Glossary of Terms

Aachen: Charlemagne's capital city (modern day Germany)
Abbess: Female administrator of monastery / abbey
Abbey: Monastic community
Abbott: Male administrator of monastery / abbey
Addled: Confused
Allah: Islamic term for God
Aller: Village where the Baptism of the Danish King Guthrum took place
Alms: Gifts of money / services / goods for the poor
Amulet: Talisman: Charm worn to protect against evil and bring good fortune
Anatolia: Asia Minor
Angles: Germanic peoples who settled post Roman Britain
Anglo-Saxon Britain: 5th Century to Norman Invasion (1066)
Applewine: Cider
Askania Lake: Lake Iznik, Provence of Bursa, Turkey
Bailey: Outer courtyard of a fortification
Banns (Bans): Announcement of forthcoming marriage
Battlements: Defensive structure along the outer edge of the wall-walk
Befuddled: Drunk
Benedictine Order: Religious community founded by St. Benedictine
Bid: Ask
Bishop of Rome: The Pope
Bishopric: Territorial jurisdiction of a Bishop
Bourgeoisie: Wealthy Middle Class
Bow: Front of a ship
Bracer: Leather support for warriors' arms
Breeches: Trousers
Brigand: Bandit
Britons: Ancient Celtic peoples from the island of Great Britain
Burgher: Member of the Bourgeoisie
Burh: Fortified town
Caliph: Head of state
Caliphate: Rule/reign of a caliph
Cast Rune: Psychic interpretation of runic alphabet symbols to tell the future
Cell: Single room in an abbey / monastery / nunnery
Chapter House: Religious community administrative center
Charlemagne: Charles I also called Charles the Great (742 AD – 814 AD)
 - King of the Franks (from 768 AD) and Emperor of the Romans (from 800 AD)
Calling: Religious vocation
Celts: Dominated Great Britain from the Iron Age through the Early Middle Ages
Christendom: The Christian world
Ciborium: Chalice and paten set using during the celebration of the Christian Mass
Circus: Open arena for chariot races and other forms of entertainment (games)
Cloister: Enclosed inner courtyard in a monastery / abbey
Coddle: Pamper

Coffer: Chest
Comely: Beautiful
Compline: 9:00 pm prayer service
Confessor: Spiritual advisor
Constantinople: Modern-day Istanbul
Contagion: Contagious disease
Cowl: Monk's hooded cloak
Dane: People of Denmark
Denarius: Main silver coin of the Roman Empire
Diet: Parliamentary body
Diocese: District or See under the supervision of a Bishop that is divided into parishes
Dolt: Stupid person
Don: To put on
Dragonship: Viking longship, longboat
Emir: Muslim military commander, local chief; prince
Eucharist: Consecrated bread and wine that becomes the body and blood of Christ
Excommunication: Banishment of a member of a church
Feign: Pretend
Fishmonger: Person who sells fish
Flameworker: Glassblower
Fealty: Swear loyalty and allegiance to an overlord / ruler
Flanders: Modern day Belgium
Forthwith: Immediately
Fortnight: Fourteen days
Frisians: Germanic people living in East & North Frisia, The Netherlands, Denmark
Garb: Clothing
Garderobe: latrines (toilet)
Gate: Heavy wood doors for entry
Gatehouse: Main entry with towers / barriers on each side of a wood gate
Gauntlet: Armored glove
Give quarter: Spare life, take prisoners
God Speed: Safe travel
Gong Farmer: Cleans the latrines (toilet)
Grapple: Bind together
Great Hall: Main room for meetings / dining
Guffaw: Laugh
Habit: Clothing worn by members of the religious community
Harried: Raid / pillage / harass
Hispania: Spain
Holy Roman Emperor: Title conferred by the Pope; ruler of the Holy Roman Empire
Holy Roman Empire: Frankish Kingdom (present day Germany)
Holy See: Seat of the Pope's office in Rome
Hull: Watertight body of a ship
Ignoble: Baseborn; illegitimate
Iliad: Homer's ancient Greek poem set in the Trojan War
Ill-begotten: Illegitimate

