

Glossary

UNIT ONE

Agape: Greek word for sacrificial love. *Agape* is the highest form of love. It is the love of God for human beings and the love human beings are called to for God and for one another.

Charity: The Theological Virtue by which we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

Chastity: A moral virtue that helps us manage or control our desires for bodily and spiritual pleasure in the way that God intended. Chastity specifically involves self-mastery of sexual feelings. It is also a virtue that helps us choose what is best for others.

Common Good: The sum total of social conditions that allow the people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily. It concerns the life of all rather than only a few and requires respect for the person, the social well-being and development of the group itself, and peace.

Corporal Works of Mercy: Jesus taught us that we must love our neighbor by performing Corporal (and Spiritual) Works of Mercy. Corporal means “body.” The corporal works of mercy help us meet a person’s physical needs. They are: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, ransom the captive, and bury the dead.

Divine Fatherhood: The Fatherhood of God, who is the Creator of all things. God’s Fatherhood is the source of human fatherhood and the foundation of honor owed to parents. Prayer is primarily addressed to God the Father.

Eros: Greek for “passion” or “desire.” It is often used to describe romantic love.

Family: A man and woman united in marriage, together with their children. It is a communion of persons who are a sign and image of the Holy Trinity. It is the domestic church, a community of faith, hope, and charity where children receive their first proclamation of the faith and learn how to pray. It is the original cell of social life, in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love, in the gift of life, and an education in morality, honoring God, and the proper use of freedom for their children.

Fraternity: Brotherhood, close relationship, or community. The humanity community is meant to resemble the relationship between the divine Persons of the Holy Trinity, who give and receive love to each other.

Friendship: A relationship between two or more people brought together for a common reason or purpose. In friendships, we first learn to love and respect others and to receive love and respect from others.

Human Dignity: The honor and respect due to all human beings, from unborn babies to the elderly, because they are children of God made in His image and likeness.

Imago Dei: Latin for “Image of God.” Human beings as male and female are made in God’s image, which means that we are persons and that we possess intellect, free will, and a capacity for love.

Justice: A Cardinal Virtue that helps us give God and neighbor their due.

Kingdom of God: God’s reign or rule over all things. During His public ministry, Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God was at hand. The Church is the seed, or beginning, of the Kingdom here on earth. The Kingdom will be fulfilled in Heaven.

Original Justice: The original state of human beings before sin. In the beginning there was no suffering or death, man was at peace with himself, there was harmony between men and women, and there was peace between Adam and Eve and all of creation. Original Justice was lost due to the Original Sin.

Peace: The stability and security of a just order. In the family, peace means parents who love and respect each other while loving God above all, and children who honor their parents. In society, peace requires social authorities to ensure by morally acceptable means the security of society and its members. It is for all of us the work of justice and the effect of charity.

Resurrection of the Body: The Christian belief that at the end of time our souls will be reunited with our resurrected and glorified bodies. The everlasting life Jesus promised is a bodily life in which we will be with God for eternity in the New Heavens and the New Earth at the end of time.

Society: A group of persons bound together by a principle of unity that goes beyond each one of them. Human beings are social beings and must live together in a society. It is a requirement of human nature. It is in society that human beings develop their fullest potential and respond to their vocation.

Solidarity: A uniting principle in society by which people bear each other’s sufferings together, make sure that material things such as food, clothing, and other resources are distributed justly, and most importantly, share spiritual goods such as prayer and penance. Solidarity is a direct demand of Christian brotherhood.

Soul: The spiritual principle which animates or gives life to a body. In human beings, the soul is the innermost aspect of the person, that which is of greatest value in him, and by which he is most especially in God’s image. It is created by God at the moment of conception and is immortal. God intended for the human body and the human soul to be united in one human nature.

Spiritual Works of Mercy: Jesus taught us that we must love our neighbor by performing Spiritual (and Corporal) Works of Mercy. The spiritual works of mercy help us meet a person's spiritual needs. They are: instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, bear wrongs patiently, forgive offenses willingly, comfort the afflicted, and pray for the living and the dead.

