

Vocabulary for Unit 1

apologist: One who speaks or writes in defense of someone or something.

Apostle: 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.

Apostolic Succession: The uninterrupted passing on of apostolic preaching and authority from the Apostles directly to all bishops. It is accomplished through the laying on of hands when a bishop is ordained in the Sacrament of Holy Orders as instituted by Christ. The office of bishop is permanent, because at ordination a bishop is marked with an indelible, sacred character.

bishop: One who has received the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders and is a successor to the Apostles.

charism: A special gift or grace of the Holy Spirit given to an individual Christian or community, commonly for the benefit and building up of the entire Church.

Christian: A name derived from that of Christ himself. Refers to one who follows Christ, or a member of the Christian church.

college of bishops: The assembly of bishops, headed by the Pope, that holds the teaching authority and responsibility in the Church.

covenant: A personal, solemn promise of faithful love that involves mutual commitments and creates a sacred relationship.

deacon: One who is ordained for service and ministry, but not for ministerial priesthood, through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Deacons are ordained to assist priests and bishops in a variety of liturgical and charitable ministries.

Deposit of Faith: The heritage of faith contained in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. It has been passed on from the time of the Apostles. The Magisterium takes from it all that it teaches as revealed truth.

Edict of Milan: A decree signed by emperors Constantine and Licinius in AD 313 proclaiming religious toleration in the Roman Empire, thereby ending the persecution of Christians.

emperor: The leader of an empire. In the Roman Empire, the emperor ruled by dictatorship and was considered a god by his subjects.



Eucharist, the: Also called the Mass or Lord's Supper, and based on a word for "thanksgiving," it is the central Christian liturgical celebration, established by Jesus at the Last Supper. In the Eucharist the sacrificial death and Resurrection of Jesus are both remembered and renewed. The term sometimes refers specifically to the consecrated bread and wine that have become the Body and Blood of Christ.

Fathers of the Church (Church Fathers): During the early centuries of the Church, those teachers whose writings extended the Tradition of the Apostles and who continue to be important for the Church's teachings.

Magisterium: The Church's living teaching office, which consists of all bishops, in communion with the Pope, the bishop of Rome.

martyrdom: Witness to the saving message of Christ through the sacrifice of one's life.

Messiah: Hebrew word for "anointed one." The equivalent Greek term is *christos*. Jesus is the Christ and the Messiah because he is the Anointed One.

New Covenant: The covenant or law established by God in Jesus Christ to fulfill and perfect the Old Covenant or Mosaic Law. It is a perfection here on earth of the divine law. The law of the New Covenant is called a law of love, grace, and freedom. The New Covenant will never end or diminish, and nothing new will be revealed until Christ comes again in glory.

persecutions: In the Roman Empire, these were organized programs of oppression, imprisonment, and cruelty against Christians, often resulting in death by martyrdom.

presbyter: A synonym to "elder" in the Acts of the Apostles and an alternative word for *priest* today.

priest: One who has received the ministerial priesthood through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The priest serves the community of faith by representing and assisting the bishop in teaching, governing, and presiding over the community's worship.

providence of God: God's loving care throughout salvation history and in each individual life, bringing what is needed into every situation and even bringing good out of evil.

redemption: From the Latin *redemptio*, meaning "a buying back," referring, in the Old Testament, to Yahweh's deliverance of Israel and, in the New Testament, to Christ's deliverance of all Christians from the forces of sin.

Sacred Tradition: From the Latin *tradere*, meaning "to hand on." Refers to the process of passing on the Gospel message. It began with the oral communication of the Gospel by the Apostles, was written down in Sacred Scripture, and is interpreted by the Magisterium under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

