

GLOSSARY

apostolate

mission and ministry to a specific field or community

apostolic community

group of religious engaged in public service ministries (e.g., teaching, nursing)

aspirant

a person who lives with a community before postulancy to determine her or his suitability for religious life and the community does the same

bride of Christ

another term for a Catholic sister or consecrated virgin who has taken public vows

canonization

the process by which a deceased person is declared a saint by the Catholic Church

charism

spirit of a community resulting from the founder's experience of God and ministry

cloister

enclosed building, buildings, or space that only members of a contemplative religious community may enter

congregation

community of religious with vows

contemplative community

congregation whose primary work is prayer and who maintain minimal contact with the outside world

convent

shared residence for a religious congregation

convert

a person who was not baptized into the Catholic Church as an infant but converted to the faith at another stage of his/her/their life

cradle Catholic

a person who was baptized into the Catholic Church as an infant

foundress

a woman who establishes a religious congregation

habit

the clothing signifying religious status worn by some communities

ministry

public services rendered by Church members

mother

title given in some religious communities to elected or appointed leaders

motherhouse

administrative headquarters of a religious community

novice

a person in training who is preparing to profess vows in a religious community

postulant

a person at the first step toward full membership in a religious community

religious

a person who pledges to live in accordance with a community's vows

superior

title given in some religious congregations to elected or appointed leaders

vocation

a calling toward a particular state of life or ministry