Glossary

A

Abba An informal name for "father" in Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. It is like "papa" in English. When Jesus spoke to God the Father, he called him "Abba."

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

Abraham The Old Testament model of faith and trust in God. God made a covenant with Abraham, promising him land and many descendants. He became the father of the Chosen People.

absolution The forgiveness of sin by God that we receive through the priest in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Absolution places us in a state of grace and prepares us to receive other sacraments.

abstain The choice to avoid certain foods or activities. Abstaining is a form of fasting that helps remind us that God comes first in our lives and that we are dependent on God for everything.

actual grace The special assistance of God in particular situations that helps us follow his will

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

adultery A sin of unfaithfulness to one's marriage vows that injures the bond of the marriage covenant. It occurs when two people have sexual relations while at least one of them is married to another person. The Sixth Commandment forbids adultery because it undermines the institution of marriage and is harmful to children, who need the stability of their parents' marriage commitment.

Advocate A title of the Holy Spirit that Jesus used. The Holy Spirit comforts us, speaks for us in difficult times, and makes Jesus present to us.

Alleluia A prayer of praise to God. It is usually sung as the Gospel Acclamation before the Gospel Reading at Mass except during Lent.

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

ambo A raised stand from which the Word of God is proclaimed during Mass

Amen The Hebrew word used to conclude Jewish and Christian prayers. It means "This is true," "So be it," or "Let it be so." We end prayers with "Amen" to show that we mean what we have just said.

angel A spiritual creature who brings a message from God. Angels serve God as messengers and tell us of God's plans for our salvation.

Angelus A Catholic devotion recited three times a day—morning, noon, and evening. The devotion reflects on the mystery of the Incarnation—the coming of the angel to Mary, her acceptance of the invitation to be the mother of Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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

Annunciation The announcement to Mary by the angel Gabriel that God had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus. When Mary agreed, the Son of God became man in her. The Feast of the Annunciation is celebrated on March 25, nine months before Christmas, except in years when that date falls on a Sunday or holy day during Lent. Then the feast is celebrated at a slightly later date.

anoint To apply oil on a person or thing to dedicate them to the service of God. The anointing of the kings of Israel was a sign that they were chosen to rule God's people.

Anointing of the Sick The sacrament in which a person is anointed with holy oil and receives the strength, peace, and courage to overcome the difficulties that come with illness. Through this sacrament, Jesus brings the sick person spiritual healing and forgiveness of sins. If it is God's will, healing of the body is given as well.

Apostle One of the 12 men chosen by Jesus to join him in preaching and healing and to continue his work after he returned to his Father in heaven

Apostles' Creed A summary of Christian beliefs. The Apostles' Creed, developed out of a creed used during Baptism in Rome, lists statements of belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The profession of faith used in Baptism today is based on the Apostles' Creed.

apostolic One of the four Marks of the Church. The Church is apostolic because it passes on the teachings of the Apostles through their successors, the bishops, in union with the successor of Saint Peter, the pope.

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

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

Assumption The act of Mary being taken, body and soul, into heaven. Mary had a close relationship with the mysteries of Jesus' life, from the very beginning when she became the mother of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit. Because of this, she has been taken into heaven where she now lives with her son. We celebrate this event in the Feast of the Assumption on August 15.

B

Baptism The first of the three Sacraments of Initiation. Baptism frees us from Original Sin and is necessary for salvation. The celebration of Baptism consists of immersing a person in water or pouring water on his or her head while declaring that the person is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Beatitudes The teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. The Beatitudes are the eight ways taught by Jesus by which we can think and act as his followers in order to have true happiness and to live in God's kingdom. The Beatitudes are the fulfillment of the Ten Commandments given to Moses.

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

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

blasphemy Any word, thought, or action done in hatred or defiance against God. It extends to using language that disrespects the Church, the saints, or holy things. It is also blasphemy to use God's name as an excuse to enslave people, torture them, or put them to death. Using God's name to do these things can cause others to reject religion.

