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AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language

  


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**en·cyc·li·cal**  (ĕn-sĭk lĭ-kəl)

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*adj.*

Intended for general or wide circulation.

*n.*

*Roman Catholic Church*

A papal letter addressed to the bishops of the Church or to the hierarchy of a particular country.

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[From Medieval Latin *encyclicus*, circular, from Greek *enkuklios* : *en-*, in; see [EN-](#)<sup>2</sup> + *kuklos*, circle; see **k<sup>w</sup>el-**<sup>1</sup> [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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## Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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