

CATHOLIC GLOSSARY

A

Absolution: Act by which a priest, acting as the agent of Christ, grants forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament of Penance.

Acolytes: One who assists in the celebration (i.e., carrying candles, holding the Pope's staff miter, etc.).

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Prayer to Christ, who is recognized as being truly present in the Sacrament, which is displayed for the people.

Adoration: Refers to the external acts of reverent admiration or honor given to a thing or person. In the Catholic faith, adoration is reserved to God alone and to Jesus present in the consecrated Eucharist.

Alb: The white garment covering one's street dress.

Alleluia Acclamation: This acclamation of praise to God follows the second reading and serves to prepare the assembly for the Gospel.

Altar: A table on which the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. It is the center of importance in the place where the Mass is celebrated. Also called: The Table of the Lord.

Ambo: The place where the Scriptures are proclaimed. Aoid: Pulpit

Amen: 1) Hebrew word meaning truly, it is true. As concluding word of prayers it expressed assent to and acceptance of God's will; 2) called the great Amen, it is the acclamation by the people expressing their agreement with all that has been said and done in the Eucharistic prayer.

Annul: Properly called the degree of nullity, this is the declaration by authorities that a marriage is null and void, because it was never valid.

Annulment: Technically called a decree of nullity, an annulment of a marriage is a decision by a church court, confirmed by an appellate court, that a putative marriage was not valid from the start because something was lacking: full knowledge and consent by both parties, freedom from force or grave fear, or some other factor needed for a valid marriage. "Putative" (meaning apparent or seeming) is a key word in the entire process: It refers to a marriage in which at least one party acted in good faith, believing it was valid at the time it took place. Children from a putative marriage are considered legitimate even if the marriage is later ruled to be invalid. This has been a source of one of the major popular misunderstandings of annulments; namely, that an annulment somehow makes the children of that union illegitimate. Church law explicitly rejects this interpretation, saying that children of a putative marriage are legitimate even if the marriage is later judged to be invalid.

Apostle - Apostolic - Disciple: Literally "one sent." Normally this refers to the 12 men chosen by Christ, to be the bearers of his teachings to the world. Term apostolic generally refers back to the 12 apostles. In the Church it characterizes certain documents, appointments or structures initiated by the pope or the Holy See. Disciple is one who follows the teachings of Jesus.

Apostolate: The ministry or work of an apostle. In Catholic usage, a term covering all kinds and areas of work and endeavor for the service of God and the Church and the good of people.

Apostolic Nunciature: The offices of the Holy Father's representative to a country or to the Church in that country.

Apostolic Pro-Nuncio - In the United States, the papal representative is sent by the Pope to both the local church and to the government. His title is Apostolic Pro-Nuncio. Although he holds the title of ambassador, in U.S. law he is not accorded the special privilege of being the dean of the diplomatic corps. In countries where he is dean of the diplomatic corps, his title is Apostolic Nuncio.

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Apostolic nuncio: Church term for the Vatican ambassador to another country and the papal liaison with the church in that country. An apostolic nuncio, also called a papal nuncio, is always an archbishop, and it is his religious title that is capitalized as a title before his name, e.g., Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, not Apostolic Nuncio Pietro Sambi. See religious titles before names. In a country with which the Vatican does not have diplomatic relations, the official Vatican liaison with the church there is called an apostolic delegate. Papal representatives in the United States were apostolic delegates until 1984, when full diplomatic relations were established. There was a brief period, from 1984 to 1991, when the Vatican ambassador to the United States was called the pro-nuncio because he was not the dean of the world's ambassadors to the United States (a position that under a Vienna convention is automatically given to the Vatican ambassador in many countries but in other countries is given to the senior foreign ambassador, wherever he is from). In 1991 the Vatican quit using pro-nuncio as the title for its ambassadors who were not deans of the ambassadorial corps and began calling all papal representatives with full rank of ambassador nuncio.

Archbishop: The title given automatically to bishops who govern archdioceses. It is also given to certain other high-ranking church officials, notably Vatican ambassadors (apostolic nuncios: see that entry), the secretaries of Vatican congregations and the presidents of pontifical councils. Adj. archepiscopal.

Archdiocese: The chief diocese of an ecclesiastical province (see province and metropolitan). It is governed by an archbishop. Adj. archdiocesan. See diocese and archeparchy.

Archeparchy: The chief diocese of an Eastern Catholic ecclesiastical province. In most contexts it can be called an archdiocese, but if some legal distinction between Eastern and Latin Catholic jurisdictions is important, it may be necessary to introduce the term. The head of an archeparchy is called an archeparch, but in most contexts he can be called an archbishop. There are only two Catholic archeparchies in the United States: the Byzantine Catholic Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and the Ukrainian Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia. See eparchy.

Aspergillum: A vessel or device used for sprinkling holy water. The ordinary type is a metallic rod with a bulbous tip which absorbs the water and discharges it at the motion of the user's hand.

Assembly: Those present to celebrate the liturgy. Other terms: to use: "The Community," "The Church (as people not building)," "The Worshipers," "The Faithful," or "the congregation." Avoid: Spectators, Crowd Audience--all passive words which do not reflect what those present do.

Auxiliary bishop: A bishop assigned to a Catholic diocese or archdiocese to assist its residential bishop. Whether in a diocese or archdiocese, his title is bishop.

B

Basilica: A church to which special privileges are attached. It is a title of honor given to various kinds of Churches.

