

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

A	
Abba	Abba means “daddy.” Because Jesus called God “Abba” Christians often think of God as their father in heaven.
Abraham	Abraham was the first person God chose to bring his covenant of friendship to the world.
Absolution	Absolution is the forgiveness of God given through the priest in the sacrament of Reconciliation. To absolve means “to wash.”
Act of Contrition	An Act of Contrition is a prayer that tells God how sorry we are for our sins.
Adam and Eve	Adam and Eve were the first humans created by God. They lived in the Garden of Eden.
Adore	To adore Jesus Christ means to worship or honor him as the Son of God.
Advent	Advent is the church season four weeks before Christmas when we get ready to welcome Jesus into our lives. Advent means “coming.”
Alb	An alb is the long, white robe worn by priests, deacons, or other ministers when they lead public prayer. The word “alb” means white.
All Saints’ Day	November 1 is All Saints’ Day when we thank God for the lives and examples of all holy people.
All Souls’ Day	November 2 is All Souls’ Day when the Church remembers and prays for all the people who have died.
Alleluia	A joyful word that means “Praise God.” It is shouted or sung.
Almsgiving	One of three principal forms of penance in which the penitent secretly donates money or other valuables to the poor as an expression of sorrow for sin.
Altar	An altar is a raised place where sacrifices are offered. The altar used for the center of worship during the Mass is also a table, where we gather to share the eucharistic meal.
Amen	Amen means, “Yes, I believe. It is true. Or “So it is.” We often say “Amen” at the end of prayers.
Angel	The word angel means “messenger.” Angels are spirits created to love and praise God. Every believer has a guardian angel to protect and guide us.
Annulment	Those who have been divorced and who wish to be married must first obtain a decree of nullity (annulment), stating that their previous relationship was not a valid marriage. Based on documentation submitted to the local Diocesan Tribunal, the Church determines the validity of the marriage in question.
Annunciation, Feast of the	On March 25, the church celebrates the Feast of the Annunciation. This is the day when the angel Gabriel told Mary that she was going to be the Mother of God.

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Anointed	Being anointed means that a person has a special mission. We are anointed with holy oil when we are baptized and confirmed.
Anointing	In the celebration of many of the sacraments, Christians are sealed (anointed) with one of three types of blessed oil. Anointing claims us as members in the family of God and symbolizes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
Anointing of the Sick	Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament of healing. The priest anoints or rubs oil of the sick on the person who is sick or dying. It brings Jesus' comfort, strength, and forgiveness to the person.
Apostles	The Apostles were those first 12 men called by Jesus to preach, heal, and teach in His name.
Apostles' Creed	The Apostles' Creed contains the central truths of the Catholic faith and sums up the beliefs and teachings of the Apostles.
Apostolic	Apostolic means "to be faithful to the teachings of Jesus and his Apostles."
Apostolic Church	The Church is apostolic because Jesus founded it on the apostles and it is taught, sanctified, and guided by their successors, our bishops.
Apostolic Succession	In order to safeguard the faithful proclamation of the Gospel for all time, the apostles appointed successors known as bishops, and, by the "laying on of hands" at ordination, transferred to them the authority they had received from Christ, equipping them to represent Christ and carry on the work of shepherding the Church.
Apparitions	Supernatural appearances of heavenly persons to those on earth. These appearances usually involve spoken messages and visual signs that encourage people to turn away from sin and grow in holiness.
Ark of the Covenant	The ark of the covenant was a special box that held the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments.
Ascension, Feast of the	The Feast of the Ascension is on a Thursday, 40 days after Easter. We celebrate when Jesus, in his resurrected body, entered heaven.
Ash Wednesday	Ash Wednesday begins the church season of Lent. We receive ashes on our foreheads as a sign that we are sorry for our sins.
Assembly	An assembly is a gathering of Catholics to celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments.
Assumption, Feast of the	The Feast of the Assumption is on August 15. This is the day the church celebrates the belief that Mary was taken body and soul into the glory of heaven and fully shares in the Resurrection of Jesus.
Authority	Authority is the right, or power, to do something.

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B	
Baptism	Baptism is the Sacrament of Initiation that welcomes us into the Church and frees us from original sin and all personal sins. A minister baptizes by pouring water over the person's forehead while blessing them by name – "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
Baptism of Jesus	Jesus was baptized by the John the Baptist in the River Jordan. A voice from heaven proclaimed that Jesus was God's Son.
Baptismal font	The container or vessel for the water which is used at Baptism. A "living" font is constructed in a manner that water flows continuously.
Beatitude	God freely offers us the chance to live forever with him in heaven, in "beatitude" or perfect happiness, and he has put the desire for happiness in every one of us so that we can taste, in this life, some share of the life to come.
Beatitudes	The Beatitudes are Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount which show us what life as a Christian is intended to be and how to find real happiness in God's kingdom.
Bethlehem	The town in Judea where Jesus was born.
Bible	The Bible (which means "book") is the written Word of God. The Catholic bible contains 73 books. The Holy Spirit guided people to write all that is contained in the Bible. It is also called Scripture.
Bishop	A bishop is an ordained leader of a diocese. Bishops are the chief teachers of the Catholic Church. They are the successors of the Apostles.
Bless	To bless means to ask for God's good will toward someone.
Blessed Mother	Another name for Mary. She is blessed, or gifted, because she is the Mother of God and our mother too.
Blessed Sacrament	The Blessed Sacrament is another name for the Eucharist.
Blessed Trinity	The Blessed Trinity is the mystery of one God in three divine Persons. The three divine Persons are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Also called the Holy Trinity.
blessing	A blessing is a gift from God. A blessing can also be a prayer that asks for God's care and protection or for God's gifts for others and ourselves.
Body of Christ	The Body of Christ is the Church or the People of God. We also call the consecrated bread at the Eucharist the Body of Christ.
bread	Bread is a food which helps us grow and gives us strength. Jesus is called the "Bread of Life" because his love does the same thing for us.

