



Using the Gifts, the Holy Spirit Has Given You

***The Gifts of the Spirit
are like tools in a toolshed.
If you don't know they are there
you can't use them.
If you know they are there
but don't know how to use them
they are of no value to you
or anyone else.***

If you have been Baptized and Confirmed you have received specific gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts have been given for your spiritual growth and for you to use to serve in the Body of Christ and in the world. None of us have been given all the gifts, but we have all been given some.

The ordinary gifts of the Spirit are those given to everyone at Confirmation: wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord. They are called the Isaiah gifts because they are first mentioned in ***Isaiah 11:2-3***.

The extraordinary gifts, or charisms, are: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues. These are found ***in Romans 12:4-8*** and ***1 Corinthians 12:4-11***. These are not all given to everyone, but everyone is given some.

If you have not yet discerned which gifts you have been given then you should pray to the Holy Spirit to help you recognize which gifts you have been given. You can also ask a close friend or two or your spiritual director. Others can more readily see our gifts than we ourselves can.

The Holy Spirit has given us gifts for our spiritual growth but primarily for service to others. It is God's Will and desire that we use the gifts we have been given. Remember the parable of the talents (**Matthew 25:14-30**)? Each of a man's servants were given a certain amount of money; some more, some less. Then the man went away. All the servants but one invested their money and made more for their master. But one buried the money in the ground for safekeeping. When the master returned, he was pleased with the servants who had invested his money, but he was very angry with the servant who buried his share. He called him a "worthless, lazy lout." The moral is **"Use your Gifts!"**

You may be reluctant to use a particular gift God has given you. Most people are fine with gifts for service, giving alms, or teaching CCD. But you may not want to teach adults, lead a Bible Study or be a reader in church. People are often reluctant to use the charisms. They may not want to speak in tongues, receive prophetic words from God or pray over others for healing. But all the charisms are Scriptural and their use approved by the Magisterium. If God chooses to give us a gift, who are we to say **"No, Lord; I don't want that one."** Or **"That one makes me uncomfortable."** If we proclaim Jesus as our Lord, then we do what He asks us to do.

In closing I would like to recommend a recent book, **The Spiritual Gifts Handbook, by Randy Clark and Mary Healy**. It further explains the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and how to use them.



Kathy Nowak-(on the right) is a cradle Catholic who has been ministering in the Church in many areas since she received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1975. Before the churches were shut down, she helped facilitate the Evening Bible Study group at the Church of Epiphany in Brick and served as a prayer group leader for JOY Prayer Group. She is also a member of Light of Life Prayer Group at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Toms River. She and her husband, Deacon Ron Nowak, are the parents of four children and are blessed with nine grandchildren. You can read more of her writing at www.pathwaypeace.blogspot.com.