Trinity: The Christian belief revealed to us by God that He is three Persons in one God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

UNIT TWO

Apostolic Fathers: The generation of leaders of the Church who were taught directly by the Apostles.

Apparition: A miraculous appearance of Jesus or Mary. There have been many appearances of Mary throughout the world in the past few centuries.

Canon: The official list of inspired books that appear in the Bible. The Catholic canon of Scripture includes 46 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books.

Charism: A specific gift or grace of the Holy Spirit that benefits the Church in some way. A charism is given in order to help a person live out the Christian life, or to serve the common good in building up the Church. This grace may also animate or inspire the spirituality and work of a religious community.

Christian Anthropology: The study of human beings concerning their origin, nature, and destiny from a Christian perspective, as made in the image and likeness of God.

Church: The communion of the faithful, those who have died and are in Heaven with God and all the angels and saints (the Church Triumphant), those who have died but are in a state of purification in Purgatory but are assured of salvation (the Church Suffering), and those who are working out their salvation here on earth (the Church Militant). The Church was founded by Jesus and will exist until the end of time. The Church is at the same time human and divine. She is the mystical Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the Body of Christ and unites its members.

Consubstantial: "Of the same substance." As affirmed by the profession of faith in the Nicene Creed, the Father and the Son are both fully God, or "of the same" divine substance. This teaching was definitively set forth to combat false teachings about Jesus' humanity and divinity, and affirm the truth of Jesus' human and divine natures.

Counter-Reformation: The name given to the Church's efforts to bring home separated Christians in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation.

Didache: A manual published in the mid to late first century that explains the practices of Christianity. It was written by the Apostolic Fathers and gives great insight into the very early Church. It contains one of the earliest written descriptions of the Catholic Mass.

Ecclesia: Latin word used to describe “the Church.” From the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means “to call out of.” This word was used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament to describe the People of God, whom He had called out of the human race and gathered to Himself. The earliest Christians used the word to describe themselves because they understood that they were the assembly of people called together by God.

Ecumenical: Worldwide. The ecumenical councils of the Church, such as the Second Vatican Council, are meetings of all the bishops of the world. Also refers to the work of restoring unity among all Christians.

Encyclical: A teaching document written by the pope.

Enlightenment: A 17th century philosophical movement that gave rise to many good ideas such as the scientific method and various political and governmental concepts, as well as many errors of thought, such as a conflict between faith and reason, an overreliance on science, new forms of atheism (belief that there is no God), and the denial of objective truth.

Evangelize: Carrying forth the Good News of salvation to every sector of the human race so that by its strength it may enter the hearts of men and renew the human race. The Church exists to evangelize, by her preaching and teaching, to be the channel of God’s grace in the world, to reconcile sinners to God, and to perpetuate Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass.

Genocide: The deliberate killing and destruction of an entire group of people. There have been numerous systematic killings of racial, political, and cultural groups, including Christians, throughout the past century.

Great Commission: The final words of Christ to His Apostles before His Ascension into Heaven, found in Matthew 28:18-20. In these words, Christ gave His Apostles, and thereby the Church, the mission of making disciples of all the nations.

Heresy: False teachings about God, Jesus, salvation, and the Church.

Holy Roman Empire: A restoration of the western portion of the Roman Empire that lasted in various forms from AD 800 to AD 1806. It was ruled by the Holy Roman Emperor, who was from various lands in Europe throughout the centuries.

Hypostatic Union: A theological term used to express that Jesus is one Person in two natures, human and divine.

Indefectible: Indestructible. Jesus willed that His Church be indestructible, which means not only that the Church will last for all time, but also that her essential elements will not be corrupted from outside or from within. The Holy Spirit guides and protects the Church in this age against the forces that would seek to harm her.

Martyr: Someone who is killed for bearing witness to the Christian Faith.

Monastery: One or more buildings where communities of religious men and women live. Within, labor and prayer are all directed toward serving God and making everyday life holy. During the Dark Ages, they became centers of learning that preserved knowledge and culture. They also offered hospitality to travelers, the poor, and the sick.