Beatification: Final step toward canonization of a saint

Bishop: The highest order of ordained ministry in Catholic teaching. Most bishops are diocesan bishops, the chief priests in their respective dioceses. But some (auxiliary bishops) are the top assistants to their diocesan bishops, and some priests are made bishops because of special posts they hold in the church, such as certain Vatican jobs. Diocesan bishops and their auxiliaries are responsible for the pastoral care of their dioceses. In some cases diocesan bishops are assigned a coadjutor bishop, who is like an auxiliary except that he automatically becomes the diocesan bishop when his predecessor resigns or dies. See auxiliary bishop and coadjutor. In addition to their diocesan responsibilities, all bishops have a responsibility to act in council with other bishops to guide the church. Adj. episcopal.

Bishops' conference: A national (or in a very few cases regional) body of bishops that meets periodically to collaborate on matters of common concern in their country or region, such as moral, doctrinal, pastoral and liturgical questions; relations with other religious groups; and public policy issues. It is also called an episcopal conference. The U.S. conference is the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, or USCCB. See that entry.

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Bishops: The chief priest of a diocese. Bishops are responsible for the pastoral care of their dioceses. In addition, bishops have a responsibility to act in council with other bishops to guide the Church.

Blessed Sacrament: The Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ, whether at the Mass or reserved in a special place in the Church (put this after Liturgy of the Eucharist)

Book of Gospels: The book which contains the Gospel texts, from which the priests or deacon proclaims the Gospel of the day.

Bread and Wine: The elements used in the celebration of Eucharist (unleavened bread and natural pure wine). NOTE: After the Eucharistic Prayer the bread and wine is referred to as: the consecrated bread and wine or the body and blood of Christ.

Breaking of the Bread: The celebrant recreates gestures of Christ at the Last Supper when He broke the bread to give to His disciples. The action signifies that in communion we who are many are made one in the one Bread of Life which is Christ

Brother: A man who has taken vows in a religious order but is not ordained or studying for the priesthood. Sometimes he is called a lay brother to distinguish him from clerical members of religious orders. See lay.

C

Cana Conference: A Catholic family movement, originally designed to aid married couples and families in their spiritual and interpersonal relationships. The program is now divided into Pre-Cana, for couples engaged to be married, and Cana Conferences, programs for married people.

Canon law: A code of ecclesiastical laws governing the Catholic Church. In the Latin or Western Church, the governing code is the 1983 Code of Canon Law, a revision of the 1917 Code of Canon Law. A separate but parallel Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, issued in 1990, governs the Eastern Catholic churches. That document was the first comprehensive code of church law governing all Eastern Catholic churches.

Canon: Greek for rule, norm, standard or measure, it is used in several ways in church language. (1) The canon of Sacred Scripture is the list of books recognized by the church as inspired by the Holy Spirit. (2) Before the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the single eucharistic prayer used universally in the Latin Mass was called the Roman Canon. Now that there are four eucharistic prayers in general use, they are usually referred to as Eucharistic Prayer I, II, III or IV, but they may also be called canons. The first of these is still called the Roman Canon because it is nearly identical to the original Roman Canon. (3) Canon is another name for a law in the Code of Canon Law. Adj. canonical. See also canon law.

Canonization: A declaration by the pope that a person who died a martyr or practiced Christian virtue to a heroic degree is in heaven and is worthy of honor and imitation by the faithful. Verification of miracles is required for canonization (except for martyrs).

Cantor: One who sings during the liturgy (i.e., the responsorial psalm).

Cardinal: Highest-ranking Catholic clergy below the pope. By church law cardinals are regarded as the pope's closest advisors, and when a pope dies those who are not yet 80 years old meet in a conclave in Rome to elect a new pope. Most cardinals are archbishops; canon law since 1983 says they must at least be bishops, but exceptions have been made in several cases where a noted priest-theologian over the age of 80 has been named a cardinal to honor his theological contributions to the church. See College of Cardinals.

Celibacy: Refers to a decision to live chastely in the unmarried state. At ordination, a diocesan priest or unmarried deacon in the Latin rite Catholic Church makes a promise of celibacy. The promise should not be called a "vow." Adj. celibate. See chastity.

Chancellor: The chief archivist of a diocese's official records. Also a notary and secretary of the diocesan curia, or central

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administration; he or she may have a variety of other duties as well. It is the highest diocesan position open to women.

Chastity: In its general sense chastity does not mean abstinence from sexual activity as such, but rather moral sexual conduct. Marital chastity means faithfulness to one's spouse and moral conduct in marital relations. The religious vow of chastity taken by brothers, sisters and priests in religious orders is a religious promise to God to live the virtue of chastity by not marrying and by abstaining from sexual activity. When diocesan priests and unmarried deacons make a promise of celibacy, they are not taking religious vows; their commitment to live chastely in an unmarried state should be described as a promise, not a vow. See celibacy.

Church: Apart from its obvious use to refer to a building where Christians gather to worship God, church has a rich theological and doctrinal meaning for Catholics that also sets limits on how it is applied. The local or particular church means the (arch)diocese, the community of faithful gathered around the altar under its bishop. Each particular church has all the necessary means of salvation according to Catholic teaching—that is, fidelity to apostolic teaching, assured by ordained ministry in apostolic succession; the seven sacraments accepted throughout Christianity before the Reformation; and all the communal means to holiness that God grants through his graces. The universal church—the meaning of catholic church, lowercased—is the communion of all those particular churches spread throughout the world who are in union with the bishop of Rome and who share in fidelity to apostolic teaching and discipleship to Christ. Catholics also recognize the mainline Orthodox churches as churches; and until the recent ordination of women in several Old Catholic churches of the Union of Utrecht, the Catholic Church had recognized Union of Utrecht churches as churches. Christian churches which share partially in the historic apostolic communities of Christian discipleship, but which in the Catholic Church's perspective do not have the fullness of apostolic succession in their bishops or ordained ministry, are called ecclesial communions, rather than churches. This position, strongly affirmed by the world's Catholic bishops at the Second Vatican Council and reaffirmed in numerous church documents since then, remains a topic of considerable disagreement in ecumenical dialogues. In Catholic teaching the church embraces all its members—not only those still living on earth, but also those in heaven or purgatory. The ancient teaching that outside the church there is no salvation (*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*) has been officially nuanced in church teaching to include many who do not explicitly embrace the church and all its teachings, or even many who join no Christian religion. The teaching affirms the central role and responsibility of the church to reach out to all people with the Gospel message while acknowledging that those who have not been apprised or convinced of that message may still be saved if they live upright lives in accord with their own convictions and understanding of God.