Blessed Sacrament The Eucharist that has been consecrated by the priest at Mass. It is kept in the tabernacle for adoration and for people to take Holy Communion to those who are sick.

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

Body and Blood of Christ The bread and wine that have been consecrated by the priest at Mass. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, all of the risen Lord Jesus Christ—Body, Blood, soul, and divinity—is present in the consecrated bread and wine.

Book of Revelation The last book of the Bible

C

calumny A false statement about someone's reputation that makes others think poorly of that person. Calumny is a sin against the Eighth Commandment.

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

Capital Sins Sins that can lead us to more serious sin. There are seven Capital Sins: pride, covetousness, envy, anger, gluttony, lust, and sloth.

Cardinal Virtues The four virtues that lead a person to live in relationship with God and with others. Prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance can be acquired by education and good actions.

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

catechumenate The process of becoming a Christian. In the early Church, the process took several years.

catholic One of the four Marks of the Church. The word catholic means "all over the world." The Church is catholic because Jesus is fully present in it and has given the Church to the whole world. The Church is universal.

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

charity The Theological Virtue of love given to us by God. Charity helps us love God above all else and love our neighbor as ourselves.

chastity One of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit and a human virtue. It is the integration of our physical sexuality with our spiritual nature. Chastity helps us be completely human, able to give to others our whole life and love. All people, married and single, are called to practice chastity.

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

Christ A title that means "anointed one." The word *Christ* is from a Greek word that means the same thing as the Hebrew word *Messiah*, or "anointed." *Christ* is the name given to Jesus after the Resurrection and Ascension when he completed his mission as priest, prophet, and king.

Christian Those who have been anointed through the gift of the Holy Spirit at Baptism who follow Christ and live as he taught us to live

Christmas December 25, the feast of the birth of Jesus. The liturgical season of Christmas begins on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Church The People of God throughout the whole world, or diocese (the local Church), or the assembly of those called together to worship God. The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. When spelled with a lowercase *c*, church is the name of the building in which we gather to pray to God.

clergy Men who are set apart as ordained ministers to serve the Church through the Sacrament of Holy Orders

collegiality Shared decision-making between the pope and the bishops

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

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

concupiscence The spiritual condition that is the result of Original Sin. It remains even after Baptism and draws us to sin even though we love God and want to serve him. Because of concupiscence, we struggle with our freedom.

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

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

conscience The inner voice that helps each of us know the law that God has placed in our hearts. It guides us to do good and avoid evil.

consecration The act of making a thing or person holy through a prayer or blessing. People or things set apart for God in a special way are also consecrated. For example, churches and altars are consecrated for use in liturgy. In the same way, bishops are consecrated as they receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Consecration also refers to the action by the power of the Holy Spirit and the words of the priest during the Liturgy of the Eucharist at Mass through which the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.

contrition The true sadness we feel when we know that we have sinned, followed by the decision not to sin again because it offends God. Perfect contrition arises from a love of God above all else. Imperfect contrition arises from other motives, such as the fear of being punished by God. Contrition is the most important act of the penitent preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

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

Council of Jerusalem The name of the meeting around A.D. 50 that is described in Acts of the Apostles. The meeting was the result of a disagreement between Paul and his followers and the Jewish Christian followers of James, the leader of the Jerusalem Church. James felt that those who became Christians should also observe Jewish customs. Paul said that was not necessary.

counsel One of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Counsel helps us make correct choices in life through reflection, discernment, consultation, and advisement.

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

covet The excessive desire to possess something of value belonging to another person, to the point of letting envy destroy the relationship. Coveting something is a desire that becomes an obsession. Covetousness is a Capital Sin prohibited by the Ninth and Tenth Commandments.

creation Everything that God has made. Creation is everything that exists. God said that all of creation is good.

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

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

culture The collection of knowledge, belief, and behavior of a group of people. Culture is an expression of the shared attitudes, values, goals, and social practices of the group. To take root in a culture, the Gospel must be adapted to live in that culture as well as transform it.

