

Glossary

Angel: A member of a class of purely spiritual beings, sometimes considered celestial attendants of God. In medieval angelology, angels constituted the lowest of the nine celestial orders (seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominions, virtues, powers, principalities, archangels, and angels). Knowing this ranking will help in understanding the first stanza of Hymn 618:

Ye watchers and ye holy ones,
bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones,
 raise the glad strain, Alleluia!
Cry out, dominions, pryncedoms, powers,
virtues, archangels, angels' choirs,
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Annunciation: A miracle by which a teenage girl named Mary became impregnated with a son. The Angel Gabriel appeared to her, announcing that she would bear the son of God and that the babe would be called Emmanuel (or “God with us”). By this means, Jesus was born of a human mother and a divine father.

Apochrypha: Generally, we refer to “the Apochrypha” (means “things that are hidden”) with regard to these particular books or portions of books: Tobit, Judith, Additions to the Book of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the Letter of Jeremiah, the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, 1-4 Maccabees, 1 & 2 Esdras, the Prayer of Manasseh, and Psalm 151. None of these is included in the Hebrew canon of Holy Scripture, although most were included in something known as the Septuagint, which was the first known version of the Old Testament in Greek. In Anglicanism, we occasionally read from one of these Apochryphal books as part of our Sunday proclamation of Scripture or in the daily office.

Archangel: A higher rank of angel. The Christian church recognizes several archangels, including Gabriel (mentioned in Luke as announcing to Mary that she would bear the son of the Most High), Michael (referred to Joshua and Daniel in the Old Testament, Jude and Revelation in the New), Raphael (Tobit), and sometimes Phanuel (mentioned in the pseudepigraphal book of Enoch).

Bishop: Someone ordained to one of three orders of ordained ministry (bishop, priest, and deacon). A bishop is called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church. While active, a bishop generally serves as the chief pastor and administrator of a Diocese.

Church: While this word brings to mind both institutions (such as the Episcopal Church) and architecture (such as the house of the Church of the Annunciation), its root implies something else. That root is also the derivation of our English word “ecclesiastical.” In Greek, the word *ekklesia* means “those called out,” and it refers to people called by God for mission and ministry here on earth in the name of Jesus.

Daily Office: A form for daily prayer, consisting primarily of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. See p.75 and p.115 in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Our prayer book also offers a brief form for Noonday Prayer and Compline (bedtime prayer), as well as brief Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families (see p.137 and following).

Deacon: Someone ordained to one of three orders of ordained ministry (deacon, priest, and bishop). A deacon has particular calling to “interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and

hopes of the world” (*Prayer Book*, p.543). A deacon may preach, and, among other duties, at celebrations of the Eucharist prepares the table, proclaims the Gospel, and dismisses the people.

Diocese: A geographical unit, containing various congregations, parishes, and other church institutions. We are part of the Diocese of Newark, which comprises northern New Jersey. The southern half of the state is part of the Diocese of New Jersey, headquartered in Trenton.

Eucharist: A term from the Greek, meaning “thanksgiving.” The Holy Eucharist may also be called Mass, the Lord’s Supper, or Holy Communion. This is the historical ritual at which we celebrate the great sacrament of the altar, sharing the meal of bread and wine that God has transformed into the body and blood of Christ.

Liturgy: The word *liturgy* means “the work of the people” or “the public work,” which reminds us that worship is not a performance we observe passively, but something that requires the active and conscious participation of the entire assembly. Liturgy is the combination of authorized text, particular space, and gathered people who together enact a ritual in the praise and worship of God.

Pastoral Care: A term applied where people offer help and caring to others in their church or wider community. Pastoral care in this sense can be applied to listening, supporting, encouraging, and befriending. It can encompass a wide variety of issues including health, social and moral education, behavior management, and emotional support. Pastoral care can be offered by lay persons and clergy alike.

Parish: Once a geographic area, a parish now refers to a local congregation in the Episcopal Church. The primary pastor of a parish is called a “rector” and is ordinarily a priest. Some aided congregations are called “missions” and have a “vicar” as their pastor instead.

Priest: Someone ordained to one of three orders of ordained ministry (priest, deacon, and bishop). A priest is ordained to bless, absolve, and consecrate in the name of the church. Like all ministries in the Episcopal Church, the priesthood is open to women and men alike.

Pseudepigraphal: Like “apochryphal,” this word is applied to works that are similar to those in the Bible but not included in the “canon,” that is, among the official books. Works considered pseudepigraphal are generally as old and possibly as authentic as those officially included in the Bible, but they were never formally included in it. Works include expansions of Old Testament books, legends, prayers, wisdom literature, psalms, odes, and fragments of lost Judeo-Hellenistic works.

Rector: A priest instituted as the permanent spiritual head of a parish.

Sacrament: The word literally means “sacred memory,” and it refers to any of a number of church rites that use matter of this material world to communicate God’s grace. The Episcopal Church affirms two primary sacraments (Baptism and Eucharist), as well as further sacramental rites (including Confirmation, Matrimony, Ordination, Anointing of the Sick, and Reconciliation of a Penitent). While there may be many other means by which inward and spiritual grace is given outward and visible sign, the church affirms that these seven and sure and certain means of that grace at all times.

Sermon: Sometimes called the “breaking open” of the Word of God, a sermon is a particular kind of speech, given within the context of the liturgy, usually based on the themes of the day’s Scripture readings.

Warden: One of two lay leaders elected by the congregation at the annual meeting. With the Rector, the Wardens are the principal leaders of the parish and they serve as his primary advisers.

Vestry and Vestry Member: In the American colonies, each parish was governed by a group of laymen (yes, *men*—always white and always male, and almost always very wealthy), and they met in the only room the church had other than the worship space, the vestry or room for putting on vestments. This is why the governing board of an Episcopal Church is called the “Vestry” to this day. Our Vestry consists of the Rector, two Wardens, and six Vestry Members, each of whom has a specific portfolio as part of the leadership and governance of the church.

Vicar: The person (usually a priest) who is the spiritual head of a mission congregation (which is a community that is not yet self-supporting). The bishop technically serves as the rector of such congregations, and thus the Vicar represents the bishop (*vicariously*, as we say).