

Glossary—Eleventh Grade

- **Abortion** – deliberate termination of pregnancy by killing the unborn child. Such a serious offense results in immediate excommunication.
- **Acedia** – spiritual sloth or indifference that can extend as far as the refusal of the joy that God gives. It causes one to be repelled by divine goodness.
- **Actual Grace** – the supernatural help from God to do good and avoid evil to enable us to save our souls.
- **Actual Sin** – sins against God committed by the deliberate will of the individual.
- **Adultery** – a carnal act between a married person and someone to whom he or she is not married.
- **Apostasy** – the total repudiation of the Christian faith.
- **Assisted Suicide** – any action or omission of an action that assists another person in bringing about his or her own death.
- **Atheism** – the refusal to accept God’s existence.
- **Attrition** – imperfect contrition resulting from being sorry for sins due to fear of God’s punishment.
- **Autonomy** – the belief that one is entirely independent and is responsible only to himself for his actions and the direction of his life.
- **Avarice** – a passionate desire for riches that leads one to use money to control others.
- **Bioethics**- derived from the Greek words *bios* (life) and *ethos* (ethics), it is the science that studies the morality of the problems related to life, from conception until death.
- **Blasphemy** – speech, thought or action involving contempt for God or the Church, or persons or things dedicated to God.
- **Bribery** – knowingly offering money or other valuable objects so as to corrupt a person.
- **Calumny** – false accusation, done maliciously to cause damage.
- **Cardinal Virtues** –four pivotal human virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. The human virtues are stable dispositions of the intellect and will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct in accordance with reason and faith.
- **Catholic Moral Theology** – a science that enables the human mind to make correct moral choices guided by principles set forth by the Magisterium.
- **Charity** – the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.
- **Chastity** – the virtue that consists in moderating the sexual appetite according to one’s state in life.
- **Christian Morality** – the part of theology that specifies the moral norms derived from the new being that the Christian-because of his incorporation into Christ in Baptism – needs to follow, with the hope of imitating Jesus’ life to the point of identifying with him.

- **Christian vocation** – the calling or destiny each person has in this life and in the hereafter. There are three vocations: the priesthood, the married life, and the single life.
- **Christianity** – the religion of the “Word” of God, a word which is incarnate and living; the way Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived.
- **Civil Authority** – the characteristic of government and those who represent it by which they are able to dictate laws or oblige the fulfillment of them.
- **Civil Law** – law promulgated by civil authority.
- **Cloning** – the technique of producing a genetically identical duplicate of an organism by replacing the nucleus of an unfertilized ovum with the nucleus of a body cell from the organism. This process is not moral in the case of humans.
- **Cohabitation** – “living together,” between unmarried persons. Often called “trial marriage”.
- **Commandment** – a norm of moral and/or religious action; above all the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses.
- **Common Good** – the total of social conditions that will allow both individuals and groups to reach their human and spiritual fulfillment more easily.
- **Commutative Justice** – regulates exchanges between persons and between institutions in accordance with a strict respect for their rights, i.e. fulfilling contracts.
- **Complete Consent** – consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice.
- **Conscience** – a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of an act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed.
- **Consequentialism** – an ethical system that determines good and evil from the consequences that follow an act.
- **Continnence** – abstaining from any type of sexual act, as well as from those activities that excite the passions and incline a person to the sexual act.
- **Contrition** – sincere sorrow for having offended God and hatred for the sins we have committed with a firm purpose of sinning no more.
- **Covenant** – a solemn agreement between human beings or between God and a human being, involving mutual commitments and guarantees.
- **Covet** – unjust desire to possess what is not ours and belongs to another or is owed to him.
- **Culpability** – moral responsibility for one’s actions.
- **Decalogue** – ten commandments given to God by Moses.
- **Declaration of Nullity** – the finding of an ecclesiastical court that a valid marriage never existed from the beginning.
- **Despair** – the loss of trust in God because of doubt in his fidelity or interest in each person.
- **Detraction** – revealing the hidden faults of another person to someone who has no right to know about them, thus damaging or destroying his good reputation.
- **Dignity** – the quality of being worthy, or honorable; worthiness, worth, nobleness, excellence.