D

deacon A man ordained through the Sacrament of Holy Orders to the ministry of service in the Church. Deacons participate with bishops and priests in the work of the Church by serving in the various charitable practices of the Church. Deacons proclaim the Gospel, preach, and assist at the Liturgy of the Eucharist. They also celebrate Baptism, bless marriages, and preside at funerals.

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

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

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

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

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

discernment A decision-making process that honors the place of God's will in our lives

disciple A person who knows, loves, and follows Jesus Christ, lives according to his teaching, and participates in his mission, his suffering, and his joys

discrimination The act of mistreating other people because of how they look or act or because they are different.

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

Divine Revelation God the Father's communication of himself to us through the words and deeds he has used throughout history. Divine revelation shows us the mystery of God's plan for our salvation in his Son, Jesus Christ.

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

doctrine The teachings that help us understand and accept the truths of our faith as revealed by Jesus and taught by the Church

E

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

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

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

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

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

encyclical A letter written by the pope and sent to the whole Church and sometimes to the whole world. It expresses church teaching on some specific and important issue.

Epistles Letters written by Saint Paul and other leaders to communities of Christians in the early Church. The Epistles make up 21 of the 27 books of the New Testament. The Second Reading at Mass on Sundays and holy days is usually from one of these Epistles.

eternal life Living joyfully in grace and friendship with God in this world and in heaven after we die. Jesus calls all people to eternal life.

Eucharist The sacrament in which we give thanks to God the Father for his gifts, most especially for the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus, which is made present in this sacrament. The Body and Blood of Christ that we receive at Mass brings us into union with Jesus and his saving Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. All of the risen Lord Jesus Christ—Body, Blood, soul, and divinity—is present under the appearances of bread and wine.

Eucharistic liturgy The public worship, held by the Church, in which the bread and wine are consecrated and become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The Sunday celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy is at the heart of church life.

euthanasia An action taken or omitted that purposely results in the death of a sick, disabled, or dying person. Euthanasia is always gravely wrong and morally unacceptable.

Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who are credited with writing the four books that begin the New Testament—the Gospels. When spelled with a lowercase *e*, it refers to a person who proclaims the Good News of the Gospel.

evangelization The proclamation, or declaration by word and example, of the Good News of salvation we have received in Jesus Christ. Evangelization is the sharing of our faith with others, both those who do not know Jesus and those who are called to follow Jesus more closely.

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

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

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

Exodus God's liberation of the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt and his leading them to the Promised Land. It is also one of the first five books in the Bible.

F

faith The Theological Virtue that makes it possible for us to believe in God and all that he has made known. Faith is both a gift from God and a free, human choice. We profess our faith in the Creed, celebrate it in the sacraments, live by it through our good conduct of loving God and our neighbor, and express it in prayer. It is a personal adherence of the whole person to God, who has revealed himself to us through words and actions throughout history. Faith is one of the three Theological Virtues; hope and charity are the other two.

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

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

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

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

Fruits of the Holy Spirit The effects or perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the "first fruits" of eternal glory. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

G

Gentile The name given by the Jews after the Exile to a foreign person. Gentiles were considered nonbelievers who worshiped false gods. They stand in contrast to the Jewish people who received God's Law.

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

Gospel The Good News of God's mercy and love made known in Jesus' life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. The Good News is presented to us in four books found in the New Testament: the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospel is also passed on in the teaching ministry of the Church as the source of all truth and right living.

grace The gift of a relationship with God, given to us by God without our deserving it. Grace cannot be earned. Through sanctifying grace, God shares his friendship with us, heals our sins, and continues the work of making us holy. Actual grace is the help God gives us every day to live as he wants us to live.

Great Commandment Jesus' important teaching that love of God and love of neighbor must never be separated. Jesus tells us that this commandment sums up everything taught in the Old Testament.

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

H

heaven Our eternal life with God, unending and full of joy, after this life; the union with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in life and love that never ends. Heaven is a state of complete joyfulness and the goal of the deepest wishes of the human heart.

