**Helpful Definitions for Instructors Using Religion Curriculum**

**Angelic Person**- an individually persisting substance of a purely rational nature, meaning, a nature that is entirely intellectual/spiritual/immaterial and without a physical body of any kind.

**Annunciation**- the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25, also the Feast of the Incarnation, is the feast celebrating the announcement of the Incarnation of God in the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity as the God-Man Jesus Christ by the Archangel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

**Anthropology-** the science of what a human being is, answered through the study of their biology, their historical development, their cultures, and their societies.

**Being-** that which is, either in an idea as mental being, or in actuality as real being.

**Bible/Sacred Scripture**- the composition of the 73 (46 Old Testament and 27 New Testament) books of the Canon of Scripture, composed by the early Church, affirmed by the Councils of Hippo (393 A.D.) and Carthage (397 A.D), and dogmatically sealed at the Council of Trent, and declared as the inspired and inerrant word of God to reveal Himself and His will to all of mankind.

**Blessed Trinity**- the unity of the Triune Godhead in being, essence, and existence as the Divine Persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Charism-** a distinct gift or power possessed by an individual as a gift from God, or a distinct character or quality possessed by an individual or community, in particular, by a religious order, community, or society.

**Christian Anthropology**- the question of what a human being is, or what is a human being’s origin, nature, and teleology, answered as a being created in the image and likeness of God, derived through the study of their biology, their historical development, their cultures, their societies, and the entire revealed Deposit of Faith.

**Church (The Church)**- from the Greek word “Ecclesia”, meaning an “Assembly” or “Congregation”, it means distinctly a specific community of people called to a special assembly or congregation as the Mystical Body of Christ, founded upon the Apostles and their successor bishops to preserve and transmit the deposit of the faith for the sanctification and salvation of its members.

**Circumincession**- the eternal, mutual immanence of the three divine persons within each other.

**Corruptible Being-** that being which breaks down, decays, perishes, or fails to endure and will cease to exist in a permanent, real sense at some point in time.

**Creed**- meaning “belief,” a collection of specific beliefs professed to be true. There are multiple creeds in the Catholic Church but the most common are the Nicene Creed and the Apostle’s Creed, which outline the most fundamental beliefs that Catholics profess to be true.

**Deposit of Faith**- all of those beliefs and practices that have been revealed to the Catholic Church through Sacred Scripture and Tradition and preserved and conveyed through the teaching authority of the Magisterium by Apostolic Succession throughout every generation to the present.

**Divine Procession**- the eternal origin of a divine person to another divine person. It is two in kind, as the Son proceeds by (1) eternal *generation* from the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds by (2) eternal *spiration* from the Father and the Son.

**Episcopate/Bishop-** a divinely instituted authority established by Jesus Christ as successors of the Apostles, who have full executive, legislative, and judicial authority over a diocese.

**Faith**- is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1).

**Free Will**- the ability of a rational being to know and choose the particular good of its own being.

**Grace**- is the free, undeserved, and supernatural help that God gives to rational creatures in order to enable them to respond to His call to become His children, as adoptive sons and partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life, and the primary source of our sanctification through the life of the sacraments.

**God-** the utterly simple and immutable being whose being is its essence and its existence, and who possesses no potential but is infinitely perfect, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent act.

**Heaven**- an eternal place or state of presence and unity with God.

**Human Person**- an individually persisting substance of a hylomorphic nature (a union of material and immaterial), meaning, a nature that is a physical body in union with a rational soul.

**Incorruptible** **Being**- that being which never breaks down, persists, resists decay, and endures in a permanent, real sense in and outside of time.

**Immaterial**- that being which exists that has a spiritual/intellectual nature.

**Intellect**- a power of the rational soul that allows rational beings the ability to understand universal forms and to know the good.

**Irrational Soul**- a material principle of life that is corporeal and corruptible.

**Liturgy**- the official, ritual, public worship of God as participated in by all members of the Church on Earth, in Purgatory, and in Heaven.

**Magisterium**- the teaching authority of the Church on matters of faith and morals, as expressed through the whole body of Bishops in union with the bishop of Rome.

**Matter**- that being which exists that has a physical nature.

**Nature**- is the essence of a being, or that which something is. For a being to behave in congruence with its nature, is when a being behaves in a way that aligns properly with the intrinsic good of what that being actually is.

**Pentecost**- the former Jewish Feast of Shavuot, it literally means “Fiftieth” in Greek. The Christian Feast celebrated seven weeks after Easter Sunday celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary, the Apostles, and the Disciples of Jesus, thereby creating the Church.

**People of God**- those persons who have been called and set apart by God for a special relationship with God and with each other for the purpose of sanctification.

**Person**- an individually persisting substance of a rational nature.

**Prayer**-the raising of one’s heart and mind to God, or the requesting of good things from God.

**Presbyterate/Priest-** a member of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ, having received the Sacrament of Holy Orders from a valid Bishop.

**Purgatory**- the specific part or aspect of Heaven where individuals, who have incurred temporal punishment unpaid, and/or possess a persisting attachment to sin, go after death to be purified and made worthy by God to be in His presence in unity with Him for eternity.

**Rational Soul**- an immaterial principle of life that is incorporeal and incorruptible.

**Rationality-** the ability to know an objective reality.

**Sacrament**- an efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church in visible rites, by which divine life is dispensed to us. There are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Holy Orders, Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick, and Confession.

**Sacred Tradition**- the body of revealed truth, as passed down in continuity through the Church from the Apostles by oral and written traditions and affirmed by the Magisterium to contain the full body of orthodoxy and orthopraxy. It includes official professions of faith, from the Apostles’ Creed (circa A.D. 120) and Nicene Creed (A.D. 325) to the Credo of the People of God by Pope Paul VI (1968); the official teachings of the 21 ecumenical councils of the Church, from Nicea I (325–381) to Vatican II (1962–65); the writings of Church Fathers and Doctors of the Church; papal documents; Sacred Scripture; Sacred Liturgy; and even Christian art through the ages that portrays what the Church believes and how it worships.

**Saint**- generally, a saint is someone who has been sanctified by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as a member of the Catholic Church, but more specifically, a saint is someone who died in the sacrifice of Christ and rose to new life in Him and has been declared by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church to be eternally with God in Heaven. We can pray to saints, asking for their prayers and intercessions.

**Soul**- the principle of life which animates a living being.

**Spirit**- a substance of an intellectual/immaterial nature. A spirit is always a person of some kind.

**Teleology**- the purpose or reason for some being as derived from it’s finality or intended end.

**Transubstantiation**- that process by which one substance becomes an entirely different substance. This process happens during the Eucharistic prayer, where the elements of bread and wine, by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Words of Institution, become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

**Vocation**- a distinct calling from God to live out one’s general call to holiness by a particular means of loving through either consecrated single/religious life, married life, and/or the priesthood.

**Will**- a power of the rational soul that allows rational beings to actively choose how to act upon particular or universal knowledge, moving the being toward some perceived good or another.