

III. THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1830 The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are **permanent dispositions which make man docile in following the promptings of the Holy Spirit.**

1831 The **seven gifts** of the Holy Spirit are **wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.** They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David. [109 Cf. Isa 11:1-2.] They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations.

Let your good spirit lead me on a level path. [110 Ps 143:10.]
For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God . . . If children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. [111 Rom 8:14,17.]

1832 The **fruits of the Spirit** are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: "charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity." [112 Gal 5:22-23 (Vulg.).]

**"I have told you this while I am with you.
The Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name,
will teach you everything
and remind you of all that I told you. John 14:25-6**

The seven gifts are enumerated in Isaiah 11:2-3, and conforms to the Latin Vulgate, which takes the list from the Septuagint.

Isaiah 11:2 And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel** and **might**, the spirit of **knowledge** and the **fear of the LORD**. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not **judge** by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear;

Here are the names of the seven gifts, as given in the Catechism of the Catholic Church [1831], along with a description of each gift, as defined by St. Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica*: [Second Part of the Second Part]

Wisdom - *With the gift of wisdom, we see God at work in our lives and in the world.* For the wise person, the wonders of nature, historical events, and the ups and downs of our lives take on deeper meaning. The matters of judgment about the truth, and being able to see the whole image of God. Lastly being able to see God in everyone and

everything everywhere.

Veneta

Understanding - *With the gift of understanding, we comprehend how we need to live as a follower of Jesus Christ.* A person with understanding is not confused by all the conflicting messages in our culture about the right way to live. The gift of understanding perfects a person's speculative reason in the apprehension of truth. It is the gift whereby self-evident principles are known, Aquinas writes.

Counsel (right judgment) - *With the gift of 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. The gift of truth that allows the person to respond prudently, and happily to believe our Christ the Lord.

Fortitude (Courage) - *With the gift of courage, we overcome our fear and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus Christ.* A person with courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God, even if it means accepting rejection, verbal abuse, or even physical harm and death. The gift of courage allows people the firmness of mind that is required both in doing good and in enduring evil, especially with regard to goods or evils that are difficult.

Preaching on abortion and immigration, tackle the tough questions.

Knowledge - *With the gift of knowledge, we understand the meaning of God's Revelation, especially as expressed in the life and words of Jesus Christ.* A person with knowledge is *always learning more about the scriptures and tradition.* The gift of knowledge is more than an accumulation of facts.

Each year I learn more through the liturgical year, eg Holy Thursday

Piety (Reverence) - *With the gift of reverence, sometimes called piety, 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. Piety is the gift whereby, at the Holy Spirit's instigation, we pay worship and duty to God as our Father, Aquinas writes.

As I study the Liturgy I see it more focused on God and not just as creative gimmicks aimed at moving us.

Wonder and Awe (Fear of the LORD) - *With the gift of wonder and awe 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.** He describes the gift as a "filial fear," like a child's fear of offending his father, rather than a "servile fear," that is, a fear of punishment. Also known as knowing God is all powerful. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov 1:7) because it puts our mindset in its correct location with respect to God: *we are the finite, dependent creatures, and He is the infinite, all-powerful Creator.*

St. Thomas Aquinas says that **four of these gifts** (wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and counsel) **direct the intellect**, while the other **three gifts** (fortitude, reverence, and fear of the Lord or wonder and awe) **direct the will toward God.**

In some respects, the gifts are similar to the virtues but a key distinction is that the **virtues operate under the impetus of human reason** (prompted by grace), whereas the **gifts operate under the impetus of the Holy Spirit**; the former can be used when one wishes, but the latter operate only when the Holy Spirit wishes. The former are like the oars of a boat; the latter, the sails.