Cross, and Resurrection from the dead set us free from the slavery of sin and bring us redemption

redemption our being set free from the slavery of sin through the life, sacrificial Death on the Cross, and Resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ

religious life a state of life recognized by the Church. In the religious life, men and women freely respond to a call to follow Jesus by living the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in community with others.

Resurrection the bodily raising of Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day after his Death on the Cross. The Resurrection is the crowning truth of our faith.

Revelation God's communication of himself to us through the words and deeds he has used throughout history to show us the mystery of his plan for our salvation. This Revelation reaches its completion in his sending of his Son, Jesus Christ.

rite one of the many forms followed in celebrating liturgy in the Church. A rite may differ according to the culture or country where it is celebrated. A *rite* is the special form for celebrating each sacrament.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) a series of rituals, accompanied by religious instruction, through which a person is formed in the Christian life through instruction and by the example of the parish community. Through conversion and maturity of faith, a catechumen is preparing to be welcomed into the Church at Easter through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Baptized Christians who are preparing to be received into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church may also take part in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Roman Missal the book containing the prayers used for the celebration of the Eucharist. It is placed on the altar for the celebrant to use during Mass.

Rosary a prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. When we pray the Rosary, we meditate on the mysteries of Jesus Christ's life while praying the Hail Mary on 5 sets of 10 beads and the Lord's Prayer on the beads in between. In the Latin Church, praying the Rosary became a way for ordinary people to reflect on the mysteries of Christ's life.

S

Sabbath the seventh day, when God rested after finishing the work of creation. The Third Commandment requires us to keep the Sabbath holy. For Christians, Sunday became the Sabbath because it was the day Jesus rose from the dead and the new creation in Jesus Christ began.

sacrament one of seven official rites through which God's life enters our lives in the liturgy through the work of the Holy Spirit. Christ's work in the liturgy is sacramental because his mystery is made present there by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave us three sacraments that bring us into the Church: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. He gave us two sacraments that bring us healing: Penance and Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. He also gave us two sacraments that help members serve the community: Matrimony and Holy Orders. (*See also* sacramental.)

Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation the sacrament in which we celebrate God's forgiveness of sin and our reconciliation with God and the Church. Penance and Reconciliation includes sorrow for the sins we have committed, confession of sins, absolution by the priest, and doing the penance that shows our willingness to amend our ways.

sacramental an object, a prayer, or a blessing given by the Church to help us grow in our spiritual life

Sacraments at the Service of Communion the Sacraments of Holy Orders and Matrimony. These two sacraments contribute to the personal salvation of individuals by giving them a way to serve others.

Sacraments of Healing the Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, by which the Church continues the healing ministry of Jesus for soul and body

Sacraments of Initiation the sacraments that are the foundation of our Christian life. We are born anew in Baptism, strengthened by Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments, we receive an increasing measure of divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity.

sacrifice a ritual offering of animals or produce made to God by the priest in the Temple in Jerusalem. Sacrifice was a sign of the people's adoration of God, giving thanks to God, or asking for his forgiveness. Sacrifice also showed union with God. The great high priest, Christ, accomplished our redemption through the perfect sacrifice of his Death on the Cross.

Sacrifice of the Mass the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross, which is remembered and mysteriously made present in the Eucharist. It is offered in reparation for the sins of the living and of the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal blessings from God.

sacrilege deliberate damage or harm to a sacred person, place, or thing. A sacrilege can be a mortal or venial sin, depending on the seriousness of the evil done.

saint a holy person who has died united with God. The Church has said that this person is now with God forever in heaven.

salvation the gift, which God alone can give, of forgiveness of sin and the restoration of friendship with him

salvation history the story of God's loving relationship with his people, which tells how God carries out his plan to save all people

sanctify to make holy, to separate from sin, to set aside for sacred use, to consecrate

sanctifying grace the gift of God, given to us without our earning it, that introduces us to the intimacy of the Trinity, unites us with its life, and heals our human nature that has been wounded by sin. Sanctifying grace helps us respond to our vocation as God's adopted children, and it continues the work of making us holy that began at our Baptism.

Satan the enemy of anyone attempting to follow God's will. Satan tempts Jesus in the Gospels and opposes his ministry. In Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thought, Satan is associated with those angels who refused to bow down before human beings and serve them as God commanded. They were thrown out of heaven as a punishment. Satan and the other demons tempt human beings to join them in their revolt against God.

Savior Jesus, the Son of God, who became human to forgive our sins and to restore our friendship with God. *Jesus* means "God saves."

scandal leading another person to sin by bad example

schism a willful split or separation in the Church, stemming from a refusal to obey lawful authority

Scripture the holy writings of Jews and Christians collected in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible

Second Vatican Council the 21st and most recent ecumenical council of the Catholic Church. It met from October 11, 1962 to December 8, 1965. Its purpose, according to Pope Saint John XXIII, was to renew the Church and to help it promote peace and unity among Christians and all humanity.

Sermon on the Mount the words of Jesus, written in chapters 5 through 7 of the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus reveals how he has fulfilled God's law given to Moses. The Sermon on the Mount begins with the eight Beatitudes and includes the Lord's Prayer.

sexism a prejudice or discrimination based on sex, especially discrimination against women. Sexism leads to behaviors and attitudes that foster a view of social roles based only on sex.

sin a deliberate thought, word, deed, or failure to act that offends God and hurts our relationships with other people. Some sin is mortal and needs to be confessed in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Other sin is venial, or less serious.

social justice the fair and equal treatment of every member of society. It is required by the dignity and freedom of every person. The Catholic Church has developed a body of social principles and moral teachings described in papal and other official documents issued since the late 19th century. This teaching deals with the economic, political, and social order of the world. It is rooted in the Bible as well as in the traditional theological teachings of the Church.

social sin social situations and institutions that are against the will of God. Because of the personal sins of individuals, entire societies can develop structures that are sinful in and of themselves. Social sins include racism, sexism, structures that deny people access to adequate health care, and the destruction of the environment for the benefit of a few.

