

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Knowledge and Understanding

- **Knowledge** is our intellectual grasp of our faith. We not only know our faith but can share it with others as well.
- **Understanding** is when we take our faith to heart, and let the gospel become the way and the truth of our lives.

Wisdom and Counsel

- **Wisdom** is when we appreciate the difference that God's ways make in how we understand the meaning of life.
- **Counsel** is our how we faithfully apply the Gospel to our daily lives and encourage others to do the same.

Piety and Fear of the Lord

- **Piety** is the genuine external manifestation of our holy faith in religious observances and devotional practices.
- **Fear of the Lord** is our internal respect for the ways of God over any fear about the disapproval of unbelievers.

Fortitude

- **Fortitude** is our confidence in standing up for Jesus and with Jesus in living out our Christian beliefs and values.
- Fortitude is also the courage to stand out as witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus despite pushback from unbelievers.

When we put these spiritual gifts to work in our lives, we grow in faith, hope, and love, as intentional disciples of Christ.

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 and leading us onward in sanctification and perfection in Christ.

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 into Gospel values.

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

So, the question, "Got Spirit?" can be answered by the Spirit dwelling in our hearts. The fruits and the gifts of the Spirit that are 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 a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Love: The Holy Spirit has infused within our hearts the capacity for sacrificial love. When we love God and our neighbor without the desire for reward, we connect with the love that made all things and keeps all things in existence.

Joy: The Holy Spirit fills us with a happiness that the world cannot give. We realize that power, possessions, pleasure, and popularity cannot fill the gaping hole in our hearts. Only Jesus can bring true fulfillment and contentment into our lives.

Peace: There is a sublime tranquility within our soul that comes from being right with God in our hearts and minds. By being reconciled to God through Christ, we are at peace with ourselves and others, because we are at one with God.

Patience: By enduring our difficulties with compassion, we unite our sufferings with those of Christ on the cross. When we treat others with the same patience that God has shown to us, we fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ.

Kindness: When we love others as Christ has loved us, we go beyond the golden rule and do more for others than they could ever do for us. The goodwill that we share with others breaks down barriers and builds bridges in our relationships.

Goodness: To do justice, to love goodness, and to walk humbly with our God, is to revel in all that is true, good, and beautiful. When the Gospel sets our standard for goodness, we encounter an excellence that can only come from God.

Faithfulness: When we humbly persevere in the ways of the Lord, we work out our salvation in holy fear and sacrificial trembling. Our confidence in Christ leads us out of our comfort zones to accomplish what is only possible with God's grace.

Gentleness: To be gentle in the face of aggressiveness reveals an inner strength that comes from our identity as sons and daughters of God. Confronted with worldly power, the gentle conviction of our holy faith always triumphs in the end.

Self-Control: When we give God control of our lives, we are unshackled from our own interests and enjoy the freedom of the Spirit. As servants of the Master, we become masterful in the disciplines of our faith as devoted followers of Christ.

