

What are the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

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. They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations. (CCC, 1831)

The Catholic Church derives this information on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit from scripture:

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. (Isaiah 11:2-4)

How Are the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit Defined?

1. **Wisdom** - Wisdom is not the quoting of facts. Wisdom is a gift that allows a person to understand things from God's point of view. In other words, Wisdom allows a person to recognize truth. A person with the Gift of Wisdom is able to take this truth and use it to glorify God by choosing Godly solutions to problems.
2. **Understanding** - The Gift of Understanding allows a person to comprehend the Catholic Faith. For example learning and understanding scripture is a Gift of Understanding.
3. **Counsel** - The Gift of Counsel is also known as a Gift of Right Judgment. This Gift allows a person to discern between good and evil or right and wrong. The Gift of Counsel makes a person able to act by intuition and choose and be prudent in a supernatural way.
4. **Fortitude** - The Gift of Fortitude is also known as the Gift of Courage. Through this Gift a person is no longer afraid to stand up for God and His truths. A person who has the Gift of Fortitude will stand up for good against evil and is convicted to take a stand when the occasion arises.
5. **Knowledge** - The Gift of Knowledge allows a person to understand the meaning and purpose God has for him and to live up to this meaning. It differs from wisdom in that it is an action, not just a desire to live up to the ways of God. It differs from Understanding in that it is not just ability, it is a knowing.

6. **Piety** - Is a desire to serve and worship God out of love, not just duty. A person with the Gift of Piety has a true love and a real relationship with God.

7. **Fear of the Lord** - The Gift of Fear of the Lord puts God in the proper perspective. A person with this Gift understands the greatness and awesomeness of the Lord. They want to serve Him because of who He is. A person with the Gift of Fear of the Lord understands who they are and why they are here in relationship to God; In other words, everything they are is due to the wonder, love, grace, and perfection of God. They are totally dependent on the Lord as a child is to a parent. The Gift of Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. Once a person understands who God is and desires to please Him, they can begin to understand things from God's point of view or have Wisdom.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

The [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) presents the seven gifts as follows:

- [wisdom](#): it is the capacity to love spiritual things more than material ones;
- [understanding](#): in 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. 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 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](#) (courage): with the gift of fortitude/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 physical harm. The gift of courage allows people the firmness of mind that is required both in doing good and in enduring evil;
- [knowledge](#): with the gift of knowledge, we understand the meaning of God. The gift of knowledge is more than an accumulation of facts;
- [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;
- [fear of the Lord](#) ([wonder](#) and [awe](#)): 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. 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. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ([Psalms 111:10](#) || [Proverbs 1:7;9:10](#)) because it puts our mindset in correct location with respect to God: we are the finite, dependent creatures, and He is the infinite, all-powerful Creator.