- **Disciple** – a follower who adopts another person’s way of life, taking on his particular type of discipline; in Scripture, a follower of Jesus.
- **Discretion** – power to decide.
- **Distributive Justice** – regulates what the community owes its citizens in proportion to their contributions and needs.
- **Divination** – the prediction of the future or revelation of the unknown through so called paranormal means.
- **Divinization** – sin against the virtue of religion in which one attempts to tell of future events by means of occult forces – Satan, demons, astrology etc.
- **Divorce** - the authority given to a civil magistrate to separate spouses joined in civil matrimony.
- **Ecclesiastical Law** – the law that directs the life and worship of the Church.
- **End (of an action)** – the first goal of the intention and the purpose pursued in the action.
- **Envy** – resentment or sadness at another’s good fortune, and the desire to have it for oneself.
- **Eroticism** – exaggeration of the passion for sex and sexual pleasure.
- **Eternal Law** – God’s wisdom as manifested in all acts and movements.
- **Ethnic Cleansing** – genocide; the destruction of a group of people based on ancestry or ancestral traditions i.e., religion, clothing, etc.
- **Eugenics** – the application of biological laws of heredity with the goal of perfecting the human species.
- **Euthanasia** – an action or an omission which, of itself or by intention, causes the death of handicapped, sick, or dying persons—sometimes with an attempt to justify the act as a means of eliminating suffering.
- **Excommunication** – penal exclusion from the faith intended to bring about reform. People who are excommunicated are forbidden to have any share in the Eucharist and other acts of public worship and sacraments.
- **External Sin** – sin committed by word or deed.
- **Extraordinary care** – life-sustaining forms of medical care that are either 1) radically painful, 2) excessively expensive, 3) doubtfully able to accomplish their designated objective, 4) radically burdensome.
- **Faith** - both a gift of God and a human act by which the believer gives personal adherence to God who invites his response, and freely assents to the whole truth that God has revealed; a theological virtue given by God.
- **Family** – a group of persons united by bonds of kinship. In the strict sense of the word, it is the community of a man and a woman and any children born from their marriage.
- **Formal Sin** – a sin that is freely and deliberately committed. A formal sin always involves knowledge of the evil of the action that is being committed, and freedom to do or to avoid the action.
- **Fornication** – sexual intercourse between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman.
- **Fortitude** – one of the four cardinal moral virtues which ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in doing the good.

- **Fraud** – sin of deception; related to cheating.
- **Free Will** – a gift from God to make possible the free choice to love God.
- **Freedom** – the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberately on one’s own responsibility.
- **Full Knowledge** – the knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God’s law.
- **Fundamental Option** – the free and responsible choice a person makes to orient, in a radical manner, his whole existence in a moral direction toward good or evil.
- **Grace** – a free gift of God’s own life that God makes to each person in Baptism; it is unfused into the soul by the Holy Spirit to heal and to sanctify it.
- **Grave Matter** – a serious violation of the natural law.
- **Greed** – the desire to amass earthly goods without limit.
- **Habitual Sin** – the permanent state of culpability, caused by the frequent commission of actual sins.
- **Hedonism** – the philosophy that considers pleasure as the supreme end of life.
- **Heresy** – the obstinate denial by a baptized person of some truth that must be believed with divine faith.
- **Holiness** – the free dedication of oneself to the will of God, and the participation in the life of grace offered to the Christian. This dedication to God affects a moral transformation in the life of the individual.
- **Holy Day of Obligation** – feast day to be observed by attendance at Mass and rest from unnecessary servile work. In the U.S.: Solemnity of Mary Mother of God, Ascension of Our Lord, Assumption, All Saints’ Day, Immaculate Conception and Christmas.
- **Hope** - the theological virtue by which we desire and expect from God both eternal life and the grace we need to attain it.
- **Human Acts** – actions that are performed with deliberation and free choice. A person cannot be blamed for actions that are performed unknowingly or unwillingly. Only properly human actions can be morally good or evil.
- **Human Law** – law promulgated by human authority, either civil or ecclesiastical. In order to be legitimate, human law must be consistent with laws of God, conform to the natural law and promote the good of society.
- **Humanism** – a moral system that denies belief in God and views humanity as the highest form of existence.
- **Idolatry** - the religious worship of imaginary gods, the devil or other created things, such as forces of nature, the stars of the cosmos, animals, etc.
- **Immorality** – behavior that goes against moral norms.
- **Immutability** – not changing.
- **Incest** – intimate relations between relatives or in-laws within a degree that prohibits marriage between them.
- **Indissolubility** – a quality of matrimony that the marital union can be broken only by the death of one of the spouses.
- **Infallibility** – immunity from error and any possibility of error.
- **Intention (of an action)** - a movement of the will toward the end, the goal of the activity.