Clergy: In Catholic usage, a collective term referring to all those ordained—bishops, priests and deacons—who administer the rites of the church. Adj. clerical.

Coadjutor: A bishop appointed to a Catholic diocese or archdiocese to assist the diocesan bishop. Unlike an auxiliary bishop—see auxiliary bishop—he has the right of succession, meaning that he automatically becomes the new bishop when the diocesan bishop retires or dies. By canon law, he is also vicar general of the diocese. If the diocese is an archdiocese, he is called coadjutor archbishop instead of coadjutor bishop. In recent years a growing number of U.S. bishops in larger dioceses or archdioceses have requested and received a coadjutor in the final year or two before their retirement, in order to familiarize their successor with the workings of the (arch)diocese before he has to take over the reins.

College of Cardinals: A group of men chosen by the pope as his chief advisers. Most are heads of major dioceses around the world or of the major departments of the Vatican, or are retired from such posts. In the interregnum following the death of the pope, the College of Cardinals administers the church, and those under the age of 80 meet in a conclave to elect a new pope.

Collegiality: The shared responsibility and authority that the whole college of bishops, headed by the pope, has for the teaching, sanctification and government of the church.

Conclave: The gathering of the world's Catholic cardinals, after the death of a pope, to elect a new pope. Only cardinals under the age of 80 are allowed into a conclave under current church rules.

Congregation: (1) A term used for some Vatican departments that are responsible for important areas of church life, such as worship and sacraments, the clergy, and saints' causes. (2) The proper legal term for some institutes of men or women religious, all of which are commonly called religious orders. The difference between a religious congregation and a religious order is technical and rarely of significance in news reporting. (3) Any gathering of Christians for worship.

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Consistory: A meeting of cardinals in Rome. It can be an ordinary consistory, attended only by cardinals in Rome at the time of the meeting, or an extraordinary consistory, to which all cardinals around the world are summoned.

Curia: The personnel and offices through which (1) the pope administers the affairs of the universal church (the Roman Curia), or (2) a bishop administers the affairs of a diocese (the diocesan curia). The principal officials of a diocesan curia are the vicar general, the chancellor, officials of the diocesan tribunal or court, examiners, consultants, auditors and notaries. When referring to the Roman Curia, Roman Curia and Curia used alone are usually capitalized (like Senate when referring to the U.S. Senate), but curia is not capitalized in reference to a diocesan curia unless it is part of a full proper name.

D

Deacon, diaconate: In the Catholic Church, the diaconate is the first of three ranks in ordained ministry. Deacons preparing for the priesthood are transitional deacons. Those not planning to be ordained priests are called permanent deacons. Married men may be ordained permanent deacons, but only unmarried men committed to lifelong celibacy can be ordained deacons if they are planning to become priests. Adj. diaconal.

Defrocking: See laicization.

Delict: The church term for a crime. Church crimes are spelled out in the Code of Canon Law for the Latin rite and in the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches for Eastern Catholic churches.

Diaconate: See deacon, diaconate.

Dicastery: A church term for one of the major departments of the Roman Curia—the Secretariat of State, Vatican congregations, tribunals, pontifical councils and a few other departments. The term does not appear with this definition in most English dictionaries, which is part of the reason it is listed here. It ordinarily does not come into play in news coverage of the Vatican, but it may do so in certain limited contexts. Generally, it is more appropriate to refer to a Vatican dicastery by its more specific proper name: congregation, pontifical council, etc.

Diocesan bishop: A bishop who heads a diocese. He may be assisted by auxiliary bishops or a coadjutor bishop (see auxiliary bishop and coadjutor). Also sometimes referred to as a residential bishop.

Diocesan curia: The personnel and offices assisting the bishop in directing the pastoral activity, administration and exercise of judicial power of a diocese.

Diocese: A particular church; the ordinary territorial division of the church headed by a bishop. The chief diocese of a group of dioceses is called an archdiocese; see that entry. Adj. diocesan.

E

Eastern Catholic churches: The Catholic churches with origins in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa that have their own distinctive liturgical, legal and organizational systems and are identified by the national or ethnic character of their region of origin. Each is considered fully equal to the Latin tradition within the church. In the United States there are 15 Eastern church dioceses and two Eastern church archdioceses. In addition, there is one non-territorial Eastern church apostolate in the United States whose bishop is a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. See archeparchy and eparchy.

Ecclesial: Having to do with the church in general or the life of the church

Ecclesiastical: Refers to official structures or legal and organizational aspects of the church.

Ecumenism /Interdenominational/ Ecumenical Movement: A movement for spiritual understanding and unity among Christians and their churches. The term is also extended to apply to efforts toward greater understanding and cooperation

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between Christians and members of other faiths.

Encyclical: A pastoral letter addressed by the Pope to the whole Church.

Entrance procession: Priest, deacon, altar servers, lectors, enter the church or designated place for celebration of the liturgy.

Entrance song/music: The song/music which takes place during the entrance procession.

Eparchy: Eastern Catholic equivalent to a diocese in the Latin Church. It is under the pastoral care of an eparch (bishop). Unless some legal distinction between a Latin rite diocese and an Eastern Church eparchy is relevant to a news report, in most cases it is appropriate to refer to an eparchy as a diocese and to its leader as a bishop. Adj. eparchial. See archeparchy.