Hebrews The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were enslaved in Egypt. God helped Moses lead the Hebrews out of slavery. Hebrews are also called Israelites because God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

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

heresy A false teaching that distorts a truth of the Catholic faith. Many of the church councils have taught against heresies about the Trinity, Jesus, or the faith of the Church.

holiness A resemblance of divine traits; a reflection of the image of God. All people are called to holiness, which is made possible by cooperating with God's grace to do his will. As we do God's will, we are transformed more and more into the image of the Son, Jesus Christ.

holy A description of something or someone set aside for God's purposes. It is one of the four Marks of the Church. The Church is holy because of her union with Jesus Christ.

Holy Communion The reception of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ during Mass. It brings us into union with Jesus Christ and his saving Death and Resurrection. Holy Communion is also brought to those who are sick or elderly and cannot participate in Mass.

holy days of obligation The principal feast days, other than Sundays, on which Catholics are committed to celebrate the great things God has done for us through Jesus Christ. Six holy days of obligation are celebrated in the United States. Catholics are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on these days, just as we are on Sundays.

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

Holy of Holies The most sacred part of the Temple in Jerusalem. The high priest entered this part of the Temple once each year to address God and ask his forgiveness for the sins of the people.

Holy Matrimony The sacrament that unites a baptized man and baptized woman with each other for life, both for their own good and for raising children. Matrimony is a sign of the unity between Jesus and his Church and is one of the two Sacraments at the Service of Communion—the other being Holy Orders.

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

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

Homily A talk by a priest or deacon after the Gospel to help us understand God's Word. The Homily deepens our understanding of the Word of God that we hear in the Scripture readings at Mass.

hope The Theological Virtue that helps us have confidence that God will always be with us. We also hope and trust that he will share his joy now and help us live in a way that keeps us with him forever.

I

idolatry The act of giving undue attention to power, pleasure, wealth, or the state, rather than giving God the honor owed to him. In biblical times, it was the false pagan worship of physical images given adoration as gods. For Christians today, idolatry occurs whenever someone gives undue attention to something in place of God.

Immaculate Conception The church teaching that Mary was free from Original Sin from the first moment of her conception. She was preserved through the merits of her Son, Jesus, the Savior of the human race. Declared a dogma of the Catholic Church by Pope Pius IX in 1854, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8.

imperfect contrition Participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation solely because we fear punishment

Incarnation The Son of God becoming man in order to save us. In assuming a human nature, Jesus did not lose his divine nature. Jesus is both true God and true man.

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

inerrancy The absence of error in the Bible when it tells us a religious truth about God and his relationship with us. The Church teaches the inerrancy of Scripture on moral and faith matters.

infallibility The inability to be in error or to teach something that is false. On matters of belief and morality, the Church is infallible because of the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Infancy Narrative An account of the birth, infancy, and childhood of Jesus that appears in the first two chapters of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels. Matthew's Infancy Narrative reveals Jesus as the fulfillment of prophecies. Luke's Infancy Narrative reveals Jesus as a Savior who came for everyone, not the privileged few. The intention of these stories is to proclaim Jesus as Messiah and Savior.

inspired Influenced by the Holy Spirit. The human authors of Scripture were influenced by the Holy Spirit. The creative inspiration of the Holy Spirit made sure that the Scripture was written according to the truth God wants us to know for our salvation.

intercession A form of prayer on behalf of others. We can also ask the saints to pray to God for us and others. We ask for the intercession of those in heaven, such as Mary and the saints, or those still with us here on earth.

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

interreligious dialogue The ongoing discussions between Christians and those of other faiths

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

Israelites Term used for the descendants of Jacob, whom God renamed Israel. Jacob's 12 sons and their children became the leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel. Israelites is the name for the Hebrews used especially when referring to times after the Exodus and before the Exile.

J

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

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

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

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

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

justification The action of the Holy Spirit that cleanses us from sin in Baptism and that continually gives us the grace to walk in right relationship with God. Justification is the saving action of God that restores the right relationship between God and an individual.

K

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

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

L

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

Last Judgment The return of Jesus Christ at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, when God's Law of Love fully rules the world.

