

Celebration of Mass

Mass: The common name for the Eucharistic liturgy of the Catholic Church.

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

Liturgy: The public prayer of the 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.

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

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

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

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.

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

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:

1. Old Testament selection
2. New Testament selection (from the Epistles)
3. The Gospel reading

\ **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.

Vespers: A portion of the Church's divine office, the daily public prayer encouraged for religious and laity. Also called Evening Prayer.

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

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.

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.

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.

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

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)

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Final Doxology: A final prayer of praise of God.

Amen: 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.

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

Doxology: The response of the people acclaiming the sovereignty of God.

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.

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

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

Communion Song: The music that is used as the consecrated bread and wine is distributed to the faithful.

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.

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

Concluding Rite: The brief rite which consists of the celebrant's greeting to all present, final blessing and dismissal.

NOTE: Do not use: "Saying Mass" or "Performing Mass"

INSTEAD USE: "Celebrating Mass," "Concelebrating Mass,"

"Celebrating the Liturgy," or "Celebrating the Eucharist"

Ministers

Celebrant: The one who presides over the assembly and consecrates the Eucharistic Sacrament.

Concelebrants: Those priests and bishops who join the Celebrant in celebrating the Mass.

Deacon: An ordained minister who assists the Celebrant at the Liturgy of the Word and at the altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

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.

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

Cross bearer: The one who carries the cross in the procession (entrance and recessional).

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

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

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

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

NOTE: The term "EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS" is no longer used. It was changed to "SPECIAL MINISTERS"

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.

NOTE: It is the entire assembly (ordained and nonordained) that celebrates the liturgy of the Mass, therefore: Avoid: The Pope's Mass, The

Bishop's Mass, His Mass, etc. All terms which would give the impression that it is only the pope or clergy who celebrate.

Liturgical Objects

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. Avoid: Pulpit

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.

Celebrant's Chair: The place where the celebrant sits. It expresses his office of presiding over the assembly and of leading the prayer of those present. AVOID: The use of the word THRONE

Processional Cross: The cross carried in the processions.

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.

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

Chalice: The cup used to hold the wine.

Paten: The plate used to hold the bread.

Ciborium: A vessel used to hold the consecrated bread for the distribution of communion.

Vestment: The vesture the ministers wear.

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

Chasuble: The vestment worn over the alb by priests, bishops and Pope when celebrating the Mass.

Cassock: A non-liturgical, full-length, close-fitting robe for use by priests and other clerics under liturgical vestments; usually black for priests,

purple for bishops and other prelates, red for cardinals, white for the Pope.

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

Dalmatic: The vestment the deacon wears over the alb on solemn occasions.

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.

Cathedral: The major church in an archdiocese or diocese. It is the seat of the local Ordinary.

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

Crosier (pastoral staff): The staff which a bishop carries when he presides at the liturgy.

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

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

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

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

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.

Other Terms To Know:

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

Adoration: Refers to the external acts of reverent admiration or honor given to a thing or person.

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

Amen: Hebrew word meaning truly, it is true. As concluding word of prayers it expressed assent to and acceptance of God's will.

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.

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.

Archbishop: Title given automatically to bishops who govern archdioceses.

Archdiocese: The chief diocese of an ecclesiastical province.

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

Auxiliary Bishop: A bishop assigned to a Catholic diocese or archdiocese, to assist a residential bishop.

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

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.

Brother: A man who is a member of a religious order, but is not ordained or studying for the priesthood.

Contemplative Nun: A religious woman who devotes her entire life in the cloister to prayer and reflection.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development: The US Catholic bishops'

domestic anti-poverty program. Started in 1970, it is funded through an annual collection in Catholic parishes.

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: Greek for rule, norm, standard, measure. Designates the Canon of Sacred Scripture, the list of books recognized by the Church as inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Canon Law: The codified body of general laws governing the Church.

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).

Cardinal: Cardinals are appointed by the pope and constitute a kind of senate of the Church, and aid the pope as his chief counselors.

Catechesis: Religious instruction and formation for persons preparing for baptism (catechumens) and for the faithful in various stages of spiritual development.

Catechetics: From the Greek meaning "to sound forth," it is the procedure for teaching religion.

Catechetical: Referring to catechesis.

Catholic: Greek word for universal. First used in the title Catholic Church in a letter written by St. Ignatius of Antioch to the Christians of Smyrna about 107 A.D.

Celebrant: The one who presides at the celebration of the Eucharist.

Celebrator: Used only to describe a participant in a nonreligious celebration.

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

Charismatic: Person who believes God endowed them with gifts or graces.

Charisms: Gifts or graces given by God to persons for the good of others and the Church.

Christ: The title of Jesus, derived from the Greek translation of the Hebrew term Messiah, meaning the Anointed of God.

