

Glossary

The Glossary in this section is not an exhaustive list of terms. Rather than provide an elaborate list and meanings, this section is intended to provide brief explanations of the meanings of key terms. Translators and translation teams will do well to compile Glossaries in their own respective languages with standardised accurate meaning for easy reference.

Advent: In the Christian Church calendar, the period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas and also of preparation for the Second Coming of Christ.

Apostolate: From the word 'Apostle, or one who is sent; the word indicates various kinds of services and ministries rendered in the name of the Church.

Apostolic Exhortation: A document issued by the pope on any important matter as part of the official teaching of the Church.

Apostolic Letters: letters issued by the pope to address administrative questions and to exhort the faithful on doctrinal issues.

Apostolic Nuncio: An ecclesiastical diplomat, serving as an envoy or a permanent diplomatic representative of the Holy See to a state or to an international organization.

Apostolic See: An episcopal see whose foundation is attributed to one or more of the apostles of Jesus or to one of their close associates.

Authority: In the New Testament, "authority" (Greek: ἐξουσία) refers to the power Jesus received from the Father to grant salvation. It consists of imparting the grace that makes us "children of God." Every baptized member of the People of God shares in this authority, guided by the Holy Spirit. It emphasizes the reciprocity of communion between the community and its Pastors.

Baptism and Confirmation: Baptism is the sacrament by which we enter the People of God, freed from original sin and adopted as sons and daughters of God in Christ. Confirmation strengthens this identity. All the faithful, including priests, religious, and laypeople, participate in this fundamental sacrament.

Baptismal Candle: The candle represents the Christian's commitment to finding the light of his own life of faith, to be in turn, a light of the world through his or her works and his actions.

Beatific Vision: The immediate knowledge of God which the angelic spirits and the souls of the just enjoy in heaven, which the faithful hopes to merit at the end of their lives on earth.

Bishop: An ordained member of the clergy who is entrusted with a position of authority and oversight in a territory or office.

Canon law: The body of ecclesiastical law that governs the hierarchy and administration of the Church.

Canticles: A scriptural hymn text that is used in various Christian liturgies and is similar to a psalm in form and content but appears apart from the book of Psalms.

Cardinal: A senior member of the clergy of the Catholic Church. Cardinals elect the Pope during a conclave.

Catechism: A set of questions and answers that are used for teaching people about the Christian faith.

Catechumen: A person who is receiving instruction in preparation for Baptism or Confirmation.

Cathedral: The principal Church of a diocese which has the chair of the bishop (from the word 'cathedra' meaning chair) indicating the main teaching office.

Catholicism: The traditions and beliefs of the Catholic Church.

Chalice: A standing cup used to hold sacramental wine during the Eucharist.

Chancery: The administrative branch of a diocese under the authority of the local ordinary; it handles the official documents pertaining to the ecclesiastical affairs of the diocese.

Charism: in Christian theological language, sanctifying grace given to all believers through baptism, or a gift granted a person or group for the benefit of the community, and hence an attitude of service of others. In this case there is a distinction between natural and supernatural gifts. We can thus speak of the Salesian charism = sanctifying grace, a gift granted for the benefit of the community, an attitude of service.

Charisms: Spiritual gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit for the benefit of the Church. They include various abilities, such as teaching, healing, prophecy, and leadership.

Charity: The theological virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God".

Chasuble: The outermost liturgical vestment worn by clergy for the celebration of the Eucharist in Western-tradition Christian Churches that use full vestments, primarily in Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran Churches.

Christendom: The medieval and renaissance notion of the Christian world as a polity.

Christian Initiation: Baptism is the sacrament by which we enter into the People of God, freed from original sin and adopted as sons and daughters of God in Christ. Baptism is the fundamental identity of all the faithful (without distinction of sex, ethnicity, social condition). «In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized» (EG, no. 120).

Church: The People of God, united in faith, worship, and mission. It encompasses all baptized persons.

Coadjutor: A bishop appointed to assist and often to succeed a diocesan bishop.

Collegiality: The Pope governing the Church in collaboration with the bishops of the local Churches.

Communion: Communion is the spiritual, sacramental and juridical bond that unites pastors with one another, pastors with the faithful and faithful with one another, on the model of Trinitarian communion. This bond, founded on common Baptism, is realized, manifested and strengthened in the common participation in the Eucharist.

