

SESSION 11

The Seven Gifts

Isaiah 11 Revisited • 1 Corinthians 12 • Exodus 31

Part 1: Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim

The seal marks the crate; tonight the group opens the cargo. Participants revisit the seven gifts of Isaiah 11, this time not as the Messiah's equipment but as their own inheritance, and get working, Tuesday-afternoon definitions of each one. They then meet the charisms of 1 Corinthians 12, learn the difference between the gifts that make the receiver holy and the gifts given for everyone else's benefit, and discover, in the live discovery, that the first person in all of Scripture whom God says He has FILLED with His Spirit was not a prophet, priest, or king, but a craftsman with skilled hands. The Spirit's equipment turns out to be aimed at ordinary excellent life, and every scrap of it, as the memory verse insists, is given for the common good.

Catholic Touchstone

The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, permanent dispositions that make us docile to His promptings (CCC 1830). Alongside these, the Spirit distributes charisms, graces oriented toward the building up of the Church and the good of the world, to be received with gratitude and discerned in the Church (CCC 799-801).

What You Need to Know

Two kinds of equipment; keep them straight. The seven GIFTS (the Church's traditional list drawn from Isaiah 11; CCC 1830-1831) are received with sanctifying grace at Baptism and strengthened and completed at Confirmation, and their job is the receiver's holiness; their fruitful operation presupposes a soul living in grace and cooperating: permanent dispositions that make a soul quick to catch and follow the Spirit's promptings, sails set for His wind. The CHARISMS (1 Corinthians 12) are distributed variously, one to this person and another to that, and their job is principally everyone else: building up the Church and serving the world (which does not mean the receiver gets nothing; serving sanctifies the servant too). St. Thomas's clean distinction in tonight's Voices: grace that makes YOU pleasing to God, versus graces freely given THROUGH you for others. Teens habitually collapse these into one pile marked "superpowers"; tonight's whole architecture is the sorting.

Definitions that survive a Tuesday. The seven gifts die in the mind as a list of synonyms for "smart and holy." Give each one a working definition and a concrete teenage scene. Wisdom: a taste for God's perspective, so His priorities start seeming obvious rather than imposed. Understanding: seeing into the truths you believe, so the Creed stops being flashcards. Counsel: right judgment in a live situation, knowing the next right move at the party, in the group chat, at the bedside. Fortitude: doing the known good when it costs, and the quieter version, enduring. Knowledge: seeing created things as they stand before God, so success, bodies, money, and grades take their true size. Piety: the family instinct, relating to God as Father and His people as yours, so worship feels like coming home rather than reporting for inspection. Fear of the Lord: the awe that will not trade God for anything, terror's opposite, the refusal to shrink Him. These land as scenes, not definitions; use the ones in the answer boxes and add your own.

The count, one more time. Session 3 already banked the honesty: Hebrew six, Septuagint and Vulgate seven, the Church's traditional list following the ancient translations, and CCC 1831 giving that received list of seven. If it resurfaces tonight, spend the banked credit: we told you the truth about the count eight weeks ago, and the list remains what it always was, a portrait of the Spirit's fullness, not an inventory with countable parts.

Gift envy is tonight's pastoral landmine. First Corinthians 12 exists because Corinth turned charisms into a status ladder. Your room has its own ladder: the kid who speaks easily about faith, the parent who runs everything, versus the quiet ones convinced they got shipped an empty box. Paul's body metaphor, Basil's "whole to each," and Bezalel the craftsman are all aimed at the bottom of that ladder. Watch for who goes quiet during this session; the Live It practice, gift-spotting in the other person, is built for them.

For the parents in the room. Parents received these same seven gifts at their own Confirmation, and 2 Timothy's "rekindle" from two weeks ago still applies. Tonight's framing for adults: the gifts are not adolescent starter equipment that expires; they are the standing riggings of a Christian life, and many adults have sailed for decades on bare poles. The gift-spotting practice runs both directions on purpose: candidates will name gifts they see operating in their parents, and some parents will hear, for the first time in years, evidence that the Spirit has been working through them all along.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

- Exodus 31:1-5 (Bezalel, filled with the Spirit of God for craftsmanship) is tonight's live discovery: the Spirit's first "filling" in Scripture equips excellent ordinary work.
- Isaiah 11:1-3, memorized in Session 3 as the Messiah's portrait, returns tonight as the family inheritance: what rested on the Head is distributed to the Body.
- Psalm 133 (the precious oil on Aaron's head, running down on the beard, onto the collar of his robes): what is poured on the head does not stay on the head. Tonight's steelman answer in one image.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Basil the Great (*On the Holy Spirit, chapter 9*)

St. Basil answered the fear of the small portion before anyone in your room was born to feel it: the Spirit, he taught, is like sunlight, which each person enjoys as if it shone for him alone, yet it lights land and sea and mingles with the whole air. The Spirit gives Himself in proportion to each one's capacity, yet remains whole to each and wholly present everywhere. Nobody is working from the Spirit's leftovers; the quietest person at your table has the whole Sun.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Gregory the Great (*Moralia on Job*)

