



Glossary of Terms - Parish 2020

Apostle - "one sent." This normally refers to the 12 men chosen by Jesus to be the bearers of his teachings to the world.

Archdiocese: The chief diocese of an ecclesiastical province.

Assembly - those gathered to celebrate the liturgy.

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

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

Canon Law - the codified body of general laws governing the Church.

Catechesis (cat-UH-key-sis) - religious instruction and formation for persons preparing for baptism and for the faithful in various stages of spiritual development.

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

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

Chancellor - the chief archivist of a diocese' official records who is also a notary and secretary of the diocesan curia.

Church - the universal Church that is spread throughout the world; the local Church is that of a particular locality, such as a diocese.

Deacon - an ordained minister who assists the celebrant during the Liturgy of the Word and at the altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Deacons can also provide assistance to the pastor in baptismal and/or marriage ministry. Transitional deacons are men who are preparing for the priesthood. Permanent deacons are men who are not planning to become ordained priests. They can be married and have children.

Deanery - regional subdivision of the Archdiocese. The Archdiocese comprises nine deaneries: Western, South West, Central, Concord, City, Northern, Eastern, St George and Sutherland.

Dean - The title of a priest appointed by the Bishop to aid him in administering the parishes in a certain vicinity, called a 'deanery'. The function of the dean involves promotion, coordination, and supervision of the common pastoral activity within the deanery.

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

Disciple - one who follows the teachings of Jesus. It is based on a word meaning pupil or student.

Doctrine – an official teaching of the church based on the revelation of God by and through Christ.

Eastern-rite Church - term used to describe the Catholic Churches which developed in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. They have their own distinctive liturgical and organizational systems. Each is considered equal to the Latin rite within the Church.

Ecclesial - having to do with the church in general or the life of the Church

Ecumenism (eh-KEW-meh-nizm) / Interdenominational / Ecumenical (EK-you-meh-nikal) Movement - a movement for spiritual understanding and unity among Christians and their churches. The term also is extended to apply to efforts toward greater understanding and cooperation between Christians and members of other faiths.

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

Evangelist - a preacher or revivalist who seeks conversions by preaching to groups.

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

Homily - a reflection by the celebrant or other minister on the Scripture readings and on the application of the texts in the daily lives of the assembled community.

Lay ministries - these are ministries within the church that are carried out by laypersons. Included are altar servers, Eucharistic minister and lectors.

Layman/woman - any church member who is neither ordained nor a member of a religious order.

Liturgy - The public prayer of the Church.

Mass - the common name for the Eucharistic liturgy of the Catholic Church. Also referred to as Eucharist, Celebration of the Liturgy, Eucharistic celebration, Sacrifice of the Mass, Lord's Supper.

Minister - from the Latin word for "servant," in the ecclesiastical sense a minister is an ordained cleric or one who has the authority to minister to others.

New Evangelisation –outreach to baptized Catholics who have become distant from the faith.

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

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

Parish Administrator - when a parish is without a pastor or a pastor is unable to fulfill his pastoral responsibilities, a priest administrator is appointed by the bishop and is bound by the same obligations and enjoys the same rights as a pastor.

Pastor - a priest appointed by a bishop to attend to the pastoral care of one or more parishes. He is responsible for administering the sacraments, instructing the congregation in the doctrine of the Church, and other services to the people of the parish.

Pastoral Council - a group of members of the parish who advise the pastor on parish matters.

Religious Order - a community of people with a particular charism, as expressed by its founder, and recognized by the Church is a religious order. There are religious orders of priests and brothers, and religious orders of sisters, which may also have lay associates. Some religious orders are dedicated primarily to prayer (contemplative), while others focus on apostolic (active) ministries.

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

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

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