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C	
Calvary	Calvary is a hill near the city of Jerusalem. Calvary is the place where Jesus was hung on a wooden cross to die.
Candles	Candles give off beautiful light. They are used at Mass to remind us of Jesus' presence in the world and in the gifts of bread and wine.
Cardinal virtues	The four cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. All other human virtues "hinge" upon these four.
Care	To care for someone is to love them and want them to be well and happy.
Catechist	Someone who teaches others about God and God's word.
Catholic	The word catholic means "universal" or for everyone. God wants everyone to be a member of the Church, to follow Jesus, and to be members of his family.
Catholic Church	The Catholic Church was founded by Jesus Christ. The Church is the living Body of Christ formed from the community of Jesus' followers.
Celebrant	Ordained clergy member who leads our church worship services.
Celibate	Describes those who choose not to marry or have children so that they can be completely free to serve God. Catholic priests of the Roman rite promise to live celibate lives, and religious order priests take a vow of chastity.
Chalice	A cup that holds the consecrated wine at Mass.
Chapel	A place of worship or prayer that is smaller than a church, often found in buildings like hospitals and schools.
Charisms	Special gifts granted by the Holy Spirit to help our lives bear fruit for the good of the whole Church. Charisms include extraordinary gifts such as healing and prophecy, as well as others such as teaching, preaching and discernment of spirits.
Charity	Virtue that helps us express self-giving Christian love and kindness to others. The greatest of the theological virtues.
Chastity	Chastity is the virtue that helps us use the gift of sexuality to express authentic love, which reserves sexual expression for marriage.
Chasuble	Colorful outer garment (vestment) worn by the celebrant of Mass. It is usually green, white, violet, or red, depending on the season or day in the church.
Choir	A group of people who sing together.
Chosen people	In the Old Testament the chosen people were Abraham and his descendants.

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Chrism	Chrism is holy oil blessed by the bishop. It is sweet-smelling, made of olive oil and perfume. Used at Baptism and Confirmation.
Christ	Christ means “anointed one” or “the Chosen one.” Jesus is the Christ, because he is the one chosen by God to save all people from sin.
Christ’s mission	Christ’s mission is to bring the Kingdom of God to all people. The Church guides us in spreading God’s peace and love to the world.
Christian	A Christian is a baptized person who believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and who tries to live as Jesus lived, loving God and others.
Christmas	Christmas is December 25 when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.
Christogram	For Catholics, Jesus’ sacred name symbolized by the monogram “IHS,” which is the first three letters of the Greek spelling of His name.
Church (building)	A church is a special place where Catholics come together to pray.
Church (community)	The Church is the name for the people of God on earth. It is also called the Body of Christ.
Church Year	The church has seasons of worship – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time plus many other special days.
Ciborium	Covered container made of precious metal used for the distribution of Holy Communion and for keeping the consecrated hosts after Mass.
Clergy	The clergy are people who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders and who serve as bishops, priests, and deacons.
Commandment	A commandment is God’s law that teaches us how to love God. Jesus gave us two great commandments: <i>Love God with all your heart and Love your neighbor as yourself.</i>
Commitment	A commitment in the Church is a promise to serve God and others.
Communion of Saints	The Communion of Saints is made up of all the followers of Jesus, both living and dead. The Communion of Saints includes the saints in heaven, the souls in purgatory, and the believers on earth.
Community	A community is a group of people who belong together
Compassion	Compassion means “to have feeling for someone’s problem and want to help.” Jesus teaches us to have compassion for our neighbors.
Confession	Confession is when we admit something we have done is wrong by telling our sins to a priest in the sacrament of Reconciliation.
Confirmation	Confirmation is a Sacrament of Initiation and completes Baptism. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts that strengthen our faith to live out God’s call to serve the Church, especially through faithful witness.

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Conscience	Our conscience is our ability to know and judge what is right and what is wrong. God speaks to us in our conscience and helps us make responsible decisions. A well-formed conscience is developed through prayerful study of the teachings of the Church.
Consecration	Means "to make holy," or to dedicate something or someone to a holy purpose. At Mass, the priest prays a special blessing consecrating bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus.
Consent	To give in, or give permission, through an act of free will. We can consent to what is good or to what is bad. Either way, we are responsible.
Consubstantial	The Church's teaching that Christ is "of the same substance" with the Father because he is fully God. He shares the same divine nature.
Contemplation	Type of prayer that is marked by simple silence in the presence of God. We can contemplate Scripture, icons, the mysteries of the Rosary, or anything that opens our hearts and minds to an intimate communion with God.
Contrition	Contrition means to be genuinely sorry for any wrong we have done and a strong resolve to stay away from sin in the future.
Conversion	A conversion is a profound change of heart toward God. Religious conversion is always an experience of accepting God's grace and turning away from sin.
Corporal works of mercy	The corporal works of mercy are the loving actions by which we respond to the basic physical needs of people: Feed the hungry; Give drink to the thirsty; Shelter the homeless; Clothe the naked; Comfort the sick; Visit the imprisoned; Bury the dead.
Covenant	A covenant is a sacred agreement, promise, or relationship, made between persons or groups of people, sometimes sealed by a ritual or ceremony.
Create	To create means to make something out of nothing.
Creation	Creation is everything that exists, created from God's love. God said that all of creation is good.
Creator	God made everything in the world. God is our Creator.
Creed	A creed is a statement of faith or belief. There are two creeds -- The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed.
Cross	The main symbol of the Christian faith because Jesus died on a cross.
Crucifix	A cross with a figure (corpus) of Christ on it.