Last Supper The last meal, a Passover supper, that Jesus ate with his Apostles on the night before he died. At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine, blessed them, and said that they were his Body and Blood. Jesus' Death and Resurrection, which we celebrate in the Eucharist, was anticipated in this meal. Every Mass is a remembrance of that last meal.

Law The first five books of the Old Testament, known as the *Torah* in Hebrew. The Law is summarized in the Ten Commandments.

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

Lent The period of 40 days during which we prepare to renew our Baptism and celebrate the rising of Jesus from the dead at Easter. Jesus died and rose from the dead to save us.

liturgical year The celebration throughout the year of the events in the lives of Jesus, Mary, and the saints. The cycle of the liturgical year, organized on a liturgical calendar, constitutes the basic rhythm of the Christian's life of prayer. The Resurrection of Jesus is the center and high point of the liturgical calendar.

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

Liturgy of the Eucharist A major part of Mass in which the appearances of the bread and wine do not change, but Jesus is really and truly present. bread and wine are consecrated and become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. We receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the Preparation of the Gifts and the Altar and concludes with the Prayer after Communion.

Liturgy of the Hours The public prayer of the Church to praise God and sanctify the day. It includes an office of readings before sunrise, morning prayer at dawn, evening prayer at sunset, and prayer before going to bed. The chanting of psalms makes up a major portion of each of these services.

Liturgy of the Word A major part of the Mass in which we listen to readings of God's Word from Scripture and consider what they mean for us today. The Liturgy of the Word can also be a public prayer and proclamation of God's Word that is not followed by the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Lord A title that indicates the divinity of God. *Lord* was said instead of *Yahweh*, the name God revealed to Moses and was considered too sacred to pronounce. The New Testament uses the title *Lord* for both the Father and for Jesus, recognizing him as God himself.

Lord's Day Sunday, the day set aside to commemorate and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Christians keep this day holy by worshiping God at Mass, relaxing the mind and body, and performing works of mercy.

M

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

Magnificat The Blessed Virgin's song of praise to God. In the Gospel of Luke, Mary praises God for the great things he has done for her and for his plans for our salvation through his Son, Jesus.

Marks of the Church The four most important characteristics of the Church. According to the Nicene Creed, the Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

martyr One who has given his or her life for the faith. *Martyr* comes from the Greek word for "witness." A martyr is the supreme witness to the truth of the faith and to Christ to whom he or she is united. In chapter 7 of Acts of the Apostles, the death of the first martyr, the deacon Stephen, is recounted.

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

Mass The paschal meal and the most important act of worship in our Catholic faith. The celebration of the Mass was established by Jesus at the Last Supper as a remembrance of his Death and Resurrection. At Mass, we listen to God's Word from Scripture and receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

meditation A form of prayer using silence and listening. Through religious imagination, emotion, and desire, it is a way to understand how to adhere and respond to what God is asking. By concentrating on a word or an image, we move beyond thoughts, empty the mind of contents that get in the way of our experience of God, and rest in simple awareness of God.

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

Messiah A title that means "anointed one." It is from a Hebrew word that means the same thing as the Greek word *Christ*. Messiah is the title given to Jesus after the Resurrection, when he had completed his mission as priest, prophet, and king.

miracle An act of God that cannot be explained by natural causes. In the Gospels, Jesus works miracles as a sign that the Kingdom of God is present in his ministry.

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

missionary A person sent by church authority to spread the Gospel through evangelization and catechesis. Missionaries may serve in areas where few people have heard about Jesus or in small, underserved communities of isolated believers.

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

moral choice A choice to do what is right. We make moral choices because they help us grow closer to God. We also make moral choices because we have the freedom to choose what is right and avoid what is wrong.

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

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

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

Muslim A follower of the religion of Islam. The word Muslim means "one who submits to God."

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

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

Mystical Body of Christ The members of the Church formed into a spiritual body and bound together by the life communicated by Jesus Christ through the sacraments. Christ is the center of this body and the source of its life. In it we all are united. Each member of this body receives Christ's gifts for himself or herself.

