

Vocabulary for Unit 3

Apostles: The general term *apostle* means “one who is sent” and can be used in reference to any missionary of the Church during the New Testament period. In reference to the twelve companions chosen by Jesus, also known as “the Twelve,” the term refers to those special witnesses of Jesus on whose ministry the early Church was built and whose successors are the bishops.

Ascension: The “going up” into heaven of the risen Christ forty days after his Resurrection.

chief priests: In biblical Judaism, the priests (descendants of the tribe of Levi) were responsible for the proclamation of God’s will, the interpretation of the Law, and worship and ritual sacrifice in the synagogues. Jesus often found himself in conflict with them.

concupiscence: The tendency of all human beings toward sin, as a result of Original Sin.

disciple: A follower of Christ. Based on a word for “pupil” or “student,” used both to designate those who learned from and followed Jesus in New Testament times (the disciples) and those who commit themselves to follow him today.

fall, the: Also called the fall from grace, the biblical revelation about the origins of sin and evil in the world, expressed figuratively in the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis.

human nature: This refers to what is essential to all human persons; all, male and female equally, are intrinsically social beings created in the image of God, and all are a unity of body and soul. All human persons are endowed with free will; all are endowed with a fundamental desire to do good and to live in unity with one another and, thus, with God.

miracle: A special manifestation, or sign, of the presence and power of God active in human history.

parable: A story intended to convey a religious truth or particular teaching through the use of metaphors; a central feature of Jesus’ teaching ministry.

Paschal Mystery: The term given the entire process of God’s plan of salvation by which God redeemed humanity from sin in and through Jesus’ life, death, Resurrection, and Ascension into glory. Christians enter into the Paschal Mystery through sacramental initiation and participate in it by faithfully living out the process of dying and rising that characterizes all life.

Passion: The suffering and death of Jesus.



Pharisees: A Jewish sect during the time of Jesus known for their strict adherence to the Old Law and their concern with superficial matters.

Reign of God (Kingdom of God): The reign or rule of God over the hearts of people and, as a consequence of that, the development of a new social order based on unconditional love.

Resurrection: The passage of Jesus from death to life “on the third day” after his Crucifixion; the heart of the Paschal Mystery and the basis of our hope in the resurrection of the dead.

sacrifice: An action or actions of self-giving for a greater good. This self-emptying, or putting God’s will and service of neighbor before one’s own desires, is a primary way in which disciples follow Jesus Christ.

scribes: In Jewish history these were government officials and scholars of the Law of Moses. They enforced the requirements of the Law.

soul: The spiritual life principle of human beings that survives after death.

stewardship: An attitude that we do not own the gifts God has given us but are trustees of those gifts. We have an obligation to share our time, talents, and material treasures with others.