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E	
Easter	The feast when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection.
Emmanuel	Means "God is with us." It is also another name for Jesus.
Epiclesis	Liturgical moment when the priest extends his hands over the gifts (bread and wine) and "calls down" the Holy Spirit upon the gifts to transform them into Christ's Body and Blood.
Epiphany, Feast of the	The Feast of the Epiphany is the second Sunday after Christmas. It is the day we remember the visit of the wise men to Jesus. The wise men saw and believed that Jesus was God's Son.
Epistle	An epistle is a letter. Some books of the Bible are called epistles. They are letters of encouragement from the disciples of Jesus to Christians everywhere.
Essenes	Essenes were devout Jewish people who lived simply in the desert.
Eternal	Means "forever." Something without beginning or end. God is eternal.
Eternal life	Eternal life is living forever with God in heaven in perfect happiness.
Eucharist	The Eucharist is a Sacrament of Initiation and most central to the faith because it "re-presents" Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and allows us to receive him, present yet hidden, in the form of bread and wine. The Eucharist is not a mere symbol, but is truly the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.
Evangelists	People who speak or write about the good news of Christ. The authors of the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called the four evangelists.
Evangelization	The process of preaching the Gospel, by words and example.
Everlasting life	Jesus promises us a life without end if we believe in him.
Evil	Evil is the absence of good. It is anything bad or wrong which causes us to sin. The devil is evil.
Examination of conscience	An examination of conscience is an organized way to remember and decide whether our words and actions show love for God and others. It can help us change bad habits and is part of the sacrament of Reconciliation.
Exile	Exile is the forced removal of people from their homeland to another land. The Israelites captured by the Assyrians were living in exile.
Exodus	A Greek word that means "going forth." The Exodus is the Old Testament story of how God freed the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt to go forth to Canaan, the land of freedom. Exodus is the second book of the Old Testament.

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F	
Faith	Faith is a gift of God, a virtue that helps us to believe and trust in God and in all the teachings of our Church. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
Family	Families come in all sizes, some with two parents and many children, some with only one parent and child. God's family is enormous and we are all part of it as brothers and sisters to one another.
Fast	To fast means "to go without food or with little food for a specified period of time. Fasting is an important tradition in Catholic spirituality to help us learn self-control. We also fast during Lent to feel closer to the poor and hungry.
Father	Jesus called God "Father" to show that God loves us as a parent loves a child. God the Father is the first person of the Blessed Trinity.
Feast day	A holy day in the Church Year when we remember and think about a saint or special event. Christmas and Easter are feast days.
Fiat	Fiat is a Latin word meaning "let it be done [to me]." It is used to describe the Blessed Virgin Mary's gracious consent to be the mother of Jesus when confronted by the archangel Gabriel.
Fidelity	Fidelity is faithfulness and loyalty to something or someone. Joseph is a model of fidelity to God.
Forgive	To forgive means to excuse or to pardon. Forgiveness is when we become friends with someone we have hurt or who has hurt us.
Free will	Free will is the power given to us by God to make our own choices, for good or bad.
Fruits of the Holy Spirit	The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are clear signs that he is acting in our lives. Fruits: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.

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G	
General intercessions	The prayers which people offer at Mass for their needs and the needs of others. They are also called the Prayers of the Faithful.
Genesis	Means "beginning." The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible. It tells the story of the beginning of the world.
Genuflect	We genuflect by touching our right knee to the ground and standing back up. It is a sign of respect we show when we enter and leave the presence of Jesus in church.
Gifts	Things we give freely without wanting to get something in return.
Gifts of the Holy Spirit	The Gifts of the Holy Spirit, given in the sacrament of Confirmation, are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They help us to love God and live as his followers.
Gloria	The Gloria is a prayer of praise to God. It is often said or sung at Mass.
God	The Creator – the source of all life. God will never stop loving us. Christians believe in one God who is three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Godparents	People who sponsor or speak for us at Baptism. They promise to pray for us and our parents.
Good Friday	The Friday before Easter. It is the day we remember that Jesus died on the cross. It is called "good" because we are saved through Jesus' death.
Good News	The Good News is Jesus Christ's message that he is the Son of God.
Good Samaritan	Jesus tells a parable about a good person from Samaria who helped a stranger in need. A person who helps others is sometimes called a "Good Samaritan."
Good Shepherd	Jesus is called the Good Shepherd because he watches over and cares for us, just as a shepherd cares for his sheep.
Gospel	Gospel means "Good News." At Mass we hear readings about Jesus' life, teachings, and actions from the four gospels -- the New Testament books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
Grace	Grace is a share in the divine life, a free gift of supernatural help given to us not because we deserve it, but because God loves us. Grace makes it possible for us to respond to God's call, to grow in holiness, and to live with God in heaven for all eternity.
Grace at meals	A prayer or blessing that people share before eating. We ask God to bless the both the food and those who are about to share it.
Great Commandment	The Great Commandment is Jesus' teachings about how to love God.
Guidance	Guidance means "to lead or show the way." We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help in making the right choices. God gives us guidance to help us develop our conscience.