N

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

New Testament The 27 books of the second part of the Bible, which tell of the teaching, ministry, and saving events of the life of Jesus and the experience of the early Church. The four Gospels present Jesus' life, Death, and Resurrection. The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of Jesus' Ascension into heaven. It also shows how Jesus' message of salvation spread through the growth of the Church. Various letters instruct us in how to live as followers of Jesus Christ.

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

O

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

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

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) The process through which unbaptized adults join the Church. Over a period of time, which may last one or two years, catechumens are formed in the life of discipleship in preparation for their initiation into the Church. When they are ready to enter into their final period of preparation, the catechumens participate in the Rite of Election near the beginning of Lent.

Ordinary Time The longest liturgical season of the church year. It is divided into two periods—the first after the Christmas season and the second after Pentecost. The first period focuses on Jesus' childhood and the beginning of his public ministry. The second period focuses on discipleship and Christ's reign as King of Kings.

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

Original Sin Our human tendency to sin, which is the result of the sin of Adam and Eve. They disobeyed God and chose to follow their own will rather than God's will. Because of this act, all human beings lost the original blessing that God intended, and we became subject to sin and death. In Baptism, we are restored to life with God through Jesus Christ, although we still experience the effects of Original Sin.

P

parable One of the simple stories that Jesus told to show us what God wants for the world. Parables present images or scenes drawn from everyday life. These images show us the radical choice we make when we respond to the invitation to enter the Kingdom of God.

parish A community of Catholics who meet regularly under the leadership of a pastor to worship God together and serve one another

Parousia The second coming of Jesus Christ at the end of time. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and the fulfillment of all creation will be achieved.

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

Paschal Mystery The central teaching of Christian faith: that salvation is accomplished by Jesus Christ through his Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. The Paschal Mystery is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. We experience its saving effects in the sacraments.

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

penance An action we perform to show we are turning away from sin so that we can live as God wants us to live. We express our penance externally by praying, fasting, and helping those in need. Penance is also the name of the action that the priest asks us to take or the prayers that he asks us to pray after he absolves us in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

Penitential Act The part of the Mass in which we pray a formula of general confession, asking for God's mercy. The priest may lead the assembly in praying the *Confiteor* ("I confess to almighty God. . .") or a threefold invocation echoed by "Lord have mercy . . . Christ have mercy . . . Lord have mercy" in English or in Greek.

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

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

perfect contrition Participation in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation solely because of a love of God

perjury Making a promise under oath without intending to keep it

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

Pharisee A member of a party or sect in Judaism that began more than 100 years before Jesus. Pharisees saw Judaism as a religion centered on the observance of the Law. The Gospels depict tension between Jesus and the Pharisees. Pharisees were later found in the Christian community in Jerusalem. (Acts of the Apostles 15:5) Before his conversion, Paul was proud to call himself a Pharisee.

piety One of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This gift calls us to show reverence for our relationships both with God and with others. Piety helps us love God and behave responsibly and with generosity and affection toward others.

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

poverty The quality of living without attachment to material goods. All baptized persons, not only those called to religious life, are called to live a holy life by practicing the virtues of chastity, obedience, and poverty.

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

prayer of petition A form of prayer asking God to fulfill a need. Sharing in God's saving love, we recognize that every need is one that we ask God to help us with. We make these requests with the understanding that it is God's will, not ours, that shall be done.

precepts of the Church The positive requirements that describe the minimum effort we must make in prayer and in moral life. The precepts of the Church call all Catholics to move beyond the minimum by growing in love of God and love of neighbor.

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

priest A man who is ordained to serve the Church by guiding it and building it up through the ministry of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments

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

prophet One called by God to speak for him and call the people to be faithful to the covenant. A major section of the Old Testament presents, in 18 books, the messages and actions of the prophets.

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

prudence The virtue of right thinking that directs us toward the good and helps us choose the correct means to achieve that good. When we act with prudence, we carefully and thoughtfully consider our actions. Prudence is one of the Cardinal Virtues that guide our conscience and influence us to live according to the Law of Christ.

