

**Simony** — To barter any sacred office or thing for money or temporal consideration, so called from Simon Magus (Acts 7).

**Sin** — An offence against God by any thought, word, deed, or omission against the law of God. It is either original, or actual, mortal or venial.

**State of Grace** — To be free from mortal sin, and pleasing to God.

**Stations, or Way of the Cross** — A devotion, which commemorates fourteen stages or Our Lord's Passion, from Pilate's house to Mount Calvary.

**Stigmata** — Wound resembling those of Our Lord, miraculously produced in the bodies of some of the servants of God, but most notably in the case of Sts. Francis of Assisi and Padre Pio. The name is from Gal. 6:17.

**Synod** — A term from the Greek, equivalent to council. Applied more especially to diocesan assemblies of the clergy, presided over by the bishop.

**Tabernacle** — The receptacle in which vessels containing the Blessed Sacrament are reserved.

**Theological Virtues** — Faith, Hope, and Charity, so called because they relate immediately to God.

**Theology** — The science of God and things belonging to God, or more accurately, the sacred teaching of divine things from those which have been revealed. *Positive* explains and interprets the Scriptures, Fathers, and Sacred Canons. *Dogmatic* proves and defends truths of faith, and by scholastic methods draws conclusions from principles, partly of faith, and partly of natural knowledge. *Moral* regulates conduct by the principles of revelation, and the laws of the Church. *Ascetical* and *Mystical* tread of progress of the soul, in the spiritual life and prayer. *Natural* theology, so called, has reference to the knowledge of God obtained by purely natural light, and is strictly a branch of philosophy.

**Thurible** — The vessel in which incense is burned in the ceremonies of the Church.

**Tithes** — The tenth part, held from earliest times to be due to God (see Gen. 14:20; Lev. 27:30; Heb. 7:5). Their payment is the recognized fulfillment of the natural obligation incumbent of the faithful to contribute to the support of their pastors, which is also found among the precepts of the Church.

**Tradition** — Truths handed down from one generation to another. Every Catholic is bound to admit and embrace Apostolic and Ecclesiastical Traditions. The faith has come down to us by two channels, the Scriptures, or written Word of God, and Tradition, which is the unwritten word. There are, however, two kinds of Tradition — the Tradition of the

Church, and traditions of the Church, the latter varying according to their authority and evidence.

**Treasury of the Church** — (Or treasure of merits) — The superabundant merit of Christ and the Saints, constituting in the hands of the Church a store of which others may avail; this is drawn from by the Church when she grants indulgence.

**Triduum** — A three days' prayer or festal celebration.

**Trinity, Holy** — The mystery of Three Persons in One God.

**Unity** — A mark of the Church, because all her members agree in one Faith, have all the same sacrifice and sacraments, and are all united under one head.

**Venerable** — A title given to a servant of God, the cause of whose canonization has been formally introduced before the Congregation of Rites at Rome.

**Venial Sin** — An offence which does not kill the soul, yet displeases God, and often leads to mortal sin. It is called venial because it is more easily pardoned than mortal sin.

**Vow** — A promise made to God, to do something pleasing to Him.

**Works of Mercy, Corporal** — To feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to harbor the harborless (Shelter the Homeless), to visit the sick, to visit the imprisoned, and to bury the dead.

**Works of Mercy, Spiritual** — To convert the sinner, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

**Year, Ecclesiastical** — Also known as the Christian year, consists of the cycle of liturgical seasons, which determines when Feasts, Memorials, Commemorations, and Solemnities are to be observed and which portions of Scripture are to be read. Distinct liturgical colors appear in connection with different seasons of the liturgical year. The liturgical year begins on the first Sunday of Advent.

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Pamphlet 260

# Simple Dictionary for Catholics

## M - Z

**Merit** — The proportion, which exists between an action and its reward. To merit supernatural reward an action must be performed for God, done freely, and in a state of grace, and there must be a promise on the part of God, without which we have no claim on Him.