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H	
Hail Mary	“Hail, Mary” was the way the angel Gabriel greeted Mary at the annunciation. Hail is a respectful way of saying “hello.” The Hail Mary is a prayer which begins with Gabriel’s greeting.
Hallowed	Hallowed means “to honor something as holy.” God’s name is hallowed.
Happiness	The desire for happiness has been placed in our hearts by God, who is the only one who can fulfill us and make us happy.
Heaven	Heaven is our true home -- life in God’s presence forever.
Hebrew Scriptures	Another name for the Old Testament books of the Bible.
Hell	Hell is being separated from God and God’s love forever.
Holiness	The state of Christian perfection to which we are all called. We cannot achieve it on our own, we must rely on the grace and mercy of God.
Holy	To be holy means “being like God.”
Holy Communion	We receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion.
Holy Days	Days in the Church Year when we remember special events in the life of Jesus or Mary. Catholics attend Mass on holy days of obligation.
Holy Family	Jesus, his mother Mary, and her husband, Joseph.
Holy Oil	Holy oil is a special oil used in Church celebrations. There are three: the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and Sacred Chrism.
Holy Land	The land of Israel where Jesus was born and lived.
Holy Orders	Holy Orders is the Sacrament of Service in which bishops, priests, and deacons are ordained to serve the Church.
Holy Spirit	The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity, the helper Jesus promised to send when he went to join his Father in heaven.
Holy Thursday	The Thursday before Easter, when Jesus shared the Last Supper with his friends and washed their feet. On Holy Thursday, we celebrate Jesus’ gift of the Eucharist, the institution of the priesthood, and his call to serve others.
Holy Trinity	Three persons in one God. Also called The Blessed Trinity . Each person of the Holy Trinity has perfect respect for the other, gives selflessly to each other without reserve, and receives each person in their totality. It is their love that makes them one and enables them to act together in perfect harmony as a communion of divine Persons.
Holy Water	Water which is blessed by a priest or deacon is holy water. It is used by Christians to remind them of their Baptism.
Holy Week	The week before Easter. It begins on Palm Sunday. During Holy Week, we remember that Jesus suffered and died for us.

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Homily	A homily is a talk given by a priest or deacon. It helps us understand the Bible readings we hear at Mass.
Honesty	Honesty means being truthful.
Hope	Hope is the virtue that helps us to trust in God no matter what happens. It also enables us to trust in God's promise of eternal life.
Hosanna	Means "Praise be to God."
Host	The bread we eat during the celebration of the Eucharist. When the host is consecrated (blessed) at Mass, it is the Body of Christ.
Hymns	Hymns are holy songs of praise that lift our hearts to God.
I	
IHS	For Catholics, a monogram symbol of Jesus' sacred name, which is the first three letters of the Greek spelling of His name.
Immaculate Conception, Feast of the	December 8. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is the belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was free from sin from the first moment of her life (conceived without original sin).
Immersed	Immersed means being placed in water for Baptism.
In Persona Christi	Latin for "in the person of Christ," this is the special role bishops and priests, by virtue of their ordination, have to act with the authority of Christ in celebrating the sacraments and teaching the faithful.
Incarnation	The Incarnation is the belief that God became man, one like us, when Jesus was born of his mother Mary. He is both human and divine.
Incense	A mixture of perfumes and spices which gives off sweet-smelling smoke. It is often used when we pray to remind us that our prayers rise to God as smoke rises to the sky.
Infallibility	Infallibility is a gift of the Holy Spirit. It ensures that when the pope or the pope and bishops together teach ex cathedra, or officially, on faith and morals, they always teach what is true.
Initiation	Initiation means, "to be newly welcomed into a group."
Inspiration	Means "in the spirit." The writers of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit to put the words and ideas God wanted into their writings.
Intercession	A type of prayer in which we place the needs of others before God. When we ask Our Lady, the saints or someone to pray for us, they become our intercessors.
Interior Life	Refers to the private relationship we have with God in our hearts, minds, and souls. It is strictly personal and unique and must be nourished like any important relationship.

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J	
Jerusalem	Also known as Zion, is the holy city for the Jewish people. Jerusalem is holy for Christians also, because Jesus spent much of this time there and was crucified outside the city walls.
Jesus, the Christ	The second person of the Blessed Trinity. The name "Jesus" comes from the Hebrew "Yeshua", meaning "God saves." It is the name which the angel told Mary to name her child, the Son of God. His followers added "Christ" because they believed that Jesus was the Messiah, God's Chosen (Anointed) One.
Jesus Prayer	"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me."
Jew	A Jew is a member of an ancient religion called Judaism. Thousands of years ago, God was made known to the Jews whom God called the Chosen People. Jesus was a Jew.
John the Baptist	A relative of Jesus who lived in the desert and baptized Jesus in the Jordan River.
Joseph	Joseph is Mary's husband and the foster father of Jesus.
Joy	Great happiness
Judgment	At the end of our lives, we will experience the judgment of God, which will determine how we spend eternity, either with God in heaven or separated from him in hell. The Church distinguishes between the <i>particular</i> judgment, which occurs immediately after death, and the <i>Last Judgment</i> , which will transpire at the Second Coming of Christ.
Justice	Justice means treating everyone fairly and with respect by following Jesus' teachings.
K	
Kerygma	Greek word for the Gospel, in brief: We were created by the Trinity to live in heaven forever, but sin alienated us from God. God gave his Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins and sent the Holy Spirit to build up the Church and share his divine life through the sacraments.
Kingdom of God	The Kingdom of God is God's promise of justice, peace, and joy that all his people will share at the end of time. It begins here on earth.

