**GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT EXPLAINED**

**Wisdom**. Wisdom is the highest gift of the Holy Spirit. Wisdom is the gift that God gives us so that we

choose His ways and thoughts. How many of you children have had the experience of your mom or dad

telling you, “I think you should do it this way,” and they tell you the way you should do it and then how many of you have ever said, “No, I'm going to do it my way?” Yes*. (the hands go up)*. Then what happens when you do it your way? You get in trouble. What else happens? It turns out wrong sometimes. The same is true with God. God has shown us the way in Jesus Christ and He gives us the gift of the Spirit of Wisdom so that we will have His ways and thoughts. When we do not follow those ways and thoughts, then things get messed up and we wonder why. Wisdom enables our minds to see, in God’s plan, where we have come from, where we are going, and how to get there.

**Understanding**. Who do we want to understand? (Jesus) Right. We want to understand Jesus. We want to understand God and the teachings of the Church, the teachings of Jesus. We can’t understand God and the mysteries of the Faith without the gift of understanding.

**Counsel**. Counsel is that gift that God gives to us that helps us to always choose what over what? (right over wrong) To choose the right thing over the wrong thing. To choose the good over the bad. To choose Jesus over satan. Right! Counsel is that gift of the Holy Spirit that God bestows on us so we will make the right decisions and the right choices; to know what to think, say or do each day. God also gives us that gift of counsel because God has a plan for each and every one of you. He may plan for some of you to be in the married state. He may plan for some of you young boys to be priests. He may plan for some of you young girls to be religious sisters. God has a definite plan for you. So pray for that gift of Counsel.

**Piety.** Piety is that gift of having reverence for God, putting God first. How many of you love your parents?(*all hands raise*) Do you try to please them and do what they wish because you love them? Yes It is the same with God. Piety is a gift that makes us worship and serve God. Our actions are done with a happy heart because we love God and want to please Him.

**Knowledge**. Knowledge is that gift that God gives to us to help us know who? Jesus. And who else? God the Father, Jesus his Son, and the Holy Spirit. Right. Knowledge is a very important gift. Do you know your parents when you were first born? No. Do you know everything about your parents today? No. You're still learning about your parents and your parents are still learning about you. Do you know everything there is to know about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? No. Do your moms and dads? No. Do your grandparents? No. That knowledge can continue to grow. It can continue to deepen. Children, what happens when knowledge of another person grows? You get smarter. Yes. But what about in a relationship, when you grow to know someone better, what happens in that? It spreads. What else happens? What grows? You know more about them and what do you become? What do you become if you know somebody? You become familiar with them and you become friends with them. Right. As you come to know that person more, not only does the friendship grow, but also your love of that person grows.

**Fortitude**. Fortitude is that gift that God gives to make us strong and courageous. Is everybody going to like you because you believe in Jesus? No. Are they going to like you because you're Catholic? No. So fortitude is that courage to live the faith. It is that courage to live your faith day in and day out and to speak the truth, even when the truth is difficult. Sometimes we know what we should do---it’s what Jesus would do, but we do not have the courage to follow our conscience. For example, we play with friends who want to do bad or mean things and get us into trouble. Are they being very good friends? No. The gift of knowledge will tell us that we should stop playing with them; but the gift of fortitude will give us the courage and strength we need to actually stop playing with them or stop them from getting into trouble.

**Fear of the Lord**. Does God want you to be afraid of Him? No. God holds you in his hand. Fear of the Lord reveals to us the greatness of our God, so that we are filled with awe and wonder at how much He loves us, and so that we understand that His love is unconditional. Fear of the Lord is having a grateful heart filled with wonder and awe, a heart that desires to never offend God by sin because we know He loves us.

All seven of these gifts of the Holy Spirit are yours for the rest of your life.

We develop and use these gifts when we pray and act in a loving manner. When we are infused with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we can respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit the way that Christ Himself would. We think, do and say what Jesus would think, do and say.