Illumination: Artistically decorated manuscripts
Inner Bailey: Courtyard in the center of the fortification
Investiture: Ceremonial transfer of a fief by an overlord to a vassal
Javelin: Spear
Keep: Large tower
Knucklebones: Game similar to Jacks
Lauds: 3:00 am prayer service
Lunge: Quick thrust or jab by leaning forward
Lyre: Harp
Magnificat (Song of Mary): Ancient Christian Hymn, taken from the Gospel of St. Luke
Mantle: Cloak-like garment that can be richly decorated
Matins: Midnight prayer service
Mead: Intoxicating beverage made from water, honey, malt and yeast
Meddle: Interfere
Menial Sins: A lesser sin not resulting in eternal damnation
Mentz: Former form of Mainz, Germany until the 20th century
Minstrel: Musician
Monastic Orders: Religious communities guided by a particular religious rule
 - e.g. Benedictine Order
Moor: A Muslim of mixed Berber and Arab descent. Invaders of Spain in the 8th C
Mortal sin: A grave sin resulting in eternal damnation
Njord: Norse god of the sea
None: 3:00 pm prayer service
Northman: Viking or Norseman: Scandinavian seafaring warriors
Novitiate: New candidate to a religious order; has not taken final vows
Nunnery: Convent
Palace of Aachen: Charlemagne's royal seat built in the late 8th century
Palfrey: Riding horse
Parapet: Wall rampart
Parry / Parried: Block / deflect a blow
Paten: Plate of precious metal used in church services
Patrimony of St. Peter: Papal States - territory in Italy ruled by the Pope
Pilgrim's Staff: Walking stick
Plantain Leaves: Medicinal herb; reduces pain
Point: First and most exposed position in combat formation
Portico: Entrance
Posthaste: Immediately
Postern Gate: Secondary gate at the rear of a fortification
Postulant: Candidate seeking admission to a religious order
Poultice: Medicinal paste
Prime: 6:00 am prayer service
Prioress: Abbess
Priory: Abbey
Prow: Front of a ship
Psalter: Book of Psalms
Psalms: Sacred poems

Quill: Writing pen
Quiver: Case for carrying arrows
Rampart: Embankment that encircles the fortification
Recompense: Give compensation for an injury or loss
Reparation: Give satisfaction for a wrong or injury
Revels:Feasting
Revenant: Lost soul whose ghostly form walks amongst the living
Rope Pulling: Tug of war
Rucksack: Backpack
Runes: Ancient alphabet letters
Saracen: By the 12th C synonymous with Muslim;
 - originally from the Roman Provence of Arabia, distinguished from the Arabs
Saxons: Germanic peoples who settled post Roman Britain
Scabbard: Sheath (case) for sword or dagger
Sconce: Mounted torch holders; Candlestick
See: Domain of authority of a Bishop
Sext: Noon prayer service
Shipwright: Boatmaker
Shriven: Free from guilt; sacrament of reconciliation (confession/penance)
Simony: The buying or selling of a church office or ecclesiastical preferment
Sjaund: Funeral ale ritual drinking celebrated seven days after a person's death
 - Norse pagan custom
Smithy: Workplace of a smith or blacksmith
Solicitor: Attorney
Solstice: June 22 first day of summer; December 22 first day of winter
Sodomite: Male homosexual
Stand: Halt / stop
Standard: Flag
Stern: Back of a ship
Sternpost: Upright structural post at the stern (back) of a wooden ship or boat
Succor: Refuge
Synod: Assembly of clergy and sometimes laity in a diocese
Tabula: Board game similar to backgammon
Take the Cloth: Join a religious order
Take the Cowl: Become a monk / brother
Take the Veil: Become a nun
Talisman / Amulet: Charm worn to protect against evil and bring good fortune
Tarry: To delay
Terce: 9:00 am prayer service
Thurible: Metal censer suspended from chains in which incense is burned
Thrust: Push or drive with force
Tonsure: Head partially shaved prior to joining a religious order
Tryst: Rendezvous / assignation
Tumbler: Acrobat
Tunic: Simple knee length or longer garment
Turret: Small tower

Valerian Root: Medicinal herb; pain reliever and sedative
Vassal Feudal tenant
Vellum: Parchment made from animal skin, high quality
Vespers: 6:00 pm prayer service
Vestment: Liturgical garments, clerical clothing
Vicar of Christ: The Pope
Vie: Compete
Viking: Scandinavian warriors / seafarers
Villa: Roman styled house favored by the Roman Briton upper class
Wall-Walk: Walkway on top of a wall that encircles a fortification
Whetstone: Sharpening stone to grind and sharpen edges of steel tools, weapons
Wimple: Covering worn over the head and around the neck and chin; nun's clothing
Yarrow: Medicinal herb; stops bleeding and reduces fever
Yield: Give up