Episcopal vicar: A priest or auxiliary bishop who assists the diocesan bishop in a specific part of the diocese, over certain groups in the diocese, or over certain areas of church affairs. Some large dioceses, for example, are divided geographically into several vicariates or regions, with an episcopal vicar for each; some dioceses have episcopal vicars for clergy or religious or for Catholics of certain racial or ethnic groups. See vicar general.

Episcopal: Refers to a bishop or groups of bishops as a form of church government, in which bishops have authority.

Eschatology: Doctrine concerning the last things: death, judgment, heaven and hell, and the final state of perfection of the people and the kingdom of God at the end of the world.

Eucharistic Prayer: The prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. It is the center and high point for the entire celebration.

Evangelical: Refers to Christians who emphasize the need for a definite commitment to faith in Christ and a duty by believers to persuade others to accept Christ.

Evangelist: A preacher or revivalist who seeks conversions by preaching to groups.

Exarch/Exarchy: A church jurisdiction, similar to a diocese, established for Eastern-rite Catholics living outside their native land. The head of an exarch, usually a bishop, is an exarch.

Excommunication: A penalty of censure by which a baptized person is excluded from the communion of the faithful for committing and remaining obstinate in certain serious offenses specified in canon law. Even though excommunicated, a person still is responsible for fulfillment of the normal obligations of a Catholic.

F

Faculty: Church authorization, given by the law itself or by a church superior, to perform certain official church acts. In some rare cases a member of the clergy will be denied certain faculties, such as hearing confessions or preaching during the liturgy, because of public positions taken that are not in accord with church teaching.

Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary: Marian feast celebrated on October 7.

Final Doxology: A final prayer of praise of God.

Finance council: A diocesan body mandated by the Code of Canon Law that is charged with preparing the annual diocesan budget and annually reviewing diocesan expenses and revenues. The finance council must be consulted for financial transactions of a given dollar level undertaken by the bishop and must give its consent to transactions at another dollar threshold. The threshold amounts are established periodically by an agreement with the Holy See and are currently subject to annual inflation changes determined by the cost of living index.

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Focolare: A lay movement started in Trent, Italy by Chiara Lubich in 1943, now claiming more than a million followers. Its aim is world unity through the living witness of Christian love and holiness in the family and small communities.

Free Will: The faculty or capability of making a reasonable choice among several alternatives.

G

General Intercessions: A prayer of intercession for all of humankind; for the Church, civil authorities, those in various needs, for all peoples, and for the salvation of the world. The celebrant invites all to pray, another minister announces the petitions and the community responds.

Gloria: Ancient hymn of praise in which the Church prays to the Father. It is used on all Sundays (outside of Advent and Lent), and at solemn celebrations.

God: The infinitely perfect Supreme Being, uncaused and absolutely self-sufficient, eternal, the Creator and final end of all things. The one God subsists in three equal Persons, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Grace: A free gift of God to human beings, grace is a created sharing in the life of God. It is given through the merits of Christ and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It is necessary for salvation.

Greeting: The celebrant greets all present at the liturgy, expressing the presence of the Lord to the assembled community.

H

Hierarchy: In Catholic usage, the term is used most commonly to refer collectively to the bishops of the world or a particular region. In technical uses, however, it may refer to all those who are ordained: deacons and priests as well as bishops. In the canon law of the Eastern Catholic churches, hierarchs is a term regularly used to describe the bishops of a church when describing their collective authority or function.

Holidays - Holy Days of Obligation: Feasts in Latin-rite churches on which Catholics are required to assist at Mass. In the United States these are: Christmas, (The Nativity of Jesus); January 1, (Mary Mother of God); Ascension of the Lord forty days after Easter; August 15, (Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary); November 1, All Saints' Day; and December 8, Immaculate Conception (of the Blessed Virgin Mary). Outside the United States, variations of Holy Days may occur.

Holy Communion: After saying a preparatory prayer, the celebrant (or other designated ministers) gives communion (the consecrated bread and wine) to himself and the other ministers at the altar, and then communion is distributed to the congregation.

Holy Name Society: A lay organization which seeks to aid its members in living a genuinely Christian life. The society organizes retreats and other spiritual and devotional exercises.

Holy See: The primary official term of reference for the Diocese of Rome, as the chief diocese of Catholic Christendom; used to refer to the pope and the Roman Curia—congregations, tribunals, and various other offices—in their role of authority over and service to the Catholic Church around the world. In most news uses, Vatican is synonymous with Holy See: A Holy See representative is a Vatican representative, a congregation of the Holy See is a Vatican congregation, etc.

Holy, Holy, Holy: The response of the community to the preface and a continuation of the general theme of praise and thanks.

Homily: The homily (sermon) is a reflection by the celebrant or other ministers on the Scripture readings and the application of the texts to the assembled community.

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Host, The Sacred: The bread under whose appearances Christ is and remains present in a unique manner after the consecration of the Mass.

Humanae Vitae: This 1968 encyclical by Pope Paul VI on married love and procreation.

I

IHS: In Greek, the first three letters of the name of Jesus.

Immaculate Conception: Catholic dogma concerning Mary and the name of a feast in her honor celebrated Dec. 8. It refers to the Catholic belief that Mary was without sin from the moment she was conceived.

Incense: Incense (material used to produce a fragrant odor when burned) is used as a symbol of the Church's offering and prayer going up to God.

Indulgence: The remission before God of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven.

Intercessions: A series of prayers for the Church, the world, the Pope, clergy and laity, and the dead.

Intercommunion: The agreement or practice of two Ecclesial communities by which each admits members of the other communion to its sacraments.