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

Purgatory A state of final cleansing after death of all human imperfections to prepare one to enter into the joy of God's presence in heaven

R

rationalism A term used for a philosophical movement that greatly influenced Protestant thought in the 17th and 18th centuries. It holds that truth is revealed only through human reason unaided by God.

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

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

Redeemer One who saves. Jesus Christ, through his life, sacrificial Death on the Cross, Resurrection from the dead, and Ascension, sets us free from the slavery of sin and brings us redemption.

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

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

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

rite The tradition and ritual that we follow in celebrating the liturgy and each sacrament. A rite may differ according to the culture or country where it is celebrated. Rite also means "the special form for celebrating each sacrament."

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

Rosary A prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. When we pray the Rosary, we meditate on the mysteries of Jesus Christ's life while praying the Hail Mary on five sets of 10 beads and the Lord's Prayer on the beads in between. In the Latin Church, praying the Rosary became a way for ordinary people to reflect on the mysteries of Christ's life. When spelled with a lowercase *r*, a rosary is a string of beads divided into decades, or groups of 10 beads, with a crucifix, used when praying the Rosary.

S

Sabbath The seventh day, when God rested after finishing the work of creation. For the Jewish people, the Third Commandment is to keep the Sabbath holy. Christians follow the Third Commandment by keeping Sunday holy because it is the day Jesus rose from the dead and the new creation in Jesus Christ began. The Sabbath is the sign of our eternal Sabbath of heaven.

sacrament A sacred sign Jesus gave the Church to help us encounter God. In the sacraments, God gives us grace, a share in his very own life. Jesus gave us three Sacraments of Initiation that bring us into the Church: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. He gave us two Sacraments of Healing that heal our soul and body: Penance and Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. He also gave us two Sacraments at the Service of Communion that help members serve the community: Matrimony and Holy Orders.

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

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

Sacraments of Healing The Sacraments of Anointing of the Sick and Penance and Reconciliation. Through these sacraments, the Church continues the healing ministry of Jesus for soul and body.

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

sacred The description of a person, place, object, or action connected to God and having a religious purpose

sacrifice A gift given to God to give him thanks. Jesus' Death on the Cross was the greatest sacrifice. A sacrifice can also be a ritual offering of animals or produce made to God by the priest in the Temple in Jerusalem. Sacrifice was a sign of the people's adoration of God, giving thanks to God, or asking for his forgiveness. The great High Priest, Christ, accomplished our redemption through the perfect sacrifice of his Death on the Cross.

Sacrifice of the New Covenant The offering of Jesus to the Father under the appearances of bread and wine. The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross is remembered and made present in the Eucharist. It is offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal blessings from God.

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

saint A holy person who has died in union with God the Father through the grace of his Son, Jesus Christ. The Church is called the Communion of Saints.

salvation The gift of forgiveness of sin and the restoration of friendship with God. God alone can give us salvation. God's Son, Jesus, died for the salvation of all humankind.

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

sanctify To make holy. Sacramentals and other church practices make holy the everyday events and objects in our lives.

sanctifying grace The gift of God, given to us without our earning it, that unites us with the life of the Trinity and heals our human nature, wounded by sin. Sanctifying grace continues the work of making us holy that began at our Baptism.

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

satisfaction The theory in Catholic theology that contends that human sin against infinite God could only be healed, or satisfied, by a sacrifice only God could make. Because the sin was committed by humans, the Son assumed a human nature. Christ died as man so that our sins could be forgiven.

Savior A title given to Jesus, the Son of God, who became man to forgive our sins and restore our friendship with God

scandal An attitude or behavior that leads another person into sin. We can give scandal either by doing or saying something wrong or by failing to do or say something we know we should.

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

Scripture The inspired Word of God, written and collected in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, which contains the truth of God's revelation

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

Sermon on the Mount The collection of Jesus' key teachings found in chapters 5 through 7 of the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus reveals his vision for the Kingdom of God. The Sermon on the Mount begins with the eight Beatitudes and includes the Lord's Prayer.

