

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit 1 Vocabulary

### Terms for Mastery

#### A

**analogy of faith** The coherence of individual doctrines with the whole of Revelation. In other words, as each doctrine is connected with Revelation, each doctrine is also connected with all other doctrines.

#### B

**biblical exegesis** The critical interpretation and explanation of Sacred Scripture.

**biblical inerrancy** The doctrine that the books of Sacred Scripture are free from error regarding the truth God wishes to reveal through Scripture for the sake of our salvation.

#### C

**canon (of Sacred Scripture)** The books of the Bible officially recognized by the Church as the inspired Word of God.

**Chosen People** Also called the Israelites or the Jews, these are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom God entered into a special covenant at Mount Sinai. God chose them to prepare for the coming of his Son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Savior of the world.

**Church** The term *Church* has three inseparable meanings: (1) the entire People of God throughout the world; (2) the diocese, which is also known as the local church; (3) the assembly of believers gathered for the celebration of the liturgy, especially the Eucharist. In the Nicene Creed, the Church is recognized as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic—traits that together are referred to as the Marks of the Church.

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

**conscience** The "inner voice," guided by human reason and Divine Law, that enables us to judge the moral quality of a specific action that has been made, is being made, or will be made. This judgment enables us to distinguish good from evil, in order to accomplish good and avoid evil.

**contextualist approach** The interpretation of the Bible that takes into account the various contexts for understanding. These contexts include the senses of Scripture, literary forms, historical situations, cultural backgrounds, the unity of the whole of Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition, and the analogy of faith.

**covenant** A solemn agreement between human beings or between God and a human being in which mutual commitments are made.

#### D

**deuterocanonical** Books of the Old Testament that do not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures but are accepted by the Church as part of the canon of Scripture.

**Divine Inspiration** The divine assistance the Holy Spirit gave the authors of the books of the Bible so the authors could write in human words the message of salvation God wanted to communicate.

**Divine Revelation** God's self-communication through which he makes known the mystery of his divine plan. Divine Revelation is a gift accomplished by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through the words and deeds of salvation history. It is most fully realized in the Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ.



## E

**Essenes** A group of pious, ultraconservative Jews who left the Temple of Jerusalem and began a community by the Dead Sea, known as Qumran.

## F

**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 account of Adam and Eve in Genesis.

**fundamentalist approach** The interpretation of the Bible and Christian doctrine based on the literalist meaning of the Bible's words. The interpretation is made without regard to the historical setting in which the writings or teachings were first developed.

## G

**Gnostic** Referring to the belief that salvation comes from secret knowledge available to only a select few.

## L

**Latin Vulgate** The Vulgate is a Latin version of the Holy Bible, and largely the result of the labors of Saint Jerome, who was commissioned by Pope Damasus I in AD 382 to make a revision of the old Latin translations.

**literal sense** A form of biblical interpretation that considers the explicit meaning of the text. It lays the foundation for all other senses of Sacred Scripture.

**literary forms (genres)** Different kinds of writing determined by their literary technique, content, tone, and purpose.

## N

**Nag Hammadi manuscripts** Fourth-century writings discovered in 1945 near the village of Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt, that are invaluable sources of information regarding Gnostic beliefs, practices, and lifestyle. Gnosticism was an early Church heresy claiming that Christ's humanity was an illusion and the human body is evil.

**natural revelation** The process by which God makes himself known to human reason through the created world.

## O

**Old Covenant** The original covenant God established with Abraham and renewed with the Chosen People at Mount Sinai, in which he promised to be their God and they promised to be his people, obeying his Law and worshipping him alone.

**Old Law** Divine Law revealed in the Old Testament, summarized in the Ten Commandments. Also call the Law of Moses.

**oral tradition** The handing on of the message of God's saving plan through words.

**original holiness** The original state of human beings in their relationship with God, sharing in the divine life in full communion with him.

**original justice** The original state of Adam and Eve before the Fall, a state of complete harmony with themselves, with each other, and with all of creation.

**Original Sin** From the Latin *origo*, meaning "beginning" or "birth." The term has two meanings: (1) the sin of the first human beings, who disobeyed God's command by choosing to follow their own will and thus lost their original holiness and became subject to death, and (2) the fallen state of human nature that affects every person born into the world except Jesus and Mary.

## P

**particular good** Something that shares in the goodness of God, but ultimately leaves you unsatisfied.



## S

**salvation history** The pattern of specific events in human history in which God clearly reveals his presence and saving actions. Salvation was accomplished once and for all through Jesus Christ, a truth foreshadowed and revealed throughout the Old Testament.

**scholastic theology** The use of philosophical methods to better understand revealed truth. The goal of scholastic theology is to present the understanding of revealed truth in a logical and systematic form.

**spiritual sense** A form of biblical interpretation that builds on the literal sense to consider what the realities and events of Sacred Scripture signify and mean for salvation.

## Terms Introduced for Later Mastery

### A

**apocrypha** Writings about Jesus or the Christian message not accepted as part of the canon of Scripture.

### B

**Babylonian Exile** The period in Israelite history during which the Israelites of the ancient kingdom of Judah were held in captivity as slaves in Babylon.

### D

**Doctor of the Church** This term (from the Latin *doctor*, meaning “teacher”) is a title officially bestowed by the Church on those saints who are highly esteemed for their theological writings as well as their personal holiness.

### E

**Ecumenical Council** A gathering of the Church’s bishops from around the world to address pressing issues in the Church and society. Ecumenical Councils are usually convened by the Pope or are at least approved by him.

## U

**ultimate good** The source of our complete fulfillment can only be found in our union with God.

**encyclical** A teaching letter from the Pope to the members of the Church on topics of social justice, human rights, and peace.

### M

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

### N

**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.

**New Law** Divine Law revealed in the New Testament through the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and through the witness and teaching of the Apostles. The New Law perfects the Old Law and brings it to fulfillment. Also called the Law of Love.



## P

**prefigure** Similar to foreshadowing, it is an indication of a type of thing, person, or event that points to its future fulfillment. The meaning of what is contained in the Old Testament is unveiled in the New Testament.

**prophet** A person God chooses to speak his message of salvation.

## S

**Sacred Tradition** The process of passing on the Gospel message. Sacred Tradition, which began with the oral communication of the Gospel by the Apostles, was written down in Sacred Scripture, is handed down and lived out in the life of the Church, and is interpreted by the Magisterium under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture have their common source in the Revelation of Jesus Christ and must be equally honored.

**Second Vatican Council** The Ecumenical or General Council of the Roman Catholic Church that Pope Saint John XXIII convened as Pope in 1962 and that continued under Pope Saint Paul VI until 1965. (Also called Vatican Council II.)

## Terms Previously Mastered or for General Knowledge

**archaeology** The study of human activity and history by means of excavating and analyzing the artifacts and other physical materials.

**Bible** The collection of Christian sacred writings, or Scripture, accepted by the Church as inspired by God and composed of the Old and New Testaments.

**New Testament** The twenty-seven books of the Bible, which have the life, teachings, Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ and the beginnings of the Church as their central theme.

**sin** Any deliberate offense, in thought, word, or deed, against the will of God. Sin wounds human nature and injures human solidarity.

**soul** Our spiritual principle, it is immortal, and it is what makes us most like God. Our souls are created by God at the moment of our conception. It is the seat of human consciousness and freedom.