**Monstrance** — The vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is placed for Exposition or Benediction.

**Mortal Sin** — A grievous offense against God. It is called mortal sin because it kills the soul and deserves hell.

**Novena** — A nine days' prayer, made in preparation for a feast, or at other times, after the example of the Apostles before Pentecost.

**Oath** — Calling God to witness the truth of what we assert, or to our sincerity in what we promise.

**Obligation, Holy Days of** — Days on which we are bound to hear Mass and rest from servile works. Besides Sundays, those observed in the United States are: December 8, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception; December 25, the solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ; January 1, the Solemnity of Mary; Thursday of the Sixth Week of Easter, the solemnity of the Ascension; August 15, the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and November 1, the solemnity of All Saints.

**Offertory** — The offering of the elements in the Mass after the Gospel; hence becomes the general name for voluntary offerings of the faithful in church.

**Oils, Holy** — Olive oil solemnly blessed by the Bishop on Thursday in Holy Week. There are three kinds, viz.: 1. Oil of Catechumens, used in ceremonies before baptism. 2. Oil of the sick, used in the anointing of the ill or aged. 3. Chrism, or oil mixed with balm, used in baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, and other consecrations and blessings.

**Oratory** — A place adapted for prayer.

**Orders, Holy** — The Sacrament by which Bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church are ordained, and receive power and grace to perform their sacred duties. Ordained ministry is exercised in three degrees: deacons, presbyters, and bishops. The sacrament of Holy Orders produces in the soul an indelible spiritual mark or character (Mt 19:12; 1 Cor 7:32; Eph 4:11; Mk 3:14-19; 10:45; Lk 6:12-16; 22:27; 1 Cor 12:27-31). Through the outward sign of

the sacrament of Holy Orders, a person receives the inward gift of grace and in some sense participates in divine nature. The ordained person now serves in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community (1 Tim 2:5; Rev 1:6; 5:9-10; 20:6; 1 Pet 2:5-9; 5:1-4; Jn 21:15-17; Mk 10:43-45; Eph 2:20; 1 Cor 4:1-21).

**Ordinary** — A name given to the bishop of a diocese, because he has ordinary (not delegated) jurisdiction and right to perform all ecclesiastical functions in his diocese.

**Passion** — The sufferings of Christ. The narrative of the same in the Gospels sung with special solemnity in Holy Week.

**Patron Saints** — Those whose names have been received at Baptism or Confirmation, or who have been chosen as the object of special devotion.

**Penance, Sacrament of** — The Sacrament by which the sins we have committed after baptism are forgiven. This forgiveness is conveyed to our soul by the priest's absolution, joined with contrition, confession and satisfaction.

**Pentateuch** — The first five books of the Old Testament, attributed to Moses.

**Perseverance, Final** — The special gift in virtue of which a person remains in a state of grace in the moment of death.

**Peter's Pence** — Originally an annual tax of one penny for every house in England, paid to the Holy See; now a general term for collections made for the support of the Holy Father.

**Pope** — A name signifying father, applied to the Bishop of Rome, who is the Vicar of Christ, and visible head of the Church on earth, because he is the successor of St. Peter.

**Possession, Diabolical** — A state in which an evil spirit, by God's permission, inhabits the body. When the devil attacks a person in a somewhat similar manner without, it is called obsession.

**Presumption** — A foolish expectation of salvation without making use of the necessary means to obtain it.

**Purgatory** — A place where souls suffer for a time after death, if they have departed this life in venial sin, or if they have not fully paid the debt of temporal punishment due to those sins, the guilt of which has been forgiven.

**Pyx** — A vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

**Relics** — The dead bodies or bones of holy persons, as also other things, which have belonged to them in mortal life. A more than ordinary veneration is

due to the wood of the Cross, and other instruments of Christ's Passion.

**Reliquary** — A case for relics which, when placed therein, must be securely sealed and authenticated by competent authority before being exposed for veneration.

