

Seek The Charisms

A List of Thirty Spiritual Gifts

The Lord commands us to set our hearts on the charisms, the supernatural gifts of the Spirit. On Judgment Day we will not be responsible to have had all the gifts, but to have sought all the gifts. To seek the gifts of the Spirit we must know what they are. Although the Spirit has poured out thousands of gifts, there are at least thirty, which the Bible describes. The Lord commands us to seek these thirty gifts by prayer, Bible study, and use in ministry.

There are several major gift-lists in the Bible and several gifts mentioned individually.

Part I: Isaiah 11:2-3 . RENEWAL GIFTS

1. Wisdom
2. Understanding
3. Counsel
4. Strength
5. Knowledge
6. Fear of the Lord

Part II Romans 12:6-8 . UNITY GIFTS

7. Prophecy
8. Faith
9. Ministry
10. Teaching
11. Exhortation (Encouragement)
12. Giving
13. Leadership
14. Mercy

Part III: 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; 13:1-3

. GIFTS FOR UNITY AND GROWTH

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- 15. Healing
- 16. Miracles
- Prophecy
- 17. Discernment of Spirits
- 18. Tongues (Praise)
- 19. Interpretation of Tongues
- 20. Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers
- Miracle-Workers
- Healers
- 21. Helpers
- 22. Administrators
- Tongues
- Giving

23. Redemptive Suffering (Martyrdom)

Part IV: Ephesians 4:11 . EQUIPPING GIFTS

- Apostles
- Prophets
- 24. Evangelists (Preachers)
- 25. Pastor-Teachers (Shepherds)

Part V: Other . INTEGRATION GIFTS

26. Deliverance . Acts 19:15
27. Celibacy. Matthew 19:11;1 Corinthians 7:1
28. Gospel poverty . Mark 10:21
29. Intercession . 1 Timothy 5:5
30. Hospitality . 1 Timothy 3:2

“What the Catechism of the Catholic Church tells Us about the Charisms”

Note: These are listed in relevant order to the topic of Charisms.

- 809** The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the soul, as it were, of the Mystical Body, the source of its life, of its unity in diversity, and of the riches of its gifts and charisms.
- 688** The Church, a communion living in the faith of the apostles which she transmits, is the place where we know the Holy Spirit:
- in the Scriptures he inspired;
 - in the Tradition, to which the Church Fathers are always timely witnesses;
 - in the Church's Magisterium, which he assists;
 - in the sacramental liturgy, through its words and symbols, in which the Holy Spirit puts us into communion with Christ;
 - in prayer, wherein he intercedes for us;
 - in the charisms and ministries by which the Church is built up;
 - in the signs of apostolic and missionary life;
 - in the witness of saints through whom he manifests his holiness and continues the work of salvation
- 798** The Holy Spirit is "the principle of every vital and truly saving action in each part of the Body." He works in many ways to build up the whole Body in charity: by God's Word "which is able to build you up"; by Baptism, through which he forms Christ's Body; by the sacraments, which give growth and healing to Christ's members; by "the grace of the apostles, which holds first place among his gifts"; by the virtues, which make us act according to what is good; finally, by the many special graces (called "charisms"), by which he makes the faithful "fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church."
- 799** Whether extraordinary or simple and humble, charisms are graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, ordered as they are to her building up, to the good of men, and to the needs of the world.
- 800** Charisms are to be accepted with gratitude by the person who receives them and by all members of the Church as well. They are a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit and are used in full conformity with authentic promptings of this same Spirit, that is, in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms.
- 951** Communion of charisms. Within the communion of the Church, the Holy Spirit "distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank" for the building up of the Church. Now, "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."
- 2003** Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. There are sacramental graces, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore special graces, also called charisms after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning "favor," "gratuitous gift," "benefit." Whatever their character - sometimes it is extraordinary, such as the gift of miracles or of tongues - charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church.