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L	
Laity	The laity is the name for all baptized people who have not been ordained.
Lamb of God	A name for Jesus. It shows us how gentle and loving Jesus is.
Last Supper	The Last Supper was the meal that Jesus ate with his disciples the night before he died. Jesus changed bread and wine into his body and blood. The Last Supper is remembered as the first Mass.
Law of Love	The loving message in which Jesus united the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes into one. Also known as the New Commandment.
Lectio Divina	“Divine Reading”; a traditional practice of meditation that involves the prayerful reading of a passage of Scripture (read); personal reflection (reflect); application (relate); and quieting the heart to give God a chance to speak (rest).
Lectionary	The book that contains the readings at Mass.
Lector	A person who reads the Bible readings at Mass during the Liturgy of the Word.
Lent	Season of prayer and penance before Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday and continues for forty days.
Liturgical colors	Colors that have special meaning for a season of the Church Year or for a church feast. White – Easter; Violet – Advent and Lent; Green – Ordinary Time; Red – Pentecost; Blue – Mary’s feast days.
Liturgical year	The liturgical year is the Church’s yearly calendar of liturgies, including Lent, Easter, Ordinary Time, Advent, Christmas, feast days, memorials, and holy days of obligation.
Liturgy	Means “public worship”; a special way to worship and praise God.
Liturgy of the Eucharist	The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the second part of the Mass in which the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.
Liturgy of the Hours	The Liturgy of the Hours is the daily prayer of the Catholic Church. It is also known as the “Divine Office.” It is prayed by reading scripture at different times from early morning to late night. It unites members of the Church everywhere.
Liturgy of the Word	The Liturgy of the Word is the first part of the Mass when we hear the Word of God in the Scriptures and explained in the homily.
Lord	A title of respect. When we call Jesus Lord, we mean that he is God.
Lord’s Day	Sunday is known as the Lord’s Day when we worship the Lord by celebrating the Eucharist at Mass. It is also called the Sabbath.
Lord’s Prayer	The Lord’s Prayer, or the Our Father, is a prayer that was given to us by Jesus.
Lord’s Supper	The name Christians use to describe the celebration of the Eucharist.
Love	Love is another word for God. Love is the greatest and highest virtue that imitates Jesus’ sacrificial love for us, a love that seeks the good of the other above our own.

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M	
Magisterium	The Magisterium refers to the living teaching authority of the Catholic Church, carried out by the Pope in union with the bishops, and ecumenical councils to teach on all questions of faith and morals, as well as to interpret with fidelity all practices of prayer and worship. The Magisterium is empowered by the Holy Spirit.
Magnificat	The song Jesus' mother Mary sang when she visited her cousin Elizabeth. The words tell of God's greatness.
Manger	Feeding box for farm animals. When Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary laid him in a manger.
Manna	Manna is the bread-like food that God gave the Israelites in the desert.
Marks of the Church	The four characteristics (or marks) that define the Church describe what the church is and should be: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.
Martyr	Means "witness." A person who has been killed for living his or her religious beliefs.
Mary, Mother of God	Mary is the Mother of God because she gave birth to Jesus, God's Son.
Mass	The word "Mass" comes from the Latin word <i>missa</i> , meaning "to send." It is a time when Catholics gather to hear God's word (Scripture) and celebrate the Eucharist (Holy Communion). It is both a sacrifice and a name for the Eucharist.
Matrimony (Marriage)	Matrimony is a vocation and a sacrament of Service which celebrates the covenant of love between baptized Christians, a man and a woman. Its purpose is to provide for the spiritual and physical well-being of both spouses, the procreation and education of children, and for service to the church.
Meditation	Meditation is one of the four types of prayer in which we are silent and concentrate on listening to God through our feelings, imagination, and thoughts. We can meditate by thinking about a Scripture story, art, and music.
Mercy	Mercy is an act of forgiveness. It is the loving kindness and generosity that God shows to sinners. We are called to show mercy to others.
Messiah	A messiah is a person chosen to save people from a particular fate. Messiah is the Hebrew word for Christ, "the Chosen One" or "savior." Jesus Christ is our Messiah, chosen by God to free us from sin and death.
Minister	A minister is a servant. Parish ministers serve people in many ways – by reading God's word, giving communion, or visiting the sick.
Ministry	Ministry means using our time and talents to serve God and others in Christ's name.

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Miracle	A wonderful and unexpected event which shows God's power and love.
Mission	A job or task. Our mission as Christians is to spread the good news of Jesus Christ by loving and serving others.
Missionary	A missionary is a person sent to share the gospel with others.
Monastery	A home for a religious community of men (monks) to live together.
Moral decisions	Moral decisions are choices between what is good and what is wrong.
Moral virtues	The moral virtues are four spiritual qualities-temperance, prudence, justice, and fortitude-that help us avoid sin.
Mortal sin	A mortal sin occurs when a gravely sinful act is committed with full understanding and consent of the will. If not repented in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, it separates us from God's sanctifying grace, which is needed to enter heaven.
Moses	Moses was the most important leader of the Old Testament. He led the people of Israel out of Egypt and received God's Law in the desert.
Mystery	A mystery refers to a truth revealed by God that we can describe in theological terms but cannot understand fully, including dogmas such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist.
N	
Nativity	The Nativity is the birth of Jesus Christ in the town of Bethlehem.
Natural Law	The law that is written on our hearts and in the very nature of things.
Natural Reason	The human power to figure something out. For example, we can judge right from wrong.
Nazareth	The town in Galilee where Jesus, Mary and Joseph lived.
Neighbor	A neighbor is a person created by God. We show we love God by loving our neighbor.
New Commandment	The New Commandment from Jesus is, "Love one another as I have loved you."
New Covenant	The New Covenant expresses the promise of God's friendship with the followers of Jesus. God promises that we will live forever.
New Eve	Mary is called the New Eve because she helped to bring salvation to the world by becoming the mother of Jesus, our Savior.
Nicene Creed	Catholics tell what they believe when they pray the Nicene Creed at Mass.
Noah	Noah was a good man who built an ark to save his family and the animals from a great flood. God promised that he would never again destroy the world by flood. God's promise to Noah was a covenant.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