J

Jesus: The name of Jesus, meaning Savior in Christian usage, derived from the Aramaic and Hebrew Yeshua and Joshua, meaning Yahweh is salvation.

K

Keys, Power of the: Spiritual authority and jurisdiction in the Church, symbolized by the keys of the kingdom of heaven, Christ promised the keys to St. Peter and head-to-be of the Church.

Knights of Columbus: Fraternal organization for Catholic men. Knights of Columbus engage in religious and charitable projects in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and the Philippines.

L

Laicization: The process by which a priest is returned to the lay state. It is sometimes used as a penalty for a serious crime or scandal, but more often it comes at the request of the priest. A laicized priest is barred from all priestly ministry with one exception: He may give absolution to someone in immediate danger of death. The pope must approve all requests for laicization. When a priest is laicized without his consent, for a crime such as living in concubinage, committing child sexual abuse or using the confessional to solicit sex, it is sometimes called defrocking or unfrocking. Those terms, which are not used in church law, should be restricted to forcible laicizations, since they connote a penalty.

Laity/lay: In canon law, anyone not ordained a deacon, priest or bishop is a layperson. In this legal sense women religious (sisters) and unordained men religious (brothers) are laity. In the documents of the Second Vatican Council, however, the laity are those who are neither ordained nor members of a religious order. The Vatican II sense is the one usually intended in most discussions of laypeople and their role in the church.

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Lamb of God: An invocation during the breaking of the bread in which the assembly petitions for mercy and peace.

Lay ecclesial ministry: Not a specific job title, but a general theological description of the work of Catholics who are not ordained but are engaged in substantial public leadership positions in church ministry, collaborating closely with the ordained leadership and working under their authority. In the United States well over 30,000 such lay ministers—an average of more than 1.6 per parish nationwide—are employed by Catholic parishes in full- or part-time positions of more than 20 hours a week. Among those who are in paid posts, about 40 percent are coordinators of religious education. Their other key ministries include general pastoral associate, youth minister, music minister, and liturgical planner or coordinator. Tens of thousands of other Catholics engage in volunteer lay ministry in U.S. parishes as catechists; as readers, altar servers, music leaders or other liturgical ministers; as social justice ministers; or in a variety of other health, charity, service or church-related ministries. Ecclesial is reserved to those who are in church-recognized leadership positions, generally certified to represent the church in their area of expertise after appropriate human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation. In a 2005 document, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, the U.S. bishops encouraged the growth of lay ecclesial ministry and set out general guidelines for the formation and the recognition or certification of such ministers.

Layman, woman, person: Any church member who is neither ordained nor a member of a religious order. When the Second Vatican Council spoke of the laity, it used the term in this more common meaning.

Leader of Song: The person who leads the community/assembly in the music they sing.

Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR): Organization of major superiors, who represent more than 90 percent of the active women religious in the United States.

Lectionary: The book that contains all the readings from the Scriptures for use in the celebration of the liturgy.

Legatee: An individual appointed by the Pope to be his personal representative to a nation, international conference, or local church. The legate may be chosen from the local clergy of a country.

Liturgical Colors: Colors used in vestments and altar coverings to denote special times in the Church. Green is used in ordinary times, red denotes feasts of martyrs or the Holy Spirit, purple denotes penitential times and white is used for joyful occasions including Christmas, Easter and some saints' days.

Liturgy of the Eucharist: The section of the celebration when the gifts are prepared and the Eucharistic Prayer is proclaimed by the celebrant.

Liturgy of the Hours: This is the preferred term in the Latin rite for the official liturgical prayers sanctifying the parts of each day.

Liturgy of the Word: That section of the celebration where the Scriptures are proclaimed and reflected upon. On Sundays and major feasts, there are three readings: Old Testament selection, New Testament selection (from the Epistles), The Gospel reading

Liturgy: The general term for all the church's official acts of worship. It includes the Mass (also called the eucharistic liturgy), the celebration of the other sacraments, and the Liturgy of the Hours, which contains the official prayers recited by priests and some others to sanctify parts of the day. See Mass, sacraments and vespers.

Lord's Prayer: The prayer of petition for both daily food (which for Christians means also the Eucharistic bread) and the forgiveness of sins.

M

Magisterium: The official Teaching office of the Church.

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Mary: The central point of the theology of Mary is that she is the Mother of God. From apostolic times, tradition, the Church and the faithful have accorded to Mary the highest forms of veneration. She is celebrated in feasts throughout the year, and in devotions such as the rosary and litany and is hailed the patroness of many countries, including the United States.

Mass: The central act of worship in the Catholic Church. In most Eastern Catholic churches the Mass is called the Divine Liturgy. The Mass is divided into two main parts. The Liturgy of the Word includes Scripture readings and a homily and ends with the general intercessions. The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the offering of the gifts, followed by consecration of the bread and wine and the reception of Communion. Catholics believe that in the consecration the bread and wine truly become the body and blood of Christ.

Master of Ceremonies: One who assisted in the preparation of the celebration and is present during it to facilitate the movement of the entire rite.

Matrimony: The Roman, Orthodox and Old Catholic churches consider matrimony a sacrament, referred to as the Sacrament of Matrimony. This is a marriage contract between baptized persons.

Metropolitan: A metropolitan see is an archdiocese that is the chief diocese of an ecclesiastical province. The archbishop who heads that province is called the metropolitan, but usually only in contexts referring to him in his capacity as head of the province. See province.

Military Ordinariate (Archdiocese for the Military Services, U.S.A.): Nonterritorial diocese for American Catholics and their dependents who are in the military or affiliated with the armed forces.

Minister: From the Latin word for "servant," in the ecclesiastical sense a minister is (1) an ordained cleric or (2) one who has the authority to minister to others.

