

TREASURES of OUR FAITH
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Greetings brothers and sisters. As we go through this 'Year of Faith', each week we will take a journey together to deepen and rediscover our faith as Catholic Christians. We will take time to look at the rich traditions of our Church, we'll look at what certain things signify and their symbolism, take time to answer some frequently asked questions and look at why we do certain things as Catholics. This week we'll look at the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit enable us to live a holy Christian life. These graces are called 'Gifts' because God gives them to us without expecting any payment from us, he freely gives them to us because He loves us. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are:

Wisdom - desire for the things of God, and to direct our whole life and all our actions to His honor and glory

Understanding - we comprehend how we need to live as followers of Christ. A person with understanding is not confused by the conflicting messages in our culture about the right way to live. Understanding enables us to know more clearly the mysteries of faith.

Counsel - with the gift of counsel/right judgment, we know the difference between right and wrong, and we choose to do what is right. A person with right judgment avoids sin and lives out the values taught by Jesus.

Fortitude - strengthen us to do the will of God in all things, a person with fortitude/courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God

Knowledge - enables us to discover the will of God in all things, helps us to understand the meaning of God.

Piety - with the gift of piety/reverence, we have a deep sense of respect for God and the Church. A person with reverence recognizes our total reliance on God and comes before God with humility, trust, and love.

Fear of the Lord - with the gift of fear of the Lord we are aware of the glory and majesty of God. A person with wonder and awe knows that God is the perfection of all we desire: perfect knowledge, perfect goodness, perfect power, and perfect love. This gift is described by Aquinas as a fear of separating oneself from God.

Charisms from the Holy Spirit are what make all of us capable of actions that help in the living out and spreading of the Gospel message. Charisms are not just limited to a select few in the Church. Everyone has their own particular gift to be used for the benefit of the Church's life and mission. Each one of us should use the gifts that we have received to serve others, in faithfully administering God's grace in all its various forms to all we meet. When we speak, we should do it as one speaking the very words of God. When we serve, we should do it with the strength that God provides us through our gifts that we have received and to serve our neighbors by living out the many examples that Jesus gave us to follow...