O	
Oil of the Sick (OI)	A special oil blessed by the bishop, used to anoint people who are old or very sick.
Ordination	The sacrament (Holy Orders) that celebrates the promise of a deacon, priest, or bishop to serve the people of God.
Original Sin	Original sin is the separation between God and people that began when Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. This is an inherited sin that has been passed on to all human beings, weakening our ability to resist sin and do good. Jesus' life and death freed humans from the effects of original sin.
Our Father	Jesus gave us this prayer to teach us how to pray. We also call it the Lord's Prayer.
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Feast is celebrated on December 12. In 1531 Mary appeared to a poor Mexican man, Juan Diego, and told him to ask his bishop to build a church on the site. The bishop asked for a sign. It was winter and Juan Diego found roses growing where Mary had appeared and her image was imprinted on his tilma (cloak). The church was built on the site and pilgrims have visited it ever since.
P	
Palm Sunday	The Sunday before Easter, also called Passion Sunday. On Palm Sunday we carry palm leaves in church. This reminds us that Jesus entered Jerusalem to the cheers of people who waved palm branches and called him king.
Parable	A parable is a story that teaches a moral or religious lesson. Jesus used parables to teach lessons about how people should live their lives. Parables use everyday events and objects to explain important truths.
Paraclete	This word means "counselor" or "helper." This is how the Lord referred to the Holy Spirit when he promised to send the "Spirit of truth" to the apostles after he returned to heaven.
Parish	A parish is a community of Catholics who come together to worship God and to serve the needs of others.
Paschal Mystery	The mystery of salvation through the life, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ. Described as "paschal" because of the deep connection between our celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice and the Jewish celebration of Passover.
Passion	The passion is Jesus' arrest, trial, suffering, and death. We remember these events on Good Friday.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

Passover	Passover is a feast in which Jewish people recall how God saved their ancestors (Israelites) from slavery in Egypt.
Pastor	Means "shepherd." Leaders of parishes are called pastors because they care for their people as shepherds care for their sheep.
Patriarch	A patriarch, a term meaning "father," is a great leader of the Hebrews from early Scripture times. A patriarch is also the male leader of a family or clan.
Paul	Paul was a preacher and missionary in the early church. Some of the letters he wrote to help early Christians are part of the Bible.
Peace	Peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. It is experienced as a calm, good feeling of being together with God and with others. Peace follows forgiveness and is maintained through respect for the dignity of the human person at every stage of life.
Peacemaker	A peacemaker is a fair person who respects others. Jesus calls all people to be peacemakers.
Penance	A penance is a prayer or kind act we must do. It shows that we are sorry for the harm caused by our sin and that we want to do better. It is also another name for the sacrament of Reconciliation.
Penitential Rite	This rite occurs at the beginning of Mass. This is when we tell God that we have not lived as we should. We ask for mercy and forgiveness from God and the community.
Pentecost	Pentecost means "fiftieth day." Fifty days after Easter, the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and they went out to share the good news of Jesus. Sometimes this event is described as "the birthday of the Church."
People of God	The People of God are members of the church and followers of Jesus Christ.
Perpetual Virginity of Mary	Conceived solely through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was "born of the virgin." Yet Mary remained a virgin throughout her life, as a model of a life completely dedicated to God.
Persistence	Persistence is the act of continually pursuing something in spite of obstacles. Prayer often requires persistence.
Peter	Peter was one of the twelve apostles. Jesus named him Peter, which means "rock," because he was to be the rock or foundation on which the church was built. Peter was the first pope.
Petition	A petition is a prayer in which we ask for God's forgiveness and help. Petition is one of the four kinds of prayer.
Pew	A pew is a church bench.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

Pharisees	Pharisees were Jewish people who accepted both the written law of the Old Testament and spoken teachings and tradition.
Piety	Piety is putting God above everything else.
Pilgrimage	A journey people make to a sacred place.
Pope	The pope is the head of the Roman Catholic Church and the Bishop of Rome. He is the successor to Saint Peter. The word pope means "papa" in Latin.
Praise	Praise is a joyful type of prayer. It celebrates God's goodness.
Prayer	Prayer is listening to and talking to God, the communication that sustains and deepens our relationship with Him.
Prayer of the Faithful	The Prayer of the Faithful is the last part of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. During this prayer
Precepts of the Church	The precepts of the Church describe the minimum effort we must make in prayer and in living a moral life. All Catholics are called to move beyond the minimum by growing in love of God and neighbor. The 5 precepts are: Attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation; Confession of serious sin at least once a year; Reception of Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter season; Observance of the days of fast and abstinence; Providing for the needs of the Church.
Priest	A priest is an ordained minister called by God to lead the community in worship, preach God's word, celebrate the sacraments, and serve and care for God's people.
Promised land	The promised land was the land of freedom -- Canaan, the sacred place God promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Israelites.
Prophet	A prophet is a person sent by God to speak out against behavior that does not follow God's will.
Protestant	A Christian who does not belong to the Catholic Church.
Psalms	Psalms are religious songs and prayers to God from the Old Testament. Psalms often express praise, thanksgiving, or sorrow.
Purgatory	Purgatory is a final purification and preparation for those who die in a state of grace, but whose souls are not yet perfected. We must be cleansed from our sin after death to enter heaven.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