2024 Sanctifying grace makes us "pleasing to God." Charisms, special graces of the Holy Spirit, are oriented to sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. God also acts through many actual graces, to be distinguished from habitual grace which is permanent in us.

910 "The laity can also feel called, or be in fact called, to cooperate with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for the sake of its growth and life. This can be done through the exercise of different kinds of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord has been pleased to bestow on them."

801 It is in this sense that discernment of charisms is always necessary. No charism is exempt from being referred and submitted to the Church's shepherds. "Their office [is] not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good," so that all the diverse and complementary charisms work together "for the common good."

CHARISMS & THEIR ROLE IN THE CHURCH

a. St. Paul said to the Church in Corinth:

i. In regard to the spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be unaware. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service, but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given some benefit. (1 Corinthians 12:1,4-7)

b. The spiritual gifts were an important part of the life of the early church.

i. The New Testament indicates that each person received spiritual gifts, and they were manifested in a great variety. The proper function of these gifts brought vitality and power to the Church, and enabled it to greatly affect the world. These spiritual gifts are an important part of the life of the Church today, too. They are still manifested in great variety throughout the Church. They are still intended to enliven and empower the Body of Christ.

ii. Like the Corinthians, we should not be unaware or ignorant of these gifts, but be eager to grow in our understanding of them so as to be able to grow in our use of them. Our Catholic Church teaches us the importance of the Gift of the Holy Spirit in our personal lives and in the life of the church.

("It is not only through the sacraments and the ministry of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes the people holy. He also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and up-building of the Church...The Charisms...are to be received with thanksgiving since they are useful for the needs of the Church.") (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

c. The Church defines Charisms or spiritual gifts as special graces distributed among the faithful making us capable of effectively doing the work, which God has called us to do as members of the church. It is important to note that everyone has spiritual gifts. They are received through the Holy Spirit in Baptism.

i. Charisms are not a sign of holiness, but rather are signs of the Spirit's presence working through the Christian. While a person may have a gift, he or she may not be aware of that gift and therefore may not be using it. It is also important to note that a Charism is a special grace; it is a special working of the Holy Spirit, which goes beyond our natural abilities. While our natural abilities and talents are gifts from God, the Charisms are more than these human abilities. Charisms enable our efforts to bear "supernatural" fruit above and beyond our natural human potential, enabling us to accomplish the work of the Kingdom through the power of the Spirit.

- d. **The Catholic Church does not limit the spiritual gifts to any certain number. The Spirit manifests the Gifts in a wide variety of ways.**
 - i. **St. Paul provides several lists of spiritual gifts in his writings (cf: Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Ephesians 4:11) varying from apostles and prophets to almsgiving and works of mercy to tongues and miracles.**
 - ii. **St. Paul does not intend these to be understood as exhaustive listings of spiritual gifts, but rather to teach that the Spirit works through individual Christians in widely varied ways in order to accomplish the work of the Church. While acknowledging that certain gifts such as pasturing and teaching may be more common in the Catholic experience, the Church also recognizes the more "remarkable" charismatic gifts as being authentic and useful:**
 - 1. **It must be recognized that these spiritual realities do occur. It would be difficult to inhibit the work of the Spirit, which manifested itself so abundantly in the early Church. We should be grateful to God for pouring out in our time those gifts and graces with which he blessed the Church at its beginning. (Sec. 7, A Pastoral Statement on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, North American Bishops Committee, 1984)**
 - iii. **As with the other spiritual gifts, the charismatic gifts are intended to empower us to be useful in the work of the Church and bear supernatural fruit. Without limiting our understanding of the other gifts, we should be informed about the charismatic gifts so as to be fully open to the Spirit in using them.**
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UNDERSTANDING THE CHARISMATIC GIFTS