Son of God the title revealed by Jesus that indicates his unique relationship to God the Father. The revelation of Jesus' divine sonship is the main dramatic development of the story of Jesus of Nazareth as it unfolds in the Gospels.

soul the part of us that makes us human and an image of God. Body and soul together form one unique human nature. The soul is responsible for our consciousness and for our freedom. The soul does not die and is reunited with the body in the final resurrection.

Spiritual Works of Mercy the kind acts through which we help our neighbors meet the needs that are more than material. The Spiritual Works of Mercy include counseling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing sinners, comforting the afflicted, forgiving offenses, bearing wrongs patiently, and praying for the living and the dead.

spirituality our growing, loving relationship with God. Spirituality is our way of expressing our experience of God in both the way we pray and the way we love our neighbor. There are many different schools of spirituality. Some examples of these schools are the monastic, Franciscan, Jesuit, and lay. These are guides for the spiritual life and have enriched the traditions of prayer, worship, and living in Christianity.

suicide the act of deliberately and intentionally taking one's own life. Because we are stewards, not owners, of the life God has given us, suicide is a sin against the Fifth Commandment. But serious psychological disturbances, fears, and suffering can lessen the responsibility of the person committing suicide. By ways known to him alone, God can offer salvation to people who have taken their own life. The Church encourages us to pray for such people.

Summa Theologiae the major work of Saint Thomas Aquinas that organized and clarified thinking on many religious topics in the 13th century. In it Thomas addressed topics such as proof for the existence of God, the nature of the human soul, making moral decisions, the Incarnation, and transubstantiation.

synagogue the Jewish place of assembly for prayer, instruction, and study of the Law. After the destruction of the Temple in 587 B.C., synagogues were organized as places to maintain Jewish faith and worship. Jesus attended the synagogue regularly to pray and to teach. Paul went to the synagogue first in every city he visited. The synagogue played an important role in the development of Christian worship and in the structure of Christian communities.

Synoptic from the Greek word meaning to “see together,” it describes the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These are called the Synoptic Gospels because although they are different from one another, there are similarities that can be seen by looking at them together. Most Scripture scholars agree that Mark was the first Gospel written and that Matthew and Luke used Mark as the pattern for their Gospels.

T

tabernacle the container in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept so that Holy Communion can be taken to the sick and the dying. *Tabernacle* is also the name of the tent sanctuary in which the Israelites kept the Ark of the Covenant from the time of the Exodus to the construction of Solomon's Temple.

temperance the cardinal virtue that helps us control our attraction to pleasure so that our natural desires are kept within proper limits. This moral virtue helps us choose to use created goods in moderation.

Temple the house of worship of God, first built by Solomon. The Temple provided a place for the priests to offer sacrifice, to adore and give thanks to God, and to ask for forgiveness. It was destroyed and rebuilt. The second Temple was also destroyed, this time by the Romans in A.D. 70, and was never rebuilt. Part of the outer wall of the Temple mount remains to this day in Jerusalem.

temptation an attraction, from outside us or inside us, that can lead us to disobey God's commands. Everyone is tempted, but the Holy Spirit helps us resist temptation and choose to do good.

Ten Commandments the 10 rules given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai that sum up God's law and show us what is required to love God and our neighbor. By following the Ten Commandments, the Hebrews accepted their Covenant with God.

Theological Virtues those virtues given us by God and not by human effort. They are faith, hope, and charity.

Torah the Hebrew word for “instruction” or “law.” It is also the name of the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Tradition the beliefs and practices of the Church that are passed down from one generation to the next under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. What Christ entrusted to the apostles was handed on to others both orally and in writing. Tradition and Scripture together make up the single deposit of the Word of God, which remains present and active in the Church.

transubstantiation the unique transformation of the bread and wine in the Eucharist into the Body and Blood of the risen Jesus Christ, while retaining its physical appearance as bread and wine

Trinity the mystery of the existence of God in three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each Person is God, whole and entire. Each is distinct only in the relationship of each to the others.

U

understanding one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This gift helps us make the right choices in life and in our relationships with God and others.

V

venial sin a choice we make that weakens our relationship with God or with other people. Venial sin wounds and lessens the divine life in us. If we make no effort to do better, venial sin can lead to more serious sin. Through our participation in the Eucharist, venial sin is forgiven when we are repentant, strengthening our relationship with God and with others.

viaticum the Eucharist that a dying person receives. It is spiritual food for the last journey we make as Christians, the journey through death to eternal life.

virtue an attitude or way of acting that enables us do good

vocation the call each of us has in life to be the person God wants each to be and the way we each serve the Church and the Kingdom of God. Each of us can live out his or her vocation as a layperson, as a member of a religious community, or as a member of the clergy.

vow a deliberate and free promise made to God by people who want especially to dedicate their lives to God. The vows give witness now to the kingdom that is to come.

W

wisdom one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Wisdom helps us understand the purpose and plan of God and live in a way that helps bring about this plan. It begins in wonder and awe at God's greatness.

witness the passing on to others, by our words and by our actions, the faith that we have been given. Every Christian has the duty to give witness to the good news about Jesus Christ that he or she has come to know.

worship the adoration and honor given to God in public prayer

Y

Yahweh the name of God in Hebrew, which God told Moses from the burning bush. *Yahweh* means "I am who am" or "I cause to be all that is."