

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

January 24, 2021
Holy Spirit Catholic Church
Jacksonville, Florida
Deacon Pat Goin

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- The traditional list is based on the Vulgate translation of Isaiah 11:1-2 (https://vulgate.org/ot/isaiah_11.htm)
- The Gifts belong in fullness to Christ, the son of David (ibid.)
- Written on extensively by St. Thomas Aquinas

See: Summa Theologiae I.II, q. 68, a1;
CCC 1830 – 1832; USCCA, p. 208-209

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Received at Baptism and strengthened at Confirmation
- Are permanent dispositions that complete and perfect the *virtues* of those who receive them
- Make the faithful docile in obeying divine inspirations
- Accompany the faithful on the various stages of spiritual development

See: CCC 1303,1830 – 1832; USCCA, p. 208-209

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1. Wisdom
2. Understanding
3. Counsel
4. Fortitude
5. Knowledge
6. Piety
7. Fear of the Lord

(CCC 1830 – 1832)

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wisdom

- Enables us to see the world from God's viewpoint: "The spiritual man can appraise everything God has revealed this wisdom to us through the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:15, 10)
- Grants us the long-range view of history, enabling us to examine the present in the light of the past and the mystery of the future
- Saves us from the illusion that the spirit of our times is the only guide for our lives

See USCCA p. 208

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Knowledge

- Directs us to thoughtful reflection of the mystery of:
 - The Triune God
 - The mysteries of the Catholic Faith
- Draws us to meditative prayer where we allow God to lead us while we are in the divine presence

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Understanding

- Stimulates us to know ourselves as we come to know God
- St. Augustine: “That I may know You, may I know myself.”
USCCA p. 209
- As Saint Thomas says about the gift of Understanding:
 - In this life, the better we know God the more we understand that he surpasses whatever the mind grasps.
 - With this “knowing ignorance,” this knowing that we do not yet fully know, comes a deep and abiding peace.

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Fortitude (Courage)

- Prepares us to stand up for Christ and the Gospel when challenged

USCCA p. 209

- Aquinas teaches that Fortitude...is that kind of firmness of mind and spirit that we need both for doing good and for enduring evil
- The Spirit's gift of fortitude preserves us from yielding to untoward pressure

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit According to St. Thomas Aquinas

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Counsel (Right Judgement)

- Enables us to sense the Spirit's teaching about our moral lives and the training of our conscience

USCCA p. 209

- Aquinas teaches that Counsel liberates us from the trap of self-reliance, for...
- Even the angels in heaven consult God regarding their duties as our protectors and guardians

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit According to St. Thomas Aquinas

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Piety (Reverence)

- Respect for: The Father, who created us, The Son, who saved us, The Spirit, who sanctifies us

USCCA p. 209

- We tend to confuse true piety with a kind of pretended sweetness, superficial exterior devotion, and fake emotionalism in church
- True piety is showing appropriate honor, respect, and appreciation to those deserving of it

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit According to St. Thomas Aquinas

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe of God)

- Infuses honesty in our relationship with God. (God is God and I am not.)
- Places us in Awe of the majesty of God
- Imparts grateful wonder both that God loves us, and we can share in his life

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe of God)

- The Fear of the Lord paves the way for the rest of the Gifts
- The gift is not being “afraid” of God’s punishment
- It is rather the fear of hurting the one we love the most, God
- By this Gift, we respond to the Spirit’s guidance by withdrawing from evil pleasures out of love for God rather than fear of punishment

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit According to St. Thomas Aquinas

Questions?

Corporal Works of Mercy

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Corporal Works of Mercy

- Found in the teachings of Jesus and in scripture
- Read Mt. 25:31-46, Jas 2:15-16
- They “are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs.” (USCCA p. 508)

Corporal Works of Mercy

1. Feed the Hungry
2. Give Drink to the Thirsty
3. Shelter the Homeless
4. Visit the Sick
5. Visit the Prisoners
6. Bury the Dead
7. Give Alms to the Poor

Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the Hungry

- Donate to Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Drives
- Contribute to organizations who provide food to the needy
 - Catholic Charities
 - Feeding Northeast Florida
 - Lutheran Social Services

Corporal Works of Mercy

Give Drink to the Thirsty

- Donate to help build wells for those who do not have clean water
- Catholic Relief Services has a water security program that helps provide potable water to needy overseas
- Find other charitable organizations that provide safe water

Corporal Works of Mercy

Shelter the Homeless

- Donate time and/or money to organizations that build homes for the needy, e.g., Habitat for Humanity
- Donate goods/money to organizations that care for the homeless, e.g., City Rescue Mission, Sulzbacher Center, and others
- Catholic Relief Services provide aid to refugees and others who are homeless because of persecution, climate, etc.

Corporal Works of Mercy

Visit the Sick

- Difficult to do face-to-face in these COVID-19 times
- Give blood
- Help those in our families who are ill or lonely, especially the elderly
- Share food with those who are homebound due to illness

Corporal Works of Mercy

Visit the Prisoners

- People in prison are still people, made in the image and likeness of God, and loved by God despite whatever they may have done
- Difficult in these COVID-19 times
- Get involved with organizations that assist those in prison and their families, e.g., Diocesan Prison Ministry, Kairos Prison Ministry

Corporal Works of Mercy

Bury the Dead

- Send a card, make a phone call, or even an email to someone who has recently lost a loved one
- Visit the graves of family members and friends, especially on November 2, All Souls Day
- Plan your own funeral Mass and final arrangements to remove that burden from your family

Corporal Works of Mercy

Bury the Dead – Cremation

- Cremation is permitted:
 - If not done for reasons contrary to the Catholic Faith
 - “Must never violate the explicitly-stated or reasonably inferred wishes of the deceased faithful.”
- Preference is for cremation to take place after the funeral Mass

Corporal Works of Mercy

Bury the Dead – Cremation

- Cremains should be treated with the same respect given to the body of the deceased
- Ashes should be kept in a worthy vessel
- Cremains must be reserved in a sacred place:
 - “That they are not excluded from the prayers and remembrance of their family or the Christian community.”
 - To ensure the remembrance of the deceased by future generations

Corporal Works of Mercy

Bury the Dead – Cremation

- The conservation of the ashes of the departed in the home of a relative or a friend is not permitted
- Ashes are not to be:
 - Divided up among family members
 - Incorporated into jewelry
 - Scattered in the air, on land, or in some other way

Cremation References:

Instruction regarding the burial of the deceased and the conservation of the ashes in the case of cremation. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 15 Aug. 2016

Committee on Divine Worship Newsletter, Volume XLVIII, USCCB, January 2012

Corporal Works of Mercy

Give Alms to the Poor

Alms are donations used to help the poor. Here are some charitable organizations that accept donations (alms):

- The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (Here at Holy Spirit)
- Catholic Charities (In our diocese)
- Catholic Relief Services (World-wide)
- Many others previously listed

Corporal Works of Mercy

Questions?

Wrap Up/Food for Thought

How do the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit aid and sustain us in performing the Corporal Works of Mercy?