Ministers of Communion: Those who assist in the distribution of communion.

Ministry: A broad term in Catholic usage for any activity conducive to the salvation of souls. It can include ordained ministry such as liturgical leadership and administration of the sacraments, or lay ministry such as instructing children in the faith, serving the poor, visiting the sick, or being an altar server, reader or music leader at Mass. See lay ecclesial ministry.

Miracles, apparitions: Generally miracle is used to refer to physical phenomena that defy natural explanation, such as medically unexplainable cures. An apparition is a supernatural manifestation of God, an angel or a saint to an individual or a group of individuals.

Mitre: A headdress worn at some liturgical functions by bishops, abbots and, in certain cases, other ecclesiastics.

Monastery: An autonomous community house of a religious order, which may or may not be a monastic order. The term is used more specifically to refer to a community house of men or women religious in which they lead a contemplative life separate from the world.

Monk - Friar: A man who belongs to one of the monastic orders in the church, such as Basilians, Benedictines, Cistercians and Carthusians.

Monsignor: An honorary ecclesiastical title granted by the pope to some diocesan priests. Priests in religious orders or congregations never receive the title of monsignor. In English the standard abbreviation as a title before the name is Msgr. American publications vary in whether they use the abbreviation or the full word before the name in news reporting. In covering the church internationally, however, it is also important to realize that the Catholic Church and news agencies in many other nations use Msgr. or Mgr. as the religious title before the name of bishops and archbishops, not just before the name of priests who have received that honorary ecclesiastical title from the pope. Check on the Web or in other resources to determine whether the man in question is a bishop or just a priest who has an honorary title from the pope.

Mortification: Acts of self-discipline, including prayer, hardship, austerities and penances undertaken for the sake of progress in virtue.

CATHOLIC GLOSSARY

N

National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB): Episcopal conference of U.S. bishops. The membership is comprised of diocesan bishops and their auxiliary bishops. The conference decides matters of ecclesiastical law and issues policy statements on political and social issues.

Newman Apostolate: An apostolate to the Catholic college and university community, now commonly known as "campus ministry."

Nun: (1) Strictly speaking, a member of a religious order of women with solemn vows. (2) In general, all women religious, even those in simple vows, who are more properly called sisters. Whether a woman religious is a nun or sister in a strict canonical sense, in news reporting it is appropriate to use the term Sister as the religious title before her name.

O

Offertory Song: Music used during the procession of gifts to the celebrant and as the altar is prepared.

Opening prayer: This prayer by the celebrant expresses the general theme of the celebration.

Opus Dei: A personal prelature dedicated to spreading through society an awareness of the call to Christian virtue, awareness, and witness in one's life and work. Members are not of a religious order, do not take vows, but sometimes live in community.

Ordain - Ordination: The proper terms in Catholic usage for references to the conferral of the sacrament of holy orders on a deacon, priest or bishop.

Order, Congregation, Society: Religious orders is a title loosely applied to all religious groups of men and women. A society is a body of clerics, regular or secular, organized the purpose of performing an apostolic work. Congregation is any group bound together by common rules.

Ordinary: A diocesan bishop or his equivalent, his vicar general and episcopal vicar, or a major superior of a clerical religious order, congregation or society. It refers to someone with ordinary authority in church law over a group of clergy, over certain pastoral concerns in a specific geographical area or over the members of a religious order. The term ordinary was formerly restricted to diocesan bishops and major superiors of religious orders, but it was expanded in the 1983 Code of Canon Law to include vicars general and episcopal vicars. It is not uncommon for bishops and other church officials schooled in the previous canon law code to use the term ordinary mistakenly to refer only to diocesan bishops or major superiors of men religious. If a church official uses the term in this more restricted former use, it is wise to question him or her on what he or she means by the term.

Ordination/Ordain: The sacramental rite by which a "sacred order" is conferred (diaconate, priesthood, episcopacy).

P

Pallium: Special stole made of lamb's wool worn over the chasuble by the Pope and archbishops; it signifies communion of archbishops with the Holy See.

Papal Infallibility: The end result of divine assistance given the pope, wherefore he is prevented from the possibility and liability of error in teachings on faith or morals.

CATHOLIC GLOSSARY

Papal Representatives: The three types of representative of the Roman Pontiff are:

Papal nuncio: See apostolic nuncio.

Parish: A specific community of the Christian faithful within a diocese, having its own church building, under the authority of a pastor who is responsible for providing ministerial service. Most parishes are formed on a geographic basis, but they may be formed along national or ethnic lines.

Parish Coordinator: A deacon, religious, or lay person who is responsible for the pastoral care of parish. The parish coordinator is in charge of the day-to-day life of the parish in the areas of worship, education, pastoral service and administration.

Pastor: A priest in charge of a Catholic parish or congregation. He is responsible for administering the sacraments, instructing the congregation in the doctrine of the church, and providing other services to the people of the parish. Pastor is not ordinarily used as a title before the name of a Catholic priest: He is Father John Smith or Msgr. John Smith or the Rev. John Smith, depending on your publication's style manual.

Pastoral Associate: A member of the laity who is part of a parish ministry team.

Pastoral Council: A group of members of the parish who advise the pastor on parish matters.

Pastoral council: A parish or (arch)diocesan body that the pastor or (arch)bishop consults concerning policies and major decisions in the governance of the local church. Such a council's role is consultative and always subject to the final authority of the pastor or bishop.

Paten: The plate used to hold the bread.

Pectoral Cross: A cross worn on a chain about the neck of bishops and abbots as a mark of office

Penitential Rite: A general acknowledgment by the entire assembly of sinfulness and the need for God's mercy.

Permanent Observer to the United Nations: The Apostolic See maintains permanent legates below the ambassadorial level to several world organizations. Since the Papal Legate does not enjoy the right to vote within the organization, his title at the United Nations is that of Observer.