R	
Real Presence	The teaching that the whole Christ is truly present, body, blood, soul, and divinity, under the appearances of bread and wine.
Reconciliation	Reconciliation is the Sacrament of Healing through which we receive God's forgiveness for our sins and are reconciled with God and the Church.
Rectory	The place in a parish where priests live.
Redeemer	A name for Jesus Christ. It means he died to save us from our sins.
Redemption	Primary purpose of God's saving plan for the human race accomplished through the sacrifice of his only Son, Jesus Christ.
Redemptive Suffering	When we experience pain in our lives, Jesus invites us to face that suffering with courage, offering it back to God by faith.
Reign of God	The Reign of God means that God actively takes part in our lives with the promise of making a better world for all people. Jesus began the reign of God during his life on earth.
Religious	Religious brothers and sisters serve God and the Church by living and working in religious communities.
Respect	Respect means to "show that all people are valuable by acting kindly toward others."
Resurrection (Jesus)	The Resurrection is Jesus' victory over sin and death by rising from the dead to new life on Easter Sunday.
Resurrection (general)	Resurrection is the new life given to us when our bodies reunite with our souls at the end of time.
Revelation	Revelation is God's way of revealing himself and the mysteries of the faith through Scripture and Tradition. We are invited to respond with faith.
Reverence	Reverence is honor and respect. We can show our reverence for God through our prayers.
Ritual	A ceremony that is performed according to a plan, in a particular order, and that usually expresses a profound or solemn meaning. A set of words, actions, and gestures that we use to celebrate something special.
Role models	Role models are people who show us how to bring God's goodness into the world by their example.
Rome	A large city in Italy. Because Saint Peter lived and died there, Peter's successor, the bishop of Rome, is the leader of the Roman Catholic church.
Rosary	The Rosary is a special devotion/prayer that honors Mary, the Mother of God and Jesus. The Rosary helps us to meditate on events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. We use a string of beads to direct our prayer.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

S	
Sabbath	The Sabbath is the day of the week on which we rest and worship God. Catholics celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection.
Sacrament	A sacrament is a sacred outward sign given to the Church by Christ to give God's grace. The seven sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage, and Holy Orders
Sacramental	A sacramental is a sacred sign, symbolic prayer, blessing, object, or action instituted by the Church that reminds us that life is holy which can lead us to a fuller participation in the grace of the sacraments. Examples are Holy Water, relics, the Sign of the Cross.
Sacramental grace	Sacramental grace is the unique gift of God's love that we receive in each sacrament. It nourishes the supernatural life of the soul.
Sacraments of Service	The Sacraments of Service are Holy Orders and Matrimony. These two sacraments celebrate two special ways that people serve God by sharing their gifts with others.
Sacraments of Healing	The Sacraments of Healing are Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick.
Sacraments of Initiation	The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The Church welcomes new members through the Sacraments of Initiation in which Christians are given a share in God's life and are nourished and strengthened as they strive to become holy.
Sacred	Sacred is another word for holy -- something that comes from God.
Sacred Heart	The heart of Jesus. It is a symbol of his love for God and all people -- his heart lit with the fire of love.
Sacred images	Sacred images are statues or pictures that remind us of God, Mary, and the saints
Sacred Scripture	The 73 books of the Holy Bible.
Sacrifice	A sacrifice is an act of unselfish giving. It is also a ritual offering made to God by a priest on behalf of the people.
Sadducees	Sadducees were Jewish people who accepted only the written law of the Old Testament and rejected spoken teachings and tradition.
Saint	A saint is a Christian who lived a holy life on earth and now lives forever with God in heaven. The life of a saint shows us how to follow Jesus.
Salt	Salt is a mineral we take from the earth. Like water, we need salt for life. Jesus told his followers they were "salt of the earth," meaning they were to bring goodness to the world and make it a better place.
Salvation	Salvation is the forgiveness of sins and the restoration of friendship with God, through Jesus who saved us from sin and death.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