Church: The universal Church that is spread throughout the world; the local Church is that of a particular locality, such as a diocese. The Church embraces all its members--on earth, in heaven, in purgatory.

Clergy: Collective term referring to male persons who administer the rites of the Church through Holy Orders.

College of Cardinals: The College of Cardinals is made up of the cardinals of the Church, who advise the Pope, assist in the central administration of the Church, head the various curial offices and congregations, administer the Holy See during a vacancy, and 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.

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.

Confession: Only part of the Sacrament of Penance or reconciliation, not a term for the sacrament.

Confirmation: One of the three sacraments of initiation, along with baptism and Eucharist.

Convent: In common usage, the term refers to a house of women religious.

Cross/crucifix: An object is a crucifix only if it depicts Christ on a cross, otherwise it is a cross.

Cult: Generic use cult denotes any act or system of veneration or worship.

Cursillo: Conducted by priests and laypersons, it consists of a three-day weekend focused on prayer, study, and Christian action, and follow-up

program known as the post-cursillo.

Deacons/diaconate: The diaconate is the first order or grade in ordained ministry. Any man who is to be ordained to the priesthood must first be ordained as a transitional deacon. Deacons serve in the ministry of liturgy, of the word, and of charity. The Permanent Diaconate is for men who do not plan to become ordained priests. The program is open to both married and unmarried men.

Dean/Vicar: The title of a priest appointed by the bishop to aid him in administering the parishes in a certain vicinity, called a "deanery." The function of a dean involves promotion, coordination, and supervision of the common pastoral activity within the deanery or vicariate.

Diocese: A particular church; a fully organized ecclesiastical jurisdiction under the pastoral direction of a bishop as local Ordinary.

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

Dispensation: An exemption from Church law.

Eastern-rite (Oriental) Church: Term used to describe the Catholic churches which developed in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. They have their own distinctive liturgical and organizational systems. Each is considered equal to the Latin rite within the church.

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.

Encyclical: A pastoral letter addressed by the Pope to the whole 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 between Christians and members of other faiths.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

Hierarchy: In general, the term refers to the ordered body of clergy, divided into bishops, priests, and deacons. In Catholic practice, the term refers to the bishops of the world or of a particular region.

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 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: 1) The diocese of the pope, Rome. 2) The pope himself or the various officials and bodies of the Church's central administration--the Roman Curia--which act in the name and by authority of the pope.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

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.

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.

Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR):

Organization of major superiors approved by the Holy See for the purpose of assisting the individual institutes of the members, transacting common business, and fostering suitable coordination and cooperation with the conferences of bishops and also with individual bishops.

Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM): Organization of major superiors representing communities of men religious in the United States.

Laicization: The process by which a man ordained is relieved of his obligations and is returned to the status of a lay person.

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.

Lay ministries: These are ministries within the church that are carried out by laypersons. Included are altar servers, eucharistic minister and lectors.

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.

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

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.

Magisterium: The official Teaching office of the Church.

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.

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.

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: The archbishop of an archdiocese in a province. He has limited supervisory powers and influence over the other dioceses and bishops in the 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.

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

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.

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.

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. In the United States, the title is given to the vicar general of a diocese. In Europe, the title is also given to bishops.

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

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.

Natural Family Planning: This refers to forms of birth regulation which, in conformity with Catholic teaching, do not involve use of any artificial means of contraception.

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

Nun: 1) Strictly, 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.

Cloister: Part of a convent or monastery reserved for use by members of the institute.

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.

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.

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: Diocesan bishops, religious superiors, and certain other diocesan authorities with jurisdiction over the clergy in a specific geographical area, or the members of a religious order.

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

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.

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

1. **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.

2. **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.
3. **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.

Parish: A specific community of the Christian Faithful within a diocese, which has its own church building, under the authority of a pastor who is responsible for providing them with 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 parish or congregation. He is responsible for administering the sacraments, instructing the congregation in the doctrine of the Church, and other services to the people of the parish.

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.

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

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

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.

Presbyterial 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.

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

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

Province: 1) A territory comprising one archdiocese called the metropolitan see and one or more dioceses called suffragan sees. The head of an archdiocese, an archbishop, has metropolitan rights and responsibilities over the province. 2) A division 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.

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 the superiors of their order. Diocesan, or secular, priests are under the direction of their local bishop. They commit to serving their congregations and other institutions.

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 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.

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.

Catholic Relief Services: overseas aid agency of American Catholics.

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

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

See: Another name for diocese or archdiocese.

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.

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: Any woman religious, in popular speech, strictly, the title applies to those women Religious belonging to institutes whose members never professed solemn vows, most of which institutes were established during and since the 19th century.

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

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.

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

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

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.

Tribunal: A tribunal (court) is the name given to the person or persons who exercise the Church's judicial powers.

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

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.

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.

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.