Moors: Muslims from North Africa who crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and invaded the southern part of Spain and eventually controlled Spain, Portugal, Sicily, and parts of Italy. They were defeated in AD 732 at the Battle of Tours led by the ruler of the Franks, Charles Martel, and his forces, preserving the Christian Faith in Europe.

Netherworld: Eternal death, or Hell.

Pater Noster: Latin for “Our Father,” the first words of the Lord’s Prayer.

Pax Romana: A time of relative peace and stability throughout the Roman Empire that lasted until about AD 180. It was during this time that Jesus was born.

Qahal: Hebrew for “assembly” or “congregation.” It is one of the first words used in the Old Testament to describe the People of God, the Chosen People whom He had called out or assembled in His name. The *qahal* of the Old Testament was the seed of the Church in the New Testament, which God intended to build from the beginning.

Reformation: A 16th century revolt begun by Martin Luther that divided and eventually splintered Christianity. Though Luther originally intended to reform the Catholic Church, he failed to do so and led a formal split from the Church. Many Christian churches formed as a result of this split, which are known as Protestant churches, or denominations. Though Jesus desires that His Church be one, all baptized Christians are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Schism: A split or division over differences of opinion or belief. The Eastern and Western Churches split (the Great Schism) in AD 1054 over differences in theological opinion, which are not heretical. The Catholic Church still considers the Sacraments of the Orthodox Church valid.

Septuagint: The Greek translation of the Old Testament written between the third century BC and 132 BC. It is the translation of Scripture Jesus would have been familiar with and quoted from.

Theotokos: Greek for “Mother of God.” A title for Mary that describes her motherhood of Jesus, who is fully man and fully God.

Threefold Mission of Christ: The mission of Christ is the salvation of all souls, which He carries out by His three offices of priest, prophet, and king. By virtue of our Baptism, the faithful also share in Christ's mission as priest, prophet, and king.

Vulgate: The 4th century Latin translation of the Bible that was mostly completed by St. Jerome. It became the official Latin translation of the Bible for the Catholic Church in the 16th century.

UNIT THREE

Beatitude: Happiness or fulfillment. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus gave the Beatitudes as the perfection of the Ten Commandments. They teach us how to be truly happy, or reach human perfection and fulfillment which we ultimately find in Heaven.

Blessing: God's power and care upon a person, place, thing, or action. God's blessing can be requested in prayer.

Capital Sins: Certain sins that should be especially guarded against because they are likely to lead to other sin. They are: pride, greed, envy, anger, lust, gluttony, and sloth. Also known as the seven deadly sins.

Commandment: One of the Ten Commandments, known as the Decalogue, or "ten words" from God to His Chosen People. They were written by God to be an objective moral standard for His people, an expression of the divine law of God. If one does not do evil acts as guided by the Commandments, then she is free from sin and able to grow in virtue and in freedom. We are obligated to follow the Commandments.

Communion: Sharing of life with one another. As one human family, we are called to imitate God who as Trinity is a communion of Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by loving and serving God and by loving and serving one another.

Concupiscence: A tendency, or inclination, to sin that is an effect of Original Sin. Even though Baptism erases the stain of Original Sin, the tendency to sin remains.

Conscience: The gift God gave human beings to be able to use reason in order to judge right from wrong. Conscience is God's voice in our hearts. We have a responsibility to educate ourselves and inform our conscience with prayer and God's word, about what is truly good. A poorly-formed conscience will lead us to sin.

Consequentialism: A dangerous philosophy that believes that a good outcome justifies bad actions and encourages people to commit evil acts. It suggests a good end result is the most important thing in morality and that the methods used to get that result are not important.

Covenant: A sacred unbreakable bond of family relationship. God entered in a series of covenants with mankind throughout Salvation History to invite us to be part of His divine family and to prepare gradually and in stages and in words and deeds to receive the gift of salvation.