- **Interdependence** – mutual reliance for support or existence.
- **Internal Sin** – Sin committed in thought or desire.
- **Israel** – the Jewish people, chosen by God to be his people named after Israel (Jacob) from whose twelve sons the tribes of Israel descend.
- **Just War** – legitimate defense by military force. The following conditions must be met for a war to be morally legitimate: 1) the damage inflicted by the aggressor must be lasting, grave, and certain; 2) all means of ending aggression must have been tried and failed; 3) there must be a serious prospect of success; 4) the evil to be eliminated must be greater than the evil produced by the use of force; 5) the war must be waged by those responsible for the common good.
- **Justice** – one of the Cardinal Virtues. Justice consists in the firm and constant will to give God and neighbor their due.
- **Law** – an ordinance of reason for the common good, corresponding to divine law and promulgated by one who has care of the community.
- **Laws of Nature** – descriptions of the behavior of the material universe.
- **Lust** – an inordinate desire for sexual pleasure.
- **Magisterium** – the name given to the ordinary and universal teaching authority of the pope and the bishops in communion with him, who guide the members of the Church without error in matters of faith and morals.
- **Masturbation** – deliberate stimulation of the genital organs in order to derive sexual pleasure.
- **Material Sin** – an action that is sinful but for which a person cannot be blamed because of ignorance.
- **Materialism** – the belief that matter is the only reality and that everything can be explained only in terms of matter, and that comfort, pleasure, and/or wealth are the only or highest goods.
- **Matrimony** – the bond between a man and a woman joined in a conjugal union for life. This bond is ordered-through its very nature- to the good of the spouses and to the procreation and education of children. This alliance was elevated by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament.
- **Modesty** – the virtue that regulates dress, conversation, and conduct in relation to the individual and society according to faith and right reason.
- **Moral law** – the ethical norm revealed by God, that imposes obligations on the conscience of each person.
- **Moral Relativism** – the belief that there are no absolutes, and that morality changes with each new situation.
- **Moral Theology** – a science which accepts and examines divine revelation while at the same time responding to the demands of human reason.
- **Morality** – the goodness or evil of human acts. The morality of a human act depends on the object (or nature) of the action, the intention of the end foreseen, and the circumstances in which the action takes place.
- **Mortal Sin** – a grave offense against God that destroys our relationship with him by severing us from his divine love.
- **Murder** – intentional killing of an innocent person.
- **Mutilation** – the disfigurement of the human body.

- **Natural Law** – a law written in the soul of each and every person; human reason and ordaining the performance of good and forbidding evil. The principle precepts of the natural law are expressed in the Decalogue.
- **New Covenant** – the new “dispensation” or order, established by God in Jesus Christ, to succeed and perfect the Old Covenant.
- **Object (of an action)** – a good toward which the will directs itself. The object of an action should not be confused with the intention that a person has when performing the act.
- **Objective Truth** – reality that exists outside of a person’s intellect, and that is independent of his acknowledgment of its existence.
- **Obligation** – the moral power of a law commanding obedience; moral necessity imposed on free will.
- **Occasion of Sin** – a person, place or thing that can lead to temptation.
- **Original Sin** – Adam and Eve’s abuse of their human freedom in disobeying God’s command. This sin separated mankind from God, darkened the human intellect, weakened the human will, and introduced into human nature an inclination towards sin.
- **Perjury** – giving one’s word under oath falsely, or making a promise under oath without intending to keep it.
- **Piety** – the virtue that gives one a sense of duty toward one’s family, church, and country.
- **Pluralism** – the existence of a variety of opinions or ideas within human society, some of which may contradict or oppose one another. Pluralism in the application of moral principles and social customs is morally legitimate insofar as it does not contradict God’s revelation and sound reason.
- **Polygamy** – a man’s being married to two or more wives (polygamy), or a woman’s being married to two or more husband (polyandry).
- **Pornography** – any written, visual, or audible material that excites the sexual appetite.
- **Poverty** – the condition of want experienced by those who are poor – whom Christ called blessed, and for whom he had a special love. *Poverty of Spirit* signifies detachment from worldly things and voluntary humility.
- **Praise** – the form of prayer which focuses on giving recognition to God for his own sake, giving glory to him for who he is.
- **Prejudice** – preconceived opinion formulated without consideration of known facts and usually based on erroneous knowledge leading to wrong judgments and rendering a person blind to reason and closed to argument.
- **Principle of Solidarity** – the duty of cooperating and harmonize the rights of the individual with the demands of society. It represents the entire effort to achieve the common good.
- **Principle of Subsidiarity** – the principle that states that a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good.