1. **In 1 Corinthians 12 St. Paul lists the nine gifts, which are known as the Charismatic gifts of the Spirit. They are Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophecy, Discernment, Tongues, and Interpretation.**
 - a. **These gifts tend to be rather commonly experienced within the prayer communities; yet, often members of those groups find it hard to understand how such extraordinary gifts can be important to the life of the Church.**
 - i. **Firstly, as Charisms, these gifts are manifestations of the Spirit- that is; they make the presence of God apparent, visible, tangible. They are not the only way in which God's presence is manifested, but they are important ways.**
 - ii. **Secondly, the charismatic gifts are channels of God's power, through them; the Spirit is able to accomplish God's work. They enable the Church to do what we cannot do by merely human means.**
 - iii. **Thirdly, in exercising the charismatic gifts, we learn how to recognize and yield to the working of the Holy Spirit.**
 - b. **As manifestations, channels and ways of yielding to the Spirit, it should be obvious that the gifts are as important to the Church today as they were in the first century. The Church needs the full range of the Spirit's work to fulfill its mission in our lives and in the world. Only when we are convinced of their importance will we be fully open to the working of the charismatic gifts in the Church.**
2. **It is worth examining how each of the charismatic gifts serves the Church so as to understand why they are important.**
 - a. **When St. Paul discusses the Charismatic Gifts, he gives groupings or categories, which describe what the gifts do to serve the Church.**
 - i. **One set of gifts are the Word Gifts or Revelation Gifts. These include Prophecy, Tongues and Interpretation. Through these, God speaks a "word" or communicates messages to the people.**

1. In Prophecy, a person speaks a message in the vernacular to a person or to the community. The message is usually one of encouragement, correction, exhortation or direction.
 2. Speaking in Tongues is a message from the Lord spoken through a person in tongues rather than the vernacular.
 3. The Gift of Interpretation is necessary for the Tongues to be understood by the group. (Notice that Speaking in Tongues differs from Prayer or Devotional Tongues, which is a gift for personal and community prayer.) The gift of Interpretation is the ability to interpret into the vernacular the message spoken in Tongues. This is not a "translation", but rather the communication of the sense of the message.
- ii. The second set of Gifts includes the Intellectual Gifts or Teaching Gifts. These are Wisdom, Knowledge and Discernment. These gifts enable the Church to understand and express truths about God's nature and ways.
1. The charismatic Gift of Wisdom enables a person to express a truth in such a way so that it bears effective results in those who listen. This might be experience when a teaching deeply moves a group and has a transforming effect upon their lives.
 2. Knowledge is the charismatic gift through which a person is able to know how God is working in a particular situation. They may receive the knowledge that God is healing someone at this time, or is calling someone to repentance, or answering a particular prayer. In speaking out the word of Knowledge, the individual is encouraging the hearers to cooperate with what God is doing.
 3. The Gift of Discernment is the ability to distinguish whether a gift or inspiration has a source in God, in evil or in human nature. Discernment is important in responding to prophecy and vital in our personal prayer and decision-making.
- iii. The third set of gifts are the Sign Gifts or Works of Power. They are Miracles, Healing, and Faith. These gifts serve the Church as manifestations of God's power and ability to work in supernatural ways.
1. Through the Gift of Miracles, God intervenes in ways outside of the natural law to manifest supernatural power over our lives and the world. While Scripture records numerous miracles, we also experience these signs of God's presence in the Church today.
 2. The Gift of Healing is a manifestation of God's power through which the Lord restores wholeness to a person. This may be in a physical, an emotional or spiritual way, and may be instantaneous or gradual.
 3. The charismatic Gift of Faith is not the same as the theological virtue of faith. The Gift of Faith enables a person to know with full certainty God's will in a particular situation, enabling them to pray with certain faith and to exhort others to act upon God's will. This might be experienced while praying with another for healing, or when seeking God's will for an important decision.
- b. St. Paul also teaches us other important points about the charismatic gifts. While some of the gifts are more sensational than others, they should all be valued as the working of the Holy Spirit. Each gift is important and vital to the Church.
- i. The gifts are interdependent- they need one another.
 1. Just as Tongues needs Interpretation, so too, Prophecy needs Discernment, and Healing needs Knowledge, ect.
 2. Only when each gift is operating fully with the other gifts will the group be truly mature and effective.