Pontiff, Pontifical: is used as an alternative form of reference to the pope. Pontifical has to do with the pope.

Prayer after Communion: The final prayer by the celebrant in which he petitions that the sacrament be beneficial for all.

Prayer over the gifts: The prayer by the celebrant asking that the gifts to be offered be made holy and acceptable.

Prayer: The raising of the mind and heart to God in adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition The official prayer of the Church as a worshipping community is called liturgy.

Preface dialogue: The introductory dialogue between the celebrant and assembly in which all are invited to join in prayer and thanksgiving to God.

Preparation of the Gifts: The time in the Mass when the bread and wine to be used in the celebration are brought to the celebrant, usually by representatives of the faithful.

Presbyteral council: Also known as the priests' council, this is the principal consultative body mandated by the Code of Canon Law to advise the diocesan bishop in matters of pastoral governance. It consists of bishops and priests serving the diocese.

Presbyterate: May be a synonym for priesthood or may refer to the collective body of priests of a diocese or similar

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ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Primacy: Papal primacy refers to the pope's authority over the whole church.

Processional Cross: The cross carried in the processions.

Profession of Faith: The people together recall and proclaim the fundamental teachings of the faith. The Profession of Faith is used on all Sundays, and solemnities. Also called the Creed.

Proselytize: To bring one to another's viewpoint whether in religion or other areas.

Province: (1) A grouping of an archdiocese, called the metropolitan see, and the dioceses under it, called suffragan sees. The Code of Canon Law spells out certain limited obligations and authority that the metropolitan archbishop has with respect to the dioceses within his province. (2) A grouping of communities of a religious order under the jurisdiction of a provincial superior.

Purgatory: The state or condition in which those who have died in the state of grace, but with some attachment to sin, suffer for a time as they are being purified before they are admitted to the glory and happiness of heaven.

R

Reader: One who is called upon to proclaim the scriptures during the Liturgy of the Word.

Relics: The physical remains and effects of saints, which are considered worthy of veneration inasmuch as they are representative of persons in glory with God.

Religion: The adoration and service of God as expressed in divine worship and in daily life.

Religious Movements: Groups of people, both lay and clerical, who band together to promote a certain belief or activity.

Religious priest/diocesan priest: Religious priests are professed members of a religious order or institute. Religious clergy live according to the rule of their respective orders. In pastoral ministry, they are under the jurisdiction of their local bishop, as well as of the superiors of their order. Diocesan, or secular, priests are under the direction of their local bishop. Most serve in the parishes of the diocese, but they may also be assigned to other diocesan posts and ministries or be released for service outside the diocese.

Religious titles before names: Of course you will follow your own publication's style manual for use of religious titles before names. But in general, Catholics refer to nuns as Sister, religious brothers as Brother and priests as Father, and those religious titles take precedence over whatever job titles they might hold, such as pastor, chancellor, vicar general, associate pastor, executive director. The other chief religious titles for clerics are Msgr., Bishop, Archbishop, Cardinal, Pope and, for the head of a male monastic community, Abbot. For many members of religious orders, the short version of their order's name may precede the religious title: Mercy Sister Mary Smith, Jesuit Father John Smith, Benedictine Brother Peter Smith. In certain cases it may be better to use an appositive phrase or some other approach: Sister Janet Smith, a School Sister of Notre Dame, rather than School Sister of Notre Dame Sister Janet Smith.

Responsorial Psalm: After the first reading there is a psalm as a response to the reading. The response, repeated after verses, is sung by the assembly, while a cantor or choir sings the verses of the psalm.

Retreat: A period of time spent in meditation and religious exercise. Retreats may take various forms, from traditional closed forms, to open retreats which do not disengage the participants from day-to-day life. Both clergy and lay people of all ages participate in retreats. Houses and centers providing facilities for retreats are retreat houses.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA): The norms and rituals of the Catholic Church for people who wish to join the

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Church. Part of the book is intended for baptized Christians who wish to become Catholics. The term is used in a general sense to refer to the process of entering the Catholic Church.

Roman Curia: The official collective name for the administrative agencies and courts, and their officials, who assist the Pope in governing the Church. Members are appointed and granted authority by the Pope.

Rome - diocese of: The City of Rome is the diocese of the pope, as the bishop of Rome.

Rosary: A prayer of meditation primarily on events in the lives of Mary and Jesus, repeating the Our Father and Hail Mary. It is generally said on a physical circlet of beads.

S

Sacramentary: The book used by the celebrant, containing all the prayers for the liturgy of the Mass.

Sacraments: Catholics, like Orthodox Christians, believe that there are seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, matrimony, holy orders and the anointing of the sick. The first three are also called the sacraments of Christian initiation, and in the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox traditions they are administered together in infancy. In the Latin rite Church baptism is administered to infants, but the first reception of the Eucharist (first Communion) and confirmation are typically delayed until the child has reached the use of reason, generally regarded as about the age of seven. Eastern Catholics and Orthodox usually refer to confirmation as chrismation. Penance is also called the sacrament of reconciliation. The anointing of the sick used to be called extreme unction when it was only given to those gravely ill or in danger of death. Now it can be administered to anyone who is seriously or chronically ill.

Sanctuary: That part of the church where the altar is located.

Second Vatican Council: A major meeting of the Bishops of the world convened by Pope John XXIII to bring about a renewal of the Church for the second half of the 20th century. It ran from 1962 to 1965 and produced important documents in liturgy, ecumenism, communications and other areas.

Secular Institutes: Societies of men and women living in the world who dedicate themselves to observe the evangelical counsels and to carry on apostolic works suitable to their talents and opportunities in every day life.

