

Take-Home · Session 9

The Gifts Begin: Fear of the Lord and Piety

What We Found

The seven Gifts grow from Isaiah 11: the Spirit resting sevenfold on the shoot from Jesse's stump. They are the Messiah's own anointing, and "Christ" means Anointed: the oil on the head runs down to the body. Our Baptism and Confirmation share in it (CCC 1266, 1303). Jesus was anointed from the Incarnation; his Baptism revealed his mission, it did not make him holy (CCC 727).

Honesty note, same policy as the twelve fruits: the Hebrew of Isaiah 11 repeats fear of the Lord; the ancient Greek and Latin render the first occurrence piety, giving the Church's seven. Piety is scriptural either way: the Spirit of sonship crying "Abba! Father!" (Romans 8:15).

Two fears in one verse (Exodus 20:20): cowering dread is forbidden, filial awe is commanded. Filial fear flees separation, not punishment, and grows as love grows.

Fear of the Lord is the foundation of wisdom, never outgrown. Augustine's staircase climbs from fear to wisdom, a spiritual reading of Isaiah's order, not the sequence in which the Gifts are received; what descended on Christ ascends in us.

Voices of the Church

St. Augustine · *On Christian Doctrine 2.7, summary*

The seven Gifts are a staircase climbed from fear of the Lord up to wisdom: fear is not the ceiling of religion but its floor.

St. Gregory the Great · *Moralia in Job, summary*

The Spirit descends on Christ from wisdom to fear and raises us from fear to wisdom: what came down on the head rises through the body.

St. Thomas Aquinas · *Summa Theologiae II-II q. 19, summary*

Servile fear flees punishment; filial fear flees separation, and only it grows with charity, as a devoted spouse fears betraying, not being caught.

Live It This Week

This week's one thing. Thirty silent seconds before prayer each day: remember whom you are addressing.

- Optional: One unhurried Our Father daily; do not rush the first two words.
- Optional: One act of piety toward the household of God this week.

Memory Verse

Proverbs 9:10 · The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

Before Next Session

Read 2 Timothy 1:6-8 and Daniel 3:13-18. Next session: the Gifts that see clearly and stand firm.

Scripture this session: Isaiah 11:1-3; Proverbs 9:10; Romans 8:14-17; Exodus 20:20 · Catechism: 1266, 1303, 1830-1831, 2144