3. God may choose to manifest any one of the gifts through you at any time. At one time God may use you to speak a prophecy, at another to pray for healing, at another to speak a word of wisdom. We should be open and expect God to use us in every way. God may use a person regularly to manifest one of the gifts but this should not limit their openness to the other gifts.
- ii. The use of the gifts needs to be pastured by proper leadership.
 1. The gifts are not given to individuals; they are given to the Body, the Church. While God manifests a gift through an individual, that person should submit the use of that gift to the leadership of the group.
 2. Through this submission of the gifts to the leadership, the gifts can be coordinated with one another, leading to harmony and unity within the Body of Christ.
 3. It also allows the leadership to discern the gifts and provide ways in which the gifts can be brought to growth and maturity.

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YIELDING TO THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1. If we understand the purpose and importance of the spiritual gifts, we should earnestly desire that the Spirit would use us to serve the Church through them. There is a difference between remaining a passive observer and one who is yielding to the gifts in his or her own ministry. Simply "believing in" and knowing about the Charisms isn't enough.
 - a. In his writings, St Paul exhorts us to earnestly seek the Gifts of the Spirit and to be fervent in using them. (Cf. 1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1; 14:39; 1 Timothy 4:14) No matter how long or how briefly we have been involved in the New Life renewal, each of us should be seeking to yield ourselves more and more to the spiritual gifts.
 - b. There are some things we should do to be open to the gifts of the Spirit in our lives.
 - i. Be faithful in using the Charisms and gifts, which God has already given you.
 - ii. If you already have the gift of devotional prayer tongues or prophecy or teaching ect, use that gift regularly and faithfully as the Spirit prompts you.
 - iii. No matter how "unspectacular" these gifts may seem, they should be cherished and used wisely for the Lord.
 - iv. We should recall Jesus' words in the Parable of the Talents: "Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you greater responsibilities," (Matthew 25:23). Expect God to use you to manifest any of the gifts. Rather than waiting for the Spirit to move through someone else, be ready for God to work through you.
 - v. While we may tend to say, "God couldn't use me to teach or to heal..."remember that God frequently uses the least qualified so as to demonstrate that it is divine power at work.
 - vi. Pray regularly for God to use you. Make this a regular part of your prayer intentions, and ask others to pray with you to yield to the Spirits prompting.
 - vii. When you feel prompted to be used for a gift, step out in faith and yield. There is risk involved, but we will never learn to yield to the Spirit if we do not take the risk.
 - viii. We should not be afraid of making a mistake in using the gifts. We will all make mistakes at times; but hopefully we are surrounded by loving sisters and brothers who will help us learn and grow from our mistakes.
 - ix. Ask for help from others who have more experience in using the gifts. Ask the leader in your community for assistance in growing in the gifts.
 - x. Seek another who is more mature in the gifts you are experiencing, and ask them to help you to learn to be more effective.

- c. **Grow by studying about the gifts of the Spirit.**
 - i. **There are excellent resources for studying about the spiritual gifts - books, cassette tapes, seminars. Ask people in your community to recommend sources of solid, reliable teaching.**
 - ii. **Exercise your gifts in love. St Paul remind us that exercising the gifts without love is like being a noisy gong or clashing cymbal-drawing attention to ourselves. Love enables us to be used by God rather than using our gifts for the wrong motives.**

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Understanding the Gift of “Devotional Tongues of Prayer”

1. **What is “Praying in Tongues”?**
 - a. **Praying in tongues is a devotional gift whereby the person prays to God in a language, which he or she does not know, by simply “Yielding” to the action of the Holy Spirit.**
 - b. **When praying in tongues the person does not use his rational powers of memory or intellect, which are usually employed in speaking or praying. He or she does use the other faculties associated with speech (the lips, the tongue, the larynx).**