See: Another name for a diocese or archdiocese. It appears in such phrases as Holy See, titular see, metropolitan see, suffragan see, see city. The see city is that city after which the diocese or archdiocese is named. See Holy See, metropolitan, province and titular see.

Seminary: An educational institutional for men preparing for Holy Orders.

Serra Club: Local units of Serra International, an organization which promotes vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and offers instructions to lay leaders.

Shrine: Erected to encourage private devotions to a saint, it usually contains a picture, statue or other religious feature capable of inspiring devotions.

Sign of Peace: Before sharing the body of Christ the members of the community are invited to express their love and peace with one another.

Sign of the Cross: A sign, ceremonial gesture or movement in the form of a cross by which a person confesses faith in the Holy Trinity and Christ, and intercedes for the blessing of himself, other persons, and things.

Sister: In popular speech, any woman religious. Strictly, the title applies to women religious of those institutes, mostly formed during or since the 19th century, whose members do not profess solemn vows. See nun.

CATHOLIC GLOSSARY

Sodality: A group of laity, established for the promotion of Christian life and worship, or some other religious purpose.

St. Vincent de Paul Society: An organization of lay persons who serve the poor through spiritual and material works of mercy. The society operates stores, rehabilitation workshops, food centers, shelters, criminal justice and other programs.

Stations of the Cross: Also known as The Way of the Cross, this devotion to the suffering of Christ consist of prayers and meditations on fourteen occurrences experienced by Christ on His way to His crucifixion. Each of these occurrences is represented by a cross. This can be done individually, or in groups with one person leading the prayers and moving from cross to cross.

Stole: The vestment worn around the neck by all ordained ministers. For priests, bishops and Pope, it hangs down in front (under the chasuble); the deacons wear it over their left shoulder crossed and fastened at the right side.

Superior: The head of a religious order or congregation. He or she may be the head of a province or of an individual house.

Superior: The head of a religious order or congregation. He or she may be the head of a province, or an individual house.

Surplice: a loose, flowing vestment of white fabric with wide sleeves. For some functions it is interchangeable with an alb.

Suspension: Church penalty under which a priest, while retaining his clerical status, is no longer permitted to perform priestly functions such as celebrating Mass, preaching or administering the sacraments.

Synod: A gathering of designated officials and representatives of a church, with legislative and policymaking powers.

Synonyms: Eucharist, Celebration of the Liturgy, Eucharistic celebration, Sacrifice of the Mass, Lord's Supper.

T

Tabernacle: Place in the church where the Eucharist or sacred species is reserved.

Tekakwitha Conference: The group dedicated to advocating the cause of sainthood of the Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, an American Indian.

Theologate: An institution which provides the last four years of study for candidates for priesthood.

Theology: The study of God and religion, deriving from and based on the data of divine Revelation, organized and systematized according to some kind of scientific method.

Titular Sees: Dioceses where the Church once flourished but which later died out. Bishops without a territorial or residential diocese of their own, e.g., auxiliary bishops, are given titular sees.

Titular see: If a bishop does not have his own diocese, he is given a titular see: that is, a place that once was the seat of a diocese but no longer is. Auxiliary bishops and bishops in Vatican service are examples of those given titular sees. Many titular sees are ancient cities of the Middle East or Northern Africa. But there are some titular sees in the United States as well, such as Bardstown, Ky. (original seat of what is now the Archdiocese of Louisville), or Jamestown, N.D. (now in the Diocese of Fargo). The *Annuario Pontificio* devotes more than 200 pages to the listing of titular sees, where it gives basic biographical information about the bishops who hold them.

Tribunal: A tribunal (court) is the name given to the person or persons who exercise the church's judicial powers. Each diocese has a diocesan tribunal, used mainly to hear marriage cases. Each archdiocese has an archdiocesan tribunal—a court of first trial—and a metropolitan tribunal, an appeals court that reviews decisions of diocesan courts in that ecclesiastical province when necessary. (The Catholic Church in Canada has a slightly different system, with regional instead of metropolitan appeals courts.)

CATHOLIC GLOSSARY

U

United States Catholic Conference (USCC): Civil corporation and executive agency of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

V

Vatican Congregation: A Vatican body which is responsible for an important area in the life of the Church, such as worship and sacraments, the clergy, and saints causes.

Vatican Councils: Councils called by the pope of all bishops of the Church. These councils are usually called to discuss specific matters of interest to the Church.

Veneration of the altar: The reverencing of the altar with a kiss and the optional use of incense.

Vespers: Also called evening prayer, vespers is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, the series of psalms, prayers and readings for different parts of the day that Catholic priests and deacons are obligated to pray daily. Often a new bishop will present his letter of appointment to the priests of the diocese during a vespers service at the cathedral.

Vespers: A portion of the Church's divine office recited each day by priests. Also called Evening Prayer.

Vestment: The vesture the ministers wear.

Vicar general: A priest, auxiliary bishop or coadjutor bishop who assists the diocesan bishop in the governance of the entire diocese.

Vow: A promise made to God with sufficient knowledge and freedom. Its purpose must be a moral good that, with God's grace, can be achieved. The promises spouses make to each other when they marry are vows. Men and women entering religious life take vows, typically of poverty, chastity and obedience. Celibacy is not a vow; it should be described as a promise.

Vow: A promise made to God with sufficient knowledge and freedom, which has as its object a moral good that is possible and better than its voluntary omission.

W

Washing of hands: An expression of the desire for inward purification.

Witness, Christian: Practical testimony or evidence given by Christians of their faith in all circumstances of life--by prayer and general conduct, through good example and good works, etc., being and acting in accordance with Christian belief, actual practice of the Christian faith.

Z

Zucchetto: Skull cap worn by the Pope (white) and bishops (purple) and Cardinals (red).