Fallen Nature: The wounded human nature after the Fall of Man, or the Original Sin of Adam and Eve. This means that human beings have concupiscence, or a tendency to sin, and are subject to ignorance, suffering, and death. Baptism removes Original Sin, but its consequences remain in our weakened human nature.

Free Will: One of the faculties of the human soul. It is a person's ability to choose and act based upon knowledge and understanding.

Freedom: The power, rooted in the intellect and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility. True freedom is the ability to do what one ought to do, that which is truly good and directed toward God, our happiness and fulfillment.

Grace: The free and undeserved gift of God's life within us. The Sacraments are efficacious signs of God's grace.

Holiness: The fullness of the Christian life and the perfection of charity. To be holy is to be set apart by God. We do not make ourselves holy; rather, holiness comes from God's initiative. We are holy because God is holy and he calls us to Himself.

Human person: A unique human individual who possesses the capacity for an inner life of thoughts and understandings, knowledge of his personhood, and is capable of freedom. Each of us are human persons, unique individuals created in the image and likeness of God, even before we are born.

Intellect: One of the faculties of the human soul. It is a person's ability to know and understand.

Justification: The transformation of the sinner (all of us) from a state of unrighteousness to a state of holiness with God. It is an act done by God that requires our free participation with His grace. We are justified by the Sacrament of Baptism, which makes us children of God. Our justification, or salvation, is won for us by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and by His Resurrection.

Law: A rule and measure of acts whereby man is induced to act or is restrained from acting. It binds a person to act or not to act. A law is not just a rule, but a guide to help determine the right course of action in a given situation. There are four types of law: eternal law (unchanging truth, God Himself), divine law (eternal truth as God has revealed it to us), natural law (man's participation in the eternal law), and human law (man-made laws enforced by a ruler or government).

Merit: To deserve or be worthy of something; to earn. Our justification, or salvation, was earned for us by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and by His Resurrection. We are not deserving or worthy of our own salvation, nor can we earn the grace of God. They are free gifts given to us by God who loves us unconditionally.

Morality: The quality of human actions whereby they are right or wrong in accordance with God's law.

Mortal Sin: Serious sin that we choose to commit even though we know it is wrong. Mortal sin separates us from God and completely rejects His love for us. The gravity of the sin is also affected by who is wronged: intentional violence against a parent is more serious than intentional violence against a stranger, though both are mortal sins.

Ontological: Having to do with existence or of being. There is an ontological line that divides the kind of existence human beings experience from the kind of existence of all other animals.

Perfection: The greatest fulfillment of something's potential and the degree to which the various things of creation are like God, who alone is the fullness of being. For human beings, Jesus is the perfect man, the fullness and unity of the moral law, and the way to human fulfillment.

Personal Sin: The sin of an individual person for which he is responsible. All sin, including social sin, begins as the sins of individual persons.

Relativism: A dangerous philosophy that denies the existence of good and evil and harms our ability to choose the good. It holds that moral principles are a matter of individual preference based on personal experience, socioeconomic status, education, and particular culture, rather than based on absolute objective moral truths.

Responsibility: Being accountable for one's choices and actions. Because we have free will, we are morally accountable for our actions.

Revelation: To make known. Divine Revelation is the body of truths made known to us by God throughout Salvation History.

Sanctify: To make holy.

Sin: A deliberate offense against God. It is something we say, think, do, or fail to do that is against the eternal law of God.

Social Sin: The effect of sin over time, which can affect society and its institutions to create structures of sin. Examples of social sin include society's oppression of the poor, a government that legalizes abortion, or businesses that cheat their employees of just wages, and so forth.

Temptation: Something that attracts or lures a person to sin.

The Cardinal Virtues: Virtues acquired by human effort. They are the key moral virtues which all other moral virtues are grouped around. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts and help prepare the powers of human beings for communion with God's love. They are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

The Four Loves: Four different expressions or forms of love using the Greek classification. They are: *storge* (the love of affection or enjoying someone or something), *philia* (the love between friends), *eros* (romantic or passionate love), *agape* (charity, or unconditional, sacrificial love; the highest form of love; the love of God for man).