2. **What does “Praying In Tongues” sound like?**
 - a. **Praying in tongues, when first yielded to, usually sounds like five or six words repeated in various ways. This praying in tongues begins and continues as long as the person wills. As time goes on, the prayer tongues usually lengthen or change and, on occasion, a different language is used.**

3. **What control does the person have over the gift of “Devotional Tongues”?**
 - a. **“Praying in tongues” is totally under the person’s control. The person decides when he or she wishes to stop. The person, however, has no control over what words will be spoken since, as St. Paul says: “If I pray in a tongue my spirit is at prayer but my mind contributes nothing” (1 Cor. 14:14). The mind has no control over the words used in this prayer.**

4. **Does the Gift of Devotional Prayer Tongues Come and Go, or is it Permanent?**
 - a. **The gift is a permanent one, i.e., whenever a person has yielded to the gift, the power to pray in tongues remains with him or her. After this first yielding, the person then prays in tongues whenever he or she wishes.**
 - b. **Sometimes, when a person has only recently begun to pray in tongues, fear, self-consciousness, doubts or some other obstacle begins to interfere with the use of this gift. The person even begins to think he or she has lost his or her gift. Usually these obstacles are removed by praying with others.**

5. **When does a Person Begin to “Pray In Tongues”?**
 - a. **It can happen anytime. Sometimes a person prays in tongues even before attending a charismatic prayer community. Frequently, a person begins to pray in tongues during the course of instruction provided by the prayer community. Usually, the person begins to pray in tongues when he or she prayed with by the community for the Baptism of the Spirit. This gift usually is the first bestowed by the Holy Spirit and is the doorway to the other Gifts.**

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Resting in the Spirit!

What is it?

It is the power of the Holy Spirit so filling a person with a Heightened Inner Awareness the body's energy fades away until it cannot stand. (It is not fainting.) The person keeps conscious awareness but under the healing power of the Holy Spirit.

Is this Experience found in the Bible?

In the 10th chapter of the Act's of the Apostles, St. Luke speaks about the soldiers falling into a trance; in the description of Gethsemane, we read about the soldiers falling backwards when Jesus spoke to them; father more, St John also fell at Jesus' feet like a dead man in Rev 1:17 and St. Paul fell to the ground during his conversion experience in Acts 9. (All of these experiences seem to have been Similar to the experience that we call Resting in the Spirit).

What is the purpose of Resting in the Spirit?

Many people who experience Resting in the Spirit experience not just the rest and peace, but God Himself in some way. While under the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus wants to release the person from the bondage of sin and heal some area of the inner person. The Holy Spirit is free to do many spiritual actions in the persons mind, will, imagination, memory, and emotions when one completely rests and relaxes in His love.

What should I do before the Experience?

Do not make anything happen! Do not prevent His power from coming upon you by being frightened, about where you fall, how you will look, and what people will think about you. Release yourself from all fears; relax in His love and gently praise Him for loving you. Release yourself from any guilt feelings about not being worthy. This is not an experience for the worthy, but it is for those who need release, inner healing, and an inner filling.

What should I do during the Experience?

During the experience relax in His love. Surrender to His love. Trust that something is happening in you even though you do not feel it emotionally. Stay in the position of relaxation as long as you feel you should.

What should I do after the Experience?

When returning to the normal level of mind-consciousness, still any thoughts inside you of condemnation, self-analysis, of what people think, or disappointment that you didn't feel anything. Remaining in the resting experience for 5 minutes or 5 hours is not a sign of greater sinfulness or greater holiness. Words of love and worship to the Father, to Son, and to the Holy Spirit from your sincere heart keep the healing flowing in the heart continuously. Be open to living in God's will every day. This experience of resting in the Holy Spirit is only the beginning. The Lord will continue His work throughout the hours to come in the remaining week, month, and maybe even years. That He would want to love us and to let His Precious Blood cleans us this way is indeed a great joy. No one praying with us has healing powers; Jesus is the Healer and His Holy Spirit affects the healing, because the Father wants it at this moment in your life.

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