

Glossary

A

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

Act of Contrition our prayer in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation in which we admit our sins, ask God for forgiveness, and express our firm purpose not to sin again

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

B

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

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

C

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

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

chalice the sacred vessel in which at Mass the wine is transformed into the Blood of Christ

Chrism, Sacred 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.

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.

Collect the prayer at the end of the Introductory Rites of the Mass in which the priest calls the people to become aware of God's presence and call to mind their intentions

Communion Rite the preparation rites for the reception of the Eucharist including the Lord's Prayer, the Rite of Peace, the Breaking of the Bread, and Holy Communion

concupiscence the human inclination to sin even after Baptism

confess to admit to having done something that has hurt our relationship with God and others. During the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, we confess our sins to a priest.

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

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

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

consecration | Holy Spirit

consecration the making of a thing or a person to be special to God through a prayer or blessing. At Mass, the source and summit of Christian life, the words of the priest are a consecration of the bread and wine that are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. People or objects set apart for God in a special way are also consecrated. These are bound up in and orient us toward the Eucharist. For example, churches and altars are consecrated for use in liturgy, and bishops are consecrated as they receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

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

conversion a radical or serious change of the whole life away from sin and toward God. The call to a change of heart is a key part of the preaching of Jesus. Throughout our entire lives, Jesus calls us to change in this way.

creed a brief 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.

D

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

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

discipleship for Christians, the willingness to answer the call to Jesus. The call is received in Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, and nourished in the Eucharist in order to spread and defend the faith.

E

Eucharist the sacrament in which we give thanks to God for giving us the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This sacrament brings us into union with Jesus Christ and his saving Death and Resurrection.

Eucharistic Prayer the preeminent prayer of thanksgiving and consecration at the heart and summit of the celebration. Through the ministry

of the priest, we give thanks and praise to God the Father for all the gifts of creation. In this prayer, we participate in the Paschal Mystery, the principal act of salvation history for which we offer thanks. We recognize the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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

F

forgiveness the call from the Lord to be kind to all who have offended us, including our enemies. Through the Holy Spirit, we receive the grace to find ourselves forgiving one another as Christ forgave us.

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

G

Gloria the prayer that glorifies and petitions God the Father and Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God

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

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

H

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

Holy Spirit the Third Person of the Trinity, who is sent to us as our helper and, through the sacraments, 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 | original holiness

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

host the unleavened bread that at Mass is transformed into the Body of Christ

I

indulgence a lessening of temporal punishment due to sin through participation in prayer and works of charity. Indulgences move us toward our final purification, after which we will live with God forever.

Introductory Rites the beginning parts of the Mass including the Entrance Procession, Sign of the Cross, Penitential Act, and *Gloria*, ending with the Collect

K

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

Kyrie the brief petition translated from the Greek that means "Lord, have mercy"

L

Last Supper the last meal that Jesus ate with his disciples on the night before he died. At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine and blessed them, and they became his Body and Blood.

lector the reader of the Sacred Scriptures at Mass, with the exception of the Gospel

liturgy the public prayer of the Church. Through the liturgy we are united with Christ, who continues the work of our redemption in, with, and through his Church.

Lord's Prayer the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples and the Church. It is the summary of the whole Gospel in which we praise our Father, petition for our needs, and ask for forgiveness as we forgive others.

M

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

mercy is a grace given to us by Jesus Christ. In recognizing the mercy shown to us, we can in turn show forgiveness and mercy to others.

moral choice a choice to do what is right or not do what is wrong. We make moral choices because they help us grow closer to God and because we have the freedom to choose what is right and avoid what is wrong.

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.

mystery of faith 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.

N

New Testament the 27 books of the second part of the Bible that tell of the teaching, ministry, and saving events of the life of Jesus. The four Gospels present Jesus' life, Death, and Resurrection. The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of 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. The Book of Revelation offers encouragement to Christians living through persecution.

O

offering the bringing forward of the bread and wine with the contributions of the people for the needs of the Church and the poor

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

original holiness Adam and Eve were created good by God, sharing in the divine life. As long as they lived in this intimacy with God, they would not be hampered by concupiscence and would not have to suffer and die. Work was not a burden, but a collaboration with God for the good of the visible world.

original justice | Sacred Scripture

original justice the original state of Adam and Eve who were created good in friendship with God. As such, they lived in an inner harmony with themselves, one another, and all creation.

Original Sin the consequence of the disobedience of Adam and Eve. They disobeyed God by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They succumbed to the temptation from the serpent (the Evil One) and chose to follow their own will rather than God's will. As a result, human beings lost God's gift of original holiness and original justice. Since Adam and Eve, all are born with a fallen human nature and struggle with concupiscence, which makes them more susceptible to falling into sinful temptations.

P

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

Penitential Act a formula of general confession asking for God's mercy said at Mass. 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.

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

procession the movement of the priest, servers, and lectors from the entrance of the church to the altar, symbolizing the journey of the pilgrim Church to God

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

R

real presence the way in which the risen Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist under the appearances of wheat bread and grape wine. Jesus Christ's presence is called real because in the

Eucharist his Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, are wholly and entirely present.

reconcile being restored to God's grace by confessing our sins in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Jesus came to reconcile us with God.

reconciliation room a small room in the church set aside for the individual celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

repentance our turning away from sin with a desire to change our lives and live more closely as God wants us to live. We express our penance externally by prayer, fasting, and helping those who are poor.

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

S

sacrament one of seven ways through which God's life enters our lives through the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave us three sacraments that bring us into the Church: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. He gave us two sacraments that bring us healing: Penance and Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. He also gave us two sacraments that help members serve the community: Matrimony and Holy Orders.

sacramental character This indelible character, received in Baptism and Confirmation, gives a positive disposition for grace and a promise of divine protection. It is a divine vocation of divine worship to the Church, and the sacrament can never be repeated.

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

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 divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity.

Sacred Scripture the Old Testament and New Testament readings proclaimed at Mass

sacrifice | venial sin

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

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

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

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

seal of confession also called the "sacramental seal." It declares that the priest is absolutely forbidden to reveal under any circumstances any sin confessed to him in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

sin of commission a deliberate act that is an offense against God and others

sin of omission the failure to act when, in a firm judgment of conscience, we recognize offenses against God and others or any personal failure to act when one should.

soul the innermost aspect of man, that which is of greatest value in him, that by which he is most especially in God's image. The soul is immortal, created immediately by God and not by parents. Body and soul together form one unique human nature. The soul is responsible for our consciousness. In having a soul, intellect, and will, we are endowed with freedom, an "outstanding manifestation" of the divine image. The soul does not die and is reunited with the body in the final resurrection.

T

tabernacle the container in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept so that Holy Communion can be taken to those who are sick and dying. It 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.

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

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

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

transubstantiation when the wheat bread and grape wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. When the priest speaks the words of consecration, the substance of the wheat bread and grape wine is transformed into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood.

Trinity, Holy the mystery of God in Three divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Persons of the Trinity are consubstantial and indivisible. When we pray to the Father, we adore and glorify him with the Son and the Holy Spirit.

V

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