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

sexuality The innermost being of the human person that unites body and soul and includes one's gender, the biological functions of reproduction, and the desire for union with another through physical intimacy that enables human beings to become co-creators of life with God. The Catholic Church teaches that such union is to be reserved for a baptized man and a baptized woman who are married to each other.

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

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

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

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

soul The spiritual part of us that makes us human and in the image of God. The soul is responsible for our consciousness and our freedom. The soul does not die and will be reunited with the body in the final resurrection.

spiritual works of mercy The selfless acts through which we help our neighbors meet their non-material needs. The spiritual works of mercy include counseling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing sinners, comforting the afflicted, forgiving offenses, bearing wrongs patiently, and praying for the living and the dead.

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

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

Summa Theologiae A work of Christian theology in five volumes written by Saint Thomas Aquinas. In the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas asks questions about thousands of theological topics that continue to influence Christian theology today.

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

synoptic The way in which three of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—tell similar stories in similar ways about the life and Death of Jesus. The Gospel of John's structure and stories are often different from the other three. Although none of the Gospels agree on every detail, each one conveys unique truths from their own perspectives about Jesus' life and mission.

T

tabernacle The sacred box or container in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept so that Holy Communion can be taken to those who are sick or dying. *Tabernacle* is also the name of the tent sanctuary in which the Israelites kept the ark of the covenant from the time of the Exodus to the construction of Solomon's Temple.

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

Temple The place of worship in Jerusalem that was built by King Solomon. The Jewish people believed that this was the place of God's presence. Jesus often came to pray in the Temple. The Temple provided a place for the priests to offer sacrifice, adore and give thanks to God, and ask for forgiveness. It was destroyed and rebuilt. The second Temple was also destroyed but was never rebuilt. Part of the outer wall of the Temple Mount remains to this day in Jerusalem.

temptation A thought or feeling that can lead us to disobey God. Temptation can come either from outside us or inside us. We are all tempted, but the Holy Spirit helps us resist temptation and choose to do good.

Ten Commandments The 10 rules that God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Ten Commandments sum up God's Law of Love and show us what is required to love God and our neighbor. By following the Ten Commandments, the Hebrews accepted their covenant with God. The Ten Commandments are also called the Decalogue.

Theological Virtues The three virtues of faith, hope, and charity that are gifts from God and not acquired by human effort. The virtue of faith helps us believe in God, the virtue of hope helps us desire eternal life and the Kingdom of God, and the virtue of charity helps us love God and our neighbor as we should.

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

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

Transfiguration An event witnessed by the apostles Peter, James, and John that revealed Jesus' divine glory. Jesus' face shone like the sun, his clothes became dazzlingly white, and he spoke with Elijah and Moses on the mountain.

transubstantiation The complete change of the bread and wine in the Eucharist into the Body and Blood of the risen Jesus Christ, while retaining their physical appearance as bread and wine

Trinity The mystery of one God existing in Three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each Person is God, whole and entire. Each is distinct only in the relationship of each to the others.

U

understanding One of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This gift gives us a deeper insight that helps us make the right choices in life and in our relationships with God and with others.

V

venial sin A choice we make that weakens our relationships with God or with other people. It wounds and diminishes the divine life in us. Through our participation in the Eucharist, venial sin is forgiven, strengthening our relationships with God and with others. The Church encourages us to confess all venial sins in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

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

virtue A disposition of the human soul, developed by grace and practice, to do good

vocation The call each of us has in life to love and serve God and his Church in a particular way. Each of us can live out his or her vocation as a layperson, a member of a religious community, or a member of the clergy.

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

W

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

witness To express to others by our words and our actions the faith that we have been given. Every Christian has the duty to give witness to the Good News about Jesus Christ that he or she has come to know.

worship The adoration and honor given to God in public prayer. Jesus recalls Deuteronomy when he says in Luke 4:8: "You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve."

Y

Yahweh The name of God in Hebrew, which God revealed to Moses from the burning bush. *Yahweh* means "I am who am" or "I cause to be all that is." It was considered too sacred to pronounce, so Israelites used *Lord* instead.