

PENTECOST-GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are enumerated in Isaiah 11:2-3. They are present in their fullness in Jesus Christ but are found in all Christians who are in the life of the trinity. We receive them when we are infused with the life of God within us—as, for example, when we receive a Holy Mystery worthily. As the current Catechism of the Catholic Church (para. 1831) notes, "They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them." Infused with His gifts, we respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as if by instinct, the way Christ Himself would.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit is an enumeration of seven spiritual gifts originating with patristic authors,^[1] later elaborated by five intellectual virtues^[2] and four other groups of ethical characteristics.^{[3][4]} They are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord (wonder and awe).

Wisdom is the first and highest gift of the Holy Spirit, because it is the perfection of the theological virtue of faith. Through wisdom, we come to value properly those things which we believe through faith. The truths of Christian Catholic belief are more important than the things of this world, and wisdom helps us to order our relationship to the created world properly, loving Creation for the sake of God, rather than for its own sake.

Understanding is the second gift of the Holy Spirit, and people sometimes have a hard time understanding how it differs from wisdom. While wisdom is the desire to contemplate the things of God, understanding allows us grasp, at least in a limited way, the very essence of the truths of the Catholic Faith. Through understanding, we gain a certitude about our beliefs that moves beyond faith.

Counsel, the third gift of the Holy Spirit, is the perfection of the cardinal virtue of prudence. Prudence can be practiced by anyone, but counsel is supernatural. Through this gift of the Holy Spirit, we are able to judge how best to act almost by intuition. Because of the gift of counsel, Christians need not fear to stand up for the truths of the Faith, because the Holy Spirit will guide us in defending those truths.

While counsel is the perfection of a cardinal virtue, fortitude is both a gift of the Holy Spirit and a cardinal virtue. Fortitude is ranked as the fourth gift of the Holy Spirit because it gives us the strength to follow through on the actions suggested

