

A glossary of Catholic terms surrounding the installation of a bishop

*The source for most of these definitions is the Catholic Encyclopedia.*

**Apostolic Nuncio:** Church term for the Vatican ambassador to another country and the papal liaison with the Church in that country. An apostolic nuncio, also called a papal nuncio, is always an archbishop. In a country with which the Vatican does not have diplomatic relations, the official Vatican liaison with the Church is called an apostolic delegate. Papal representatives in the United States were apostolic delegates until 1984, when full diplomatic relations were established.

**Archbishop:** An archbishop or metropolitan, in the present sense of the term, is a bishop who governs a diocese strictly his own, while he presides at the same time over the bishops of a well-defined district composed of simple dioceses but not of provinces. Hence none of these subordinate bishops rule over others. These bishops are called the suffragans. The archbishop's own diocese is the archdiocese. The several dioceses of the district form the archiepiscopal, or metropolitan, province. The title of archbishop is given automatically to bishops who govern archdioceses. It is also given to certain other high-ranking church officials, notably Vatican ambassadors, the secretaries of Vatican congregations and the presidents of pontifical councils.

**Archdiocese:** This term does not designate an ecclesiastical province, but only that diocese of the province which is the archbishop's own, and over which he holds immediate and exclusive jurisdiction.

**Auxiliary bishop:** A bishop assigned to a Catholic diocese or archdiocese to assist its residential bishop. Whether in a diocese or archdiocese, his title is bishop.

**Bishop:** The highest order of ordained ministry in Catholic teaching; the title of an ecclesiastical dignitary who possesses the fullness of the priesthood to rule a diocese as its chief pastor, in due submission to the primacy of the pope.

**Cathedra:** The chair of a bishop in his cathedral church at which he presides at solemn functions.

**Cathedral:** The chief church of a diocese, in which the bishop has his chair. It is, properly speaking, the bishop's church, wherein he presides, teaches, and conducts worship.

**College of Consulters:** A stable body involved in the governance of a diocese. It is composed of between 6 and 12 priests and is presided over by the

diocesan bishop. Members are chosen by the bishop from among the members of the presbyteral council. The bishop is required by canon law to consult with the College on certain matters and to obtain their consent on other matters about which he must make a decision (Canon 502).

**Crosier:** The crosier is an ecclesiastical ornament, resembling a shepherd's staff, which is conferred on bishops at their consecration and on mitred abbots at their investiture, and which is used by these prelates in performing certain solemn functions. It is a symbol of the office of bishop.

**Dean/Vicar:** The title of a priest appointed by the bishop to aid him in administering the parishes in a certain vicinity, called a "deanery." The function of a dean involves promotion, coordination, and supervision of the common pastoral activity within the deanery or vicariate.

**Diocese:** The territory or churches subject to the jurisdiction of a bishop.

**Holy See:** The primary official term of reference for the Diocese of Rome, as the chief diocese of Catholic Christendom; used to refer to the pope and the Roman Curia — congregations, tribunals, and various other offices — in their role of authority over and service to the Catholic Church around the world.

**Installation:** In common usage, installation usually refers to the assumption of duties by a local ordinary, generally the diocesan bishop. The technical assumption of duties by the bishop-designate basically occurs when he presents his apostolic letter of appointment to the diocesan College of Consulters. One frequently sees, however, and with ample appropriateness, a more ceremonial and public liturgical celebration of that ecclesial event in the form of an "installation Mass," which opens the pastoral administration of the new bishop.

**Mitre:** The mitre is the tall, pointed ceremonial cap worn as part of liturgical dress by a pope, bishop or abbot. It consists of two like parts, each stiffened by a lining and rising to a peak; these are sewn together on the sides, but are united above by a piece of material that can fold together. Two lappets trimmed on the ends with fringe hang down from the back.

**Pallium:** Special stole made of lamb's wool worn over the chasuble by the pope and archbishops; it signifies the communion of archbishops with the Holy See. (See page ??)

**Province, Ecclesiastical:** An ecclesiastical administrative district under the jurisdiction of an archbishop. The seven dioceses in the state of Florida — St. Augustine, Miami, Orlando, St. Petersburg, Pensacola-Tallahassee, Palm Beach

and Venice — make up one province that is led by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Miami. The Code of Canon Law spells out certain limited obligations and authority that the metropolitan archbishop has with respect to the dioceses within his province.

**Vespers:** Also called evening prayer, vespers is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, the series of psalms, prayers and readings for different parts of the day that Catholic priests and deacons are obligated to pray daily. Often a new bishop will present his letter of appointment to the priests of the diocese during a vespers service at the cathedral.

**Vicar General:** A priest, auxiliary bishop or coadjutor bishop who assists the diocesan bishop in the governance of the entire diocese.

**Zucchetto:** Skull cap worn by the pope (white), bishops (purple) and cardinals (red).