Confirmation: Confirmation is the sacrament by which the faithful receive the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In Confirmation, we become fully equipped for the mission entrusted to us at our Baptism. The Spirit poured out upon us enables us to live ever more deeply our primordial vocation

as sons and daughters of God who cry out Abba, Father! (Rm 8:15). We are not only called to live out our call as sons and daughters of God, but also to invite others into this filial relationship with the Father in Christ, of which the Holy Spirit makes us partakers. The new life we have received in Baptism and Confirmation is continually nourished by participation in the Eucharist, fount and apex of the whole Christian life. (LG, no. 11). Ultimately, it is from the Eucharistic celebration that a synodal Church takes shape.

Consecration: The setting apart for the service of God, of both persons and objects.

Consensus: Consensus does not mean uniformity or a democratic majority. If this was the case, this would ignore the fact that the Holy Spirit can speak through the words of one single member of the People of God or a small group. Rather, consensus in synodal key refers to the process of listening to one another in an atmosphere of prayer and interior freedom, in order to discern the common path that God is calling us to in a spirit of communion, guided by the Holy Spirit.

Consultation: Consultation is the process by which the faithful are officially heard on matters concerning doctrine, morals and the Christian life, before taking a decision. The practice of consultation has in the past found its formulation in these latin words: «Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari (et approbari) debet» («What concerns everyone must be treated [and approved] by all») (quoted by Francis, *Ceremony Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops*, 17 October 2015). This current Synod seeks to broaden the experience of “consultation” in order to move towards a more synodal Church that more fully listens to and engages the entire People of God. The Synod path is the culmination of a long process by which the voice of the Holy Spirit resounds throughout the whole Church, at the diocesan, national, continental, and universal levels.

Council: A meeting of bishops of the whole Church; local councils representing such areas as provinces or patriarchates are often called synods.

Deacon: An ordained minister who is a member of the clergy along with priests and bishops.

Dicastery: The departments of the Roman Curia which form the governance structure and office of the Holy See.

Diocesan Pre-Synodal Meeting: A local gathering to prepare for the Synod, involving representatives from the diocese.

Diocesan Synodal Team: The role of the Synodal team is to implement, coordinate, and oversee the diocesan phase of the Synodal Process under the leadership of the local Bishop, collaborating with the Diocesan Contact Person(s). The synodal team must plan the listening sessions to be carried out on the local level to ensure the widest participation possible including those on the margins. Special efforts must be made to engage those who are seldom listened to in the Church. The Synodal team organises any gatherings, events, and meetings that coincide with the Synodal Process. The goal is to create an authentic experience of synodality at the local level. Upon the completion of the listening sessions, the Synodal team is responsible for elaborating the diocesan synthesis on the basis of the experiences and feedback received from all those who participated.

Discernment: The Synodal Process entails a discernment process oriented towards consensus. We listen to each other in order to discern what God is saying to all of us. This kind of discernment is not only a one-time event, but ultimately a way of life, grounded in Christ, following the lead of the Holy Spirit, living for the greater glory of God. Communal discernment helps to build flourishing and resilient communities for the mission of the Church today. Discernment is a grace from God, but it

requires our human involvement in simple ways: praying, reflection, paying attention to one's inner disposition, listening and talking to one another in an authentic, meaningful, and welcoming way. Discernment in this spiritual key plants seeds that can bear the fruits of fraternity, healing, communion, mission, and more. God comes to lead and inspire us as we seek to discern His will.

Doctrine of the Faith: The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith to promote and safeguard the doctrine on faith and morals in the Church.

Ecumenical: Representing different Christian Churches striving towards unity.

Ecumenism: The principle or aim of promoting unity among the world's Christian Churches.

Encyclical Letter: Pastoral letter written by the Pope for the whole Church on matters of doctrine, morals, or discipline.

Episcopal: Pertaining to bishops, who hold apostolic authority within the Church.

Holy See: Highest office of the episcopal jurisdiction of the Catholic Church under the Bishop of Rome, the Pope.

Inculturation: The integration of the Christian faith in various local culture(s).

Instrumentum Laboris: The working document prepared before a Synod, outlining the topics for discussion.

Lectio Divina: A method for praying with the Scriptures.

Lectionary: The readings and the responsorial psalm assigned for each Mass of the year.

Listening: A method which is indispensable to the synodal process according to which the faithful People, the College of Bishops, the Bishop of Rome, all listening to each other and a listen to the Holy Spirit» According to the International Theological Commission «Synodal dialogue depends on courage both in speaking and in listening. It is not about engaging in a debate where one speaker tries to get the better of the others or counters their positions with brusque arguments, but about expressing whatever seems to have been suggested by the Holy Spirit as useful for communal discernment, at the same time being open to accepting whatever has been suggested by the same Spirit in other people's positions, for the general good.

