

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1) Wisdom: The gift of knowing right from wrong, and of which choices to make in life in order to live a holy life and to avoid stepping off of God's path.

2) Understanding: The gift of tolerance, sympathy and compassion for others. The gift allows for us to comprehend and grasp the meanings behind the teachings of the Church, and of how to aid others in need.

3) Counsel: The gift of right judgment, prudence, and guidance. With counsel comes the knowledge necessary to guide ourselves and others in following the teachings of the Church and to do God's will. This helps us to make the right judgment calls when making choices to live a life faithful to Jesus Christ.

4) Fortitude: The gift of strength and courage that helps us to stand up for our faith in Christ, and to suffer and endure the persecution and obstacles that may keep us from practicing our faith.

5) Knowledge: The gift of enlightenment that enables us to choose the right path that will lead us to God. It also encourages us to lead others and to avoid obstacles that could keep us from him.

6) Piety: The gift of reverence and confidence in God, fills us with the love, and joyfully longing to serve God and the Church, and enables us to see him in all events through a holy life of prayer and devotion.

7) Fear of the Lord: The gift of wonder and respect encourages us to be in loving awe of God. Our fear of the Lord is not so much about being afraid of eternal punishment for our sins, but more so out of fear of offending or displeasing him as if he were a loving parent.

THE FRUITS AND THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES

How do we know that we have received the Holy Spirit? Let us consider several ways in which, taken together, we are assured that the Holy Spirit is transforming our daily lives.

First, we have received the sacraments of the Church. Christ gives us the sacraments through the power of his Holy Spirit.

Second, we are acting more and more like Jesus did. Our lifestyles are reflecting the values and teachings of Jesus.

Third, we are thinking and feeling more like Jesus did. Our inward desires are being transformed to Gospel values.

Fourth, we are experiencing the Fruits of the Spirit in our lives. We notice these traits in our lives, and other notice them too.

Fifth, we are making good use of the Gifts of the Spirit. We consciously and conscientiously apply these spiritual gifts.

Sixth, we are providing a good example to others. Authenticity makes a difference that other people both notice and desire.

Seventh, we are inviting others to experience the Spirit. We intentionally reach out to others as missionary disciples.

In other words, the answer to "Got Spirit?" can be answered in these and many other wonderful ways. The fruits and the gifts of the Spirit, presented here, are not a checklist of things to do, but a preview of a mystery that unfolds in our lives when we spiritually grow in our saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1) Charity: The Holy Spirit has infused us with the capacity for love. For the love of God and of our neighbor, without the desire of reward for our selfless devotion.

2) Joy: When the Holy Spirit enters us, we come to recognize that true happiness comes not from money or possessions. But by knowing and following Jesus, we will someday be with him, now and forever in Heaven.

3) Peace: There is a tranquility within our soul that comes from our reliance on God. Through prayer and worship, we experience an inner peace, and work to spread this peace throughout the world.

4) Patience: By treating others with thoughtfulness and tolerance, we are capable of demonstrating our ability to resist temptation, and the need for God's mercy and forgiveness. As love is patient.

5) Kindness: Otherwise known as benignity, is the willingness to do more for others than they do for you. Another words the virtue of treating others the way one would like to be treated themselves.

6) Goodness: To renounce evil and embrace that which is good, as we repent for our sins, and strive to do God's will.

7) Longanimity: To quietly endure the provocation and attacks of others, through perseverance and patience. This long-suffering is our ability to stay faithful over the course of our lives.

8) Mildness: People inherently have a tendency to be rough, angry and vengeful. The Holy Spirit has given us the moral virtue to be gentle and mild in behavior. From this blessing we drew our ability to show forgiveness, and to be gracious towards others.

9) Faith: Through Divine grace, we are faithful by living our lives in accordance with God's will, and by committing to the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Holy Scriptures, and the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Tradition includes three more Fruits of the Holy Spirit which are found in the Bible translation of Saint Jerome.

10) Modesty: Internally this means being humble of ourselves and pure of thoughts. By acknowledging that our successes, achievements, talents, and merits, are all truly gifts from God. Externally this means dressing appropriately, to speak without gloating or boasting, and to not act in a manner unbecoming of a follower of Christ.

11) Continence: Is to exercise self-control and moderation of all things. By overcoming and resisting temptations of a sexual nature or other questionable appetites, we are doing God's will. This does not mean to deny oneself of what is needed, but to limit one's wants, to what is an appropriate behavior or level of indulgence.

12) Chastity: The submission of physical or sexual desires to the Holy Spirit. This means to abstain from sexual activity prior to marriage, as well as to remain faithful to your spouse and not to part take in sexual activities with another partner.