Sanctifying grace	Sanctifying grace is God's free gift of his own life. It is received at Baptism and heals us of sin and makes us holy.
Satan	The name that Jesus gave to the tempter or devil who tries to keep us from loving God and doing what is right.
Savior	Jesus
Scripture	Scripture means "sacred writings." It is the written Word of God found in the Bible. The Church professes that God is the author of the Bible because the writers of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit.
Seal	A seal is a permanent (indelible) spiritual "mark" on our souls. The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders impart a seal and can be received only once.
Seal of Confession	Because of the importance and private nature of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, priests are strictly bound, under threat of severe penalties, to maintain absolute secrecy about anything revealed in the confessional.
Sermon on the Mount	A collection of Jesus' teachings, including the Beatitudes. It shows what Jesus expects of his followers.
Serve	To serve means to help other people.
Server	One who helps the celebrant at Mass or another sacrament.
Sexuality	The ability to express the complementary differences of our gender, rooted in our very human nature as male or female, according to God's plan.
Share	To give or receive the good things God has blessed us with: wealth, love, talents, and faith.
Sign of Peace	During Mass we share the sign of peace – this handshake, hug, or kiss, and the words of greeting remind us to love our neighbors.
Sign of the Cross	A prayer in honor of the Blessed Trinity. Using our right hand to make the shape of a cross on ourselves we say: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."
Sin	A sin is any thought, word, or action that we choose that hurts others or ourselves and turns us away from God's Law and Love.
Sister	A woman who joins a community of other women and makes special promises to God. Sisters dedicate their lives to prayer and service.
Social Justice	We help to bring about social justice when we live by the "Golden Rule" and work with others to make society a more just place, tending to both the physical and spiritual needs of all.
Son of God	Son of God is a special title for Jesus. It tells us that Jesus is both divine and human.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

T	
Tabernacle	A tabernacle is the special place in church where the Blessed Sacrament is kept, for personal prayer and for distribution to those unable to come to Mass due to illness.
Talents	Talents are abilities or gifts to do something well. We can use our talents to serve others as Jesus teaches.
Temple	The Temple was the Jewish place of worship in Jerusalem that contained the ark of the covenant.
Temple of the Holy Spirit	Each of us is a temple of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit dwells within us. As temples of the Holy Spirit, we are called to imitate Jesus.
Temptation	A temptation is wanting to do something that is wrong.
Ten Commandments	The Ten Commandments are the laws God gave to Moses. They help us live in peace by loving God, ourselves, and others.
Thanksgiving	A form of prayer in which we express our gratitude for gifts received from God, especially the gift of Jesus. The Greek word <i>Eucharist</i> means “thanksgiving.”
Theological virtues	The theological virtues are faith, hope, and love. These virtues are infused into our souls at Baptism and help us to draw closer to God.
Tomb	A place to put a dead body. Jesus’ tomb was a cave.
Tradition (Sacred)	Tradition is the living transmission of the Word of God and includes the Church’s official teachings, rituals, and customs that have been handed down from the Apostles over the centuries.
Transfiguration	Means to change appearance. One day Jesus’ friends saw his face and clothes shining like the sun while he talked with the long-dead prophets of Moses and Elijah. This event is called the transfiguration.
Transubstantiation	Transubstantiation is the sacred mystery in which bread and wine are completely changed into the real presence of Jesus Christ; the Body of Christ and his Precious Blood.
Trespass(es)	Trespass means “to do something wrong to another person.” Sins.
Tribunal	An ecclesiastical (Church) court made up of one or more competent judges who consider all testimony, applying canon law, and rendering a declaration or verdict. Most of the work of diocesan tribunals concerns annulment cases.
Trinity	The Blessed Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith, the belief that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three distinct Persons, are one God and share in a single divine nature.
Truth	Truth is what God desires of our lives. We can live truthfully by following Jesus, who called himself “the way, the truth, and the life.”

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

U	
Unity	Oneness. One of the four marks of the Church which reflects the unity of the Blessed Trinity. Christ established the “one” Church and all are called to be part of it.
Unleavened	Unleavened bread is baked without yeast so that it does not rise. Jewish people used unleavened bread at Passover. Catholics use it for the Eucharist.
Usher	A person who helps at Mass – seating people and collecting the offering.
V	
Vatican	The Vatican is a small city within Rome. It is the home for the pope and the headquarters for the Roman Catholic Church.
Venial sin	A venial sin is a less serious sin that wounds but does not destroy the divine life in the soul. It weakens our love for God and others and can lead to mortal sin. Venial sin may be forgiven by a worthy reception of the Eucharist or in the sacrament of Reconciliation.
Vestments	Special clothes worn by ministers who celebrate or assist at Mass and other sacraments or worship services.
Viaticum	What the Church calls a person’s last reception of the Eucharist. Because Jesus is the “resurrection and the life” he has promised us that if we eat his Body and drink his Blood, we will have eternal life.
Virtue	A virtue is a habit that helps us to do good. The three most important virtues are faith, hope, and love.
Vocation	A vocation is “a calling.” It is God’s call to us to live our lives in a special way and to use our talents to serve others.
Vocational Discernment	The process of seeking our true purpose in life and involves preparing ourselves to hear the call of God, preferably under the guidance of a spiritually mature person. Our greatest happiness will be found in our faithfulness to God’s plan.

CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

W	
Water	Since we need water to live, it is a symbol for life. It is used in the church for blessings and for Baptism.
Wine	Wine is a drink made from grapes. During Mass, the wine is changed into the blood of Christ.
Wisdom	Wisdom is knowing how God wants us to live and trying to live that way.
Wise Men	In the Bible, the wise men were three kings who visited the baby Jesus and honored him with gifts. They are also called the Magi.
Witness	A witness is someone who tells, in words or actions, of the good news of Jesus Christ.
Word	Another name for Jesus. His words are God's words. Jesus is also called the Word of God.
Word of God	The Word of God is God speaking to us in Scripture.
Worship	To worship is to give honor and praise to God, especially as a community. For Catholics, the Mass is an example of public worship.
X – Y - Z	
X (symbol)	X is the first letter of the Greek name for Christ. P is the second. Together they make a symbol, called Chi Rho $\chi\rho$, which is used to mean Jesus, the Christ.
Yahweh	Yahweh is the most sacred name of God, spoken to Moses in the desert. It means "I am who I am." God is now, always has been, and always will be.