Local Church: The Church community such as a diocese within a specific geographical area, led by the bishop.

Magisterium: The Church's authority or office to give authentic interpretation of the word of God.

Ministry: Any action taken on behalf of the Church that serves its mission in some way.

Mission: The Second Vatican Council affirms that «the pilgrim Church is missionary by nature» (*Ad Gentes* 2). The mission therefore expresses the deepest identity of the Church, which exists to proclaim the Gospel to all people. In a time of rapid change, Pope Francis invites the Church to rediscover her missionary nature, establishing herself in all places on earth in a permanent state of mission (cf. *EG* 25).

Papacy: The office or authority of the Pope.

Parrhesia: Refers to the boldness that the coming of the Holy Spirit brought about in the hearts of the apostles at Pentecost. It is the inner courage that sent them out to proclaim the Good News that

Jesus is Lord without fear in the days of the Early Church. The Spirit offers us this same boldness to carry out the mission of the Church today. *Parrhesia* is required in the Synodal Process so that we can listen humbly and speak boldly, inspired by the Holy Spirit as we journey forward towards this “new phase of evangelization” to which God calls us. The *parrhesia* of the Spirit required of the People of God on its synodal journey is the trust, frankness and courage to “enter into the expanse of God’s horizon” in order to “ensure that a sacrament of unity exists in the world and that man is therefore not destined for dispersion and confusion”[169]. The lived and enduring experience of synodality is, for the People of God, a source of the joy promised by Jesus, a catalyst of new life, the springboard for a new phase of missionary commitment» (*Syn.*, no. 121).

Participation: A synodal Church is a Church of participation and co-responsibility. In exercising synodality she is called to give expression to the participation of all, according to each one’s calling, ministry and charism. Participation is based on the fact that all the faithful are qualified and called to serve each other through the gifts they have all received from the Holy Spirit. In the synodal Church the whole community, in the free and rich diversity of its members, is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on taking pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God’s will. So, in coming to formulate their own decisions, Pastors must listen carefully to the views and experiences of the faithful.

Pastor: A minister in charge of a Christian Church or congregation, especially in some non- episcopal Churches.

Patriarch: The bishop who is head of a particular autonomous Church.

People of God: All the baptized persons, collectively forming the Church.

Pontifical: Referring to the supreme head of the Roman Catholic Church; the Pope also known as the *Pontiff*.

Pontificate: The government of the Roman Catholic Church.

Power: The authority exercised by legitimate Pastors in communion with the community.

Presbyterium: A college of priests, in active ministry, of an individual particular Church such as a diocese or eparchy.

Relics: An object or article of religious significance from the past used for veneration.

Sacrament: Outward sign of inward grace, instituted by Christ to help individuals in their spiritual life and to grow in holiness.

Sensus Fidei: The anointing of the Holy Spirit, conferred by Christian Initiation of the sacraments, is manifested in the *sensus fidei* of the People of God. In all the baptized, from first to last, the sanctifying power of the Spirit is at work, impelling us to evangelization. The People of God is holy thanks to this anointing, which makes it infallible *in credendo*. This means that it does not err in faith, even when it cannot find words to explain that faith. The Spirit guides it in truth and leads it to salvation. As part of His mysterious love for humanity, God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith – *sensus fidei* – which helps them to discern what is truly of God. The presence of the Spirit gives Christians a certain connaturality with divine realities, and a wisdom which enables them to grasp those realities intuitively (*EG* 119). This connaturality shows itself in a *sentire cum Ecclesia*: to feel, sense and perceive in harmony with the Church. This is required not just of theologians, but of all the faithful; it unites all the members of the People of God as they make their pilgrim journey. It is the key to their “walking together” (*The Sensus fidei*, no. 90).

Signs of the Times: Recognizing the signs and challenges faced by the Church today, guided by the Church and society.

Synod: The Synod is the event in which the Church is called together by the competent authority in accordance with the specific procedures laid down by ecclesiastical discipline, involving the whole People of God in various ways on local, regional and universal levels, presided over by the Bishops in collegial communion with the Bishop of Rome, to discern the way forward and other particular questions, and to take particular decisions and directions with the aim of fulfilling its evangelising mission (*Syn.*, no. 70).

Synodal Church: The whole community, in the free and rich diversity of its members, called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on making pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God's will.

Synodal Process: The journey of discernment, consultation, and decision-making within the Church.

Synodality: Fraternal collaboration and discernment expressed through bodies like the Synod of Bishops.

Vatican II: The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), which emphasized the role of the laity and collegiality within the Church.