**Resurrection of Christ** — The Soul of our Lord, which had been in Limbo of the Fathers since He died, was united again to His sacred Body and Christ rose from the dead, immortal and impassible.

**Rosary of the B.V.M.** — A devotion in which twenty decades, each consisting of an *Our Father* and ten *Hail Mary's*, and a *Gloria*, are recited, and accompanied, each of them, by meditation on one of the twenty mysteries of our Lord or of our Blessed Lady. Of the twenty mysteries, five are called Joyful, five Sorrowful, five Glorious, and five Luminous. The prayers are counted by the use of beads arranged in order for five decades; this is called a chaplet. When the beads have been duly blessed, those who carry them can gain many indulgences.

**Rubrics** — Directions as to ceremonies which occur in liturgical books, so called from their being generally printed in red letters.

**Sabbath** — The seventh day, on which God rested after creation, ordered to be kept holy by the third commandment. The Church, in the time of the Apostles, transferred the obligation from the seventh to the first day of the week in honor of the Resurrection of Christ.

**Sacrament** — An outward sign of inward grace, ordained by Jesus Christ, by which grace is given to our souls. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Order, and Matrimony. When a Sacrament is given there must always be, 1. Things for matter; 2. Words as form; 3. The person of a minister having the intention of doing what the Church does.

**Sacramental Grace** — A title to certain actual graces, to enable us to live up to the end of the Sacrament, which we have received.

**Sacramentals** — Certain practices of piety, commonly so called on account of a certain similarity to the Sacraments; e.g., holy water, and other things blessed by the Church. These do not of themselves give grace, but in virtue of the prayers of the Church help to excite good dispositions in the soul.

**Sacrifice** — The offering of a victim by a Priest to God alone, in testimony of His being sovereign Lord of all things.

**Sacrilege** — A profanation of anything holy or dedicated to God — persons, places, things.

**Sacristy** — A place adjoining a church where the sacred vessels and vestments are kept, and where the clergy prepare for ecclesiastical functions.

**Sanctifying Grace** — That by which a person is constituted permanently just or holy, the friend of God, and His son by adoption. Charity always accompanies sanctifying grace, and many great theologians consider that they are one and the same thing; for all the effects and characteristics of the former are attributed in Holy Scripture to the latter.

**Sanctuary** — The part of the Church where the altar stands; a place to which pilgrimages are made.

**Satisfaction** — Doing the penance given us by the priest in confession. It is also made by good works, mortification and gaining indulgences.

**Scandal** — To lead another to commit sin, being equivalent to spiritual murder.

**Scapular** — A part of a religious habit, covering the shoulders (scapulae), part being in front and part behind. The scapular generally worn by the faithful consists of two small squares of woolen cloth joined by two strings. This represents the habit of a religious Order to which the wearer is associated. The principal ones are: 1. Brown, of the B.V.M. of Mount Carmel. Our Lady appeared to St. Simon Stock at Cambridge, England in the thirteenth century and promised, as a singular privilege for the Carmelite Order, that whoever wore it at their death should not suffer eternally (Carmelites); 2. White, of the Holy Trinity (Trinitarians); 3. Black, of the Seven Dolors (Servites); 4. Blue, of the Immaculate Conception, to which unusually large indulgences have been granted (Theatines); 5. Red, of the Passion, revealed to a Sister of Charity in 1846, with the promise that those who wear it shall receive every Friday a large increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity (blessed by Vincentians). It is necessary to have a scapular blessed and to be invested with it (but not on renewal).

**Scruple** — A fear of actions being sinful, without sufficient ground for it.

**Septuagint (Seventy)** — The chief Greek version of the Old Testament, so called because it is believed to have been approved by the Sanhedrin, or because, according to legend, seventy-two men were employed on the translation. It was probably made in the third century BC. Most of the citations from the Old Testament in the New are out of it.