- **Principle of the Common Good** – the primacy of the common good over individual interests. The term “common good” is applied to the effort to achieve a social good that makes possible the full development of one’s own perfection.
- **Proportionalism** – an ethical system that deduces the moral value of an act from the proportion of good and evil effects produced by an action.
- **Prudence** – the virtue which disposes a person to discern the good and choose the correct means to accomplish it. One of the cardinal moral virtues that disposes the Christian to live according to the law of Christ.
- **Purity** – Attuning the intellect and will to the demands of God’s holiness, chiefly in three areas: 1) charity, 2) chastity or sexual rectitude, and 3) love of truth and orthodoxy of faith.
- **Racism** – unjust discrimination on the basis of a person’s race. It is a violation of human dignity, and a sin against justice.
- **Rape** – the forcible violation of the sexual intimacy of another person; deeply wounds the respect, freedom, and physical and moral integrity to which every person has a right.
- **Rationalism** – the doctrine that rejects supernatural revelation and makes reason the sole source of knowledge.
- **Realism** – the theory of knowledge that justly values the role of reason and reality of objects in themselves, outside of the mind.
- **Reason** – that intellectual power or faculty which is ordinarily employed by man in adapting thought or action to some end; the guiding principle of the human mind in the process of thinking.
- **Religion** – a set of beliefs and practices followed by those committed to the service and worship of God.
- **Reparation** – making amend for a wrong done or for an offense, especially for sin, which is an offense against God.
- **Restitution** – the return of what has been unjustly taken from another.
- **Resurrection** – *of the dead*: the raising of the righteous, who will love forever with the risen Christ, on the last day. *Of Christ*: the bodily rising of Jesus from the dead on the third day after his death on the cross and burial in the tomb.
- **Revelation** – the truths about God and his will which he has communicated freely to humanity by means of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.
- **Reverence** – deep respect felt or shown towards a person on account of his or her position or relationship.
- **Robbery** – stealing by force or threatening of force.
- **Sabbath** – the Sabbath or seventh day, on which God rested after the work of the six days of creation was completed, as recounted in the opening narrative of the Bible.
- **Sacralization** – making sacred.
- **Sacred Tradition** – the Word of God entrusted to the apostles and their successors by Christ and the Holy Spirit, and transmitted by their teaching to each generation of Christians.

- **Sacrifice** – a ritual offering made to God by a priest on behalf of the people, as a sign of adoration, gratitude, supplication, and communion; the most perfect is Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross.
- **Sacrilege** – the violation of sacred persons, places, things.
- **Sanctifying Grace** – the share in the divine life of God infused into us at Baptism.
- **Scandal** – an attitude or behavior that leads another to do evil.
- **Seal of Confession** – the confessor’s obligation to keep absolutely secret what a penitent has told to him in the Sacrament of Penance; also known as the sacramental seal.
- **Secularism** – a system of doctrines and practices that rejects any form of religious faith and worship.
- **Sexuality** – a group of anatomical and physiological conditions that characterize many organic beings, and through which they are either male or female. In human beings, psychological conditions are also included in sexuality.
- **Sin** – an offense against God.
- **Sin of Commission** – a choice to do an evil act- i.e. stealing.
- **Sin of Omission** – a failure to perform some act required by a positive precept- i.e. missing Mass on Sunday.
- **Slander** – destroying the honor or fame of another by accusing him of something of which he is not guilty.
- **Social Charity** – the principle of friendship or solidarity manifested first in the distribution of goods and the remuneration of work.
- **Social Justice** – the justice that characterizes and regulates relations among individuals or among diverse groups and social classes in all areas of social interaction.
- **Sterilization** – the destruction of human procreative powers.
- **Stewardship** – God’s entrusting of the resources of the world to mankind to care for them, master it by labor, and enjoy their fruits.
- **Suicide** – to voluntarily take one’s own life.
- **Superstition** – sin against the virtue of religion involving the attribution of a kind of magical power to certain practices or objects, like charms or omens.
- **Temperance** – the cardinal moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasure and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensure the mastery of the will over instinct, and keeps natural desires within proper limits.
- **Theft** – Unjustly taking and keeping the property of another, against the reasonable will of the owner.
- **Theological Virtues** – gifts infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life. The theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity.
- **Theonomy** – the belief that one depends upon God for the meaning, direction and purpose of his life.
- **Tolerance** – respect for other people, though their ideas may not be correct.
- **True Conscience** – judgment of the practical intellect that deduces correctly from true principles that some act is lawful.

- **Truth** – the correlation between the idea in one’s mind and external reality.
- **Universality** – the ability to be applied to everyone.
- **Unjust Law** – human laws that contradict or fail to conform to divine or natural law. Such laws are never binding on a person’s conscience, and must be prudentially opposed by conscientious objection.
- **Veneration** – showing devotion and respect to Mary, the apostles, and the martyrs, who were viewed as faithful witnesses to faith in Jesus Christ; must be clearly distinguished for adoration and worship, which are due to God alone.
- **Venial Sin** – a less serious offense against the love of God that does not deprive the soul or sanctifying grace, but which weakens a person’s love for God and neighbor.
- **Veracity** – truthfulness; the disposition of a person to tell the truth.
- **Virtue** – a habitual and firm disposition to do good.
- **Vow** – a deliberate and free promise made to God concerning a possible and better good which must be fulfilled by reason of the virtue of religion.
- **Worship** – adoration and honor given to God, which is the first act of the virtue of religion.