Theological Virtues: Virtues infused directly into the human soul by God that help human beings relate to God. They are the foundation of Christian moral activity by animating it and giving it its special character. They inform and give life to all other virtues. They are faith, hope, and love (charity).

Three Parts of a Moral Act: The conditions necessary for a human action to have a moral quality. The three parts are: the moral quality (good or evil) of the object, or act itself, the intention of the act, and the circumstances surrounding the act. The intention or circumstances of an action cannot make an objectively evil act good, but can lessen one's responsibility for that act. An objectively evil action is always morally wrong. The intention or circumstances of an action can make an objectively good act evil if it is done for the wrong reasons.

Type: A thing or person in the Old Testament that foreshadows a later thing or person in the New Testament.

Venial sin: Less serious sin that hurts our relationship with God, but does not destroy it.

Virtue: A habit of doing what is good. We build virtues through our own efforts and with God's grace.

UNIT FOUR

Authority: The quality of exercising power over others and expecting obedience from them. All communities need someone or some institution in authority. That required governing authority comes from God. For example, parents have authority over their children; governments exercise authority over citizens. Government authority is legitimate only if it works for the common good in moral ways. Corrupt and immoral governments do not have legitimate authority. Power exercised without authority is tyranny.

Citizenship: One's status as a member of a political society. For example, a person living in Texas is a Texas citizen, as well as a citizen of the United States. Citizenship varies according to the government in place, and often confers both privileges and responsibilities

Golden Rule: Christ's teaching that we should treat others the way we would like to be treated. He said in Matthew 7:12, "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you."

Government: Individuals or institutions that exercise power over people in a given area. These often include the power to make and enforce laws, try criminal cases, jail criminals, and set taxes. Good governments protect the rights of citizens, and work for the common good. Unjust governments abuse human authority by acting contrary to the moral order. Both just and unjust governments have existed throughout world history up to today.

Just Hierarchy of Values: The acknowledgment that certain values are more important than others. The right to life is the most important of all rights, because without the right to life, no other rights can exist.

Just War Doctrine: Church teaching on conditions that all must exist at the same time for war to be just. These conditions are: the damage by the aggressor(s) must be lasting, grave, and certain; all other means of avoiding war must have been tried; there must be a real chance of winning; and the war itself must not result in worse conditions than the conditions that cause the war.

Natural Law: Man's participation in the eternal law of God. It expresses the original moral sense which enables man to determine whether something is good or evil. It is written into the heart of every person and is universal in its authority and application. It is unchanging and permanent and provides a solid foundation on which human beings can build the structure of moral rules to guide their choices.

Precepts of the Church: The minimum of what is required of us for Christian living. The precepts are: to attend Mass and to rest from servile work on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, to confess our sins to a priest at least once a year, to receive our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist at least once a year during the Easter Season, to observe the days of abstinence and fasting, and to contribute to the support of the Church. These precepts unite our moral, Christian life with the liturgy, which nourishes us.

Right: That which someone has a just claim to. Some rights are God-given, fundamental to the human person, and common to all people. These include the right to life, liberty, private property, free speech, freedom of religion, and others. Other political or civil rights, such as the ability to vote, serve on juries, or be provided with an education at public expense, may be conferred by human authorities and may justly vary from society to society. These abilities are more properly called privileges, and should not be confused with natural rights, which are natural or inborn: natural rights can all be exercised without anyone else acting on your behalf.

Sacramental: Objects or actions that are sacred signs of God's grace that prepare us to receive His grace and cooperate with it. A blessing is a sacramental, as well as objects such as medals, crosses, scapulars, and rosaries when they are blessed by the Church.

UNIT FIVE

Abortion: The direct and intentional termination of a pregnancy. An abortion results in the death of an innocent unborn child and is gravely sinful. It not only offends the procreative purpose of marriage, but also violates the Fifth Commandment, "You shall not kill." Christians have a responsibility to work and pray for a just society that respects the life of all people, from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death.

