

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The seven gifts of the Spirit are based on a prophecy from Isaiah about the promised Messiah:

The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him;
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD (Isaiah 11:2-3).

Here are some descriptions to help you understand the meaning of these gifts (the names for these gifts come from the prayers used during confirmation).

Wisdom—with the gift of wisdom, we see God at work in our life and in the world. For the wise person, the wonders of nature, historical events, and the ups and downs of our lives take on a deeper meaning and purpose.

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.

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.

Courage—with the gift of courage, we overcome our fear and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus. 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.

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.

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 his or her total reliance on God and comes before God with humility, trust, and love.

Wonder and Awe—with the gift of wonder and awe (sometimes called 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.