Adultery: The unfaithfulness of at least one spouse in marriage by thought or deed. It is a grave sin that offends both the unitive and procreative purposes of marriage. The Sixth Commandment specifically prohibits adultery, a fact Jesus affirmed in the Sermon on the Mount.

Anthropology: The study of human beings that concerns their origin, nature, and destiny. A Christian anthropology considers the human person from a Christian perspective, as made in the image and likeness of God.

Chastity: A moral virtue that helps us manage or control our desires for bodily and spiritual pleasure in the way that God intended.

Chastity specifically involves self-mastery of sexual feelings. It is also a virtue that helps us choose what is best for others.

Contraception: Any action taken by a man and woman engaging in sexual relations that actively and intentionally is contrary to conception or prevents the conception of a child. It is a sinful action that offends both the unitive and procreative purposes of marriage.

Femininity: The qualities of being a female, or womanliness. It is not a socialized concept, but rather a truth inherently known and recognized.

Friendship: A relationship between two or more people brought together for a common reason or purpose. In friendships, we first learn to love and respect others and to receive love and respect from others.

Goods of Marriage: The characteristics of marital love that are reflections of the characteristics of God's love. Marital love and God's love is free (freely given), faithful, total self-gift, and fruitful.

Icon of the Trinity: The union of man and woman in marriage is a sign, or icon, of God's own life as the Holy Trinity.

Imago Dei: Latin for "Image of God." Human beings as male and female are made in God's image, which means that we are persons and that we possess intellect, free will, and a capacity for love.

Lust: The disordered desire for or inordinate (excessive) enjoyment of sexual pleasure. It is self-taking and seeks to use others as a means to an end as an object of pleasure.

Masculinity: The qualities of being a male, or manliness. It is not a socialized concept, but rather a truth inherently known and recognized.

Mystery: A truth about God that we can come to know only with God's help.

Person: A unique individual who possesses an inner life of thoughts and understandings, knows that he is a person, and possesses freedom. Each of us are human persons, unique individuals created in the image and likeness of God, even before we are born. The Holy Trinity is three Persons in One God. Each Person of the Trinity is a unique individual, and fully God.

Purposes of Marriage: The two purposes of marriage that are essential for a marriage to be a marriage. Anything that prevents or diminishes these purposes is contrary to God's plan for marriage. They are the good of the couple (unitive purpose) and the generation and education of children (procreative purpose).

Sacrament of Holy Matrimony (Marriage): The Sacramental joining of one man and one woman in a free, faithful, fruitful, and indissoluble union. It is an integral part of human nature that has been written into the complementarity of the male and female bodies and the human soul from our origins.

Self-denial (asceticism): Intentionally making sacrifices in daily life in order to strengthen the will. It is a powerful way of resisting temptation.

Self-mastery: The process of perfecting ourselves according to God's plan. It is ongoing and at times difficult work throughout every stage of life that will never be fully accomplished in this life.

Sex: Being male or female as God made us rooted in both the body and the soul.

Sexuality: An essential part of our human identity as being either male or female. This includes the physical, psychological, and emotional characteristics as men and women, as well as our attitudes and need for love and friendship. Sexuality affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of our body and soul, especially our emotions, and our capacity to love, procreate, and form relationships with others.

Shame: A painful feeling of guilt or regret. In the beginning before sin, Adam and Eve had no reason to feel shame and were able to be themselves freely and to choose to love without any fear. After the Original Sin, Adam and Eve felt shame and hid themselves from God and each other.

Theology of the Body: A series of talks given over many months by Pope St. John Paul II in which he proposed that the human body makes visible the invisible mystery of God and is thus a sign of it. The pope developed this thesis by reflecting on the original state of mankind as revealed to us in the first three chapters of Genesis.

Trinity: The Christian belief revealed to us by God that He is three Persons in One God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Wonder: The feeling of being amazed and of admiration. God's plan of love for us can be known in some way to us when we reflect upon the beauty, awesomeness, and mystery of creation. This feeling brings about questions about who we are as human beings, and points toward something greater than ourselves.