St. Gregory the Great (*Moralia on Job, on the seven sons; see Book I*) read the seven gifts as an ascent the Spirit works in a soul, with fear of the Lord as the first step and wisdom as the summit: the climb begins in awe that will not trifle with God and rises toward tasting things as God tastes them. The gifts, for Gregory, are not seven trophies on a shelf but one Spirit's ascending work,

operating together in the soul rather than one rung at a time.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 111*)

St. Thomas drew the map for tonight's central distinction: there is grace that makes the receiver holy and pleasing to God, and there are graces freely given, granted not for the receiver's own sanctification but so that through him others may be helped toward God. The seven gifts belong to the first kind and are for everyone; the charisms belong to the second and are distributed as the Spirit wills. Knowing which kind you are looking at, Thomas would say, is half of spiritual sanity.

Catechism Connection

- **CCC 1830.** The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit: permanent dispositions that make man docile in following the promptings of the Spirit.
- **CCC 799.** Charisms are graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, oriented to her building up and to the good of men.
- **CCC 800.** Charisms are to be accepted with gratitude by the one who receives them and by all members of the Church (with CCC 801: no charism is exempt from being referred and submitted to the Church's shepherds for discernment).

Thread Watch

The Head-to-Body transfer. Tonight completes a quiet arc that began in Session 3: the gifts were introduced as the Messiah's portrait, seen resting on Him at the Jordan in Session 5, distributed as flames on each head in Session 7, and claimed tonight as inheritance. If a participant assembles that chain aloud, the study's middle third has done its work; celebrate it. Psalm 133 in the steelman answer is the image to leave them holding: the oil on the Head runs down onto the Body's robes.

Two sessions of equipment, then the mission. Tonight is the gear; next week is what grows; the week after is what it is all FOR. Resist every temptation to preach Session 13 early. When someone asks "but what am I supposed to DO with all this," smile and say: that is precisely the right question, and it has its own night.

Session Goals

1. Participants can distinguish the seven gifts from the charisms and say what each kind is for.
2. Every participant can give a working definition and a concrete scene for at least three of the seven gifts.
3. Participants have found Bezalel themselves and registered what the Spirit's first filling was for.
4. The group has faced the "seven gifts are scaffolding, not Scripture" objection at full strength, spending Session 3's honesty credit.
5. Each household leaves with the gift-spotting practice, and the quiet ones have been watched for.

Time Note

Full plan runs about 75 minutes. To land at 60, make these cuts and no others: drop Win question 1 (keep question 2), skip the Dig Deeper box on Psalm 133 (moving its image into your own steelman summary), and present the steelman objection yourself in one minute rather than building it with the group. Never cut the seven working definitions or the Bezalel discovery; those carry the session.

Part 2: Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader: *Come, Holy Spirit, and unpack Your gifts in us: wisdom to taste as You taste, understanding to see into what we believe, counsel for the next right step, fortitude for the costly ones, knowledge to size the world truly, piety to know we are family, and fear of the Lord, that we may never trade You for anything smaller. You have never shipped an empty box. Open ours tonight. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Win: Opening Questions

Parent and candidate pairs. Two minutes each question, then a few pairs share with the table.

1. What is a tool, device, or feature you own that you have honestly never learned to use properly?
2. Look at your partner. Name one ability of theirs that you genuinely admire, and tell them.

Build: Into the Text

Scene One: The Inheritance (Isaiah 11:1-3, Revisited)

Have someone recite the Session 3 memory verse; help them land it. Then read Isaiah 11:1-3a aloud once more from the page.

Question 1. Eight weeks ago this passage was a portrait of the promised Messiah, and in Session 5 you watched the Spirit rest on him at the Jordan. Tonight the claim gets personal: the Church prays these exact seven gifts over every person she confirms. On what grounds? Trace it with what you know: how does the Messiah's own equipment become YOUR inheritance?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

The chain the study has built, and name its two kinds of link honestly. The scriptural premises: the Spirit rested whole on the Anointed One (Isaiah 11, the Jordan); the fullness was promised to the whole messianic people (tracked since Session 2); at Pentecost the resting was distributed, one flame per head, without being divided; and Paul told the Romans that if the Spirit of Christ dwells in you, it is Christ's own Spirit you have, not a budget substitute (Romans 8:9, worth reading aloud here). Then the Church's articulation, which reads those premises together and names the inheritance with Isaiah's portrait: the gifts are not seven prizes God hands out beside Christ; they are the Church's traditional naming of the character of Christ's own Spirit, and whoever receives HIM receives what He is like. The Church prays the sevenfold gift over the confirmed for the same reason a family expects the heir to receive the whole estate: it is not seven bequests, it is one inheritance, and the inheritance is a Person.

Question 2. Now make the list livable. Go around the table and assign each gift a real scene from an ordinary week, school, work, home, phone, where that gift and nothing else is what the moment needs. Push past synonyms for "smart and holy"; the leader has scenes ready wherever the table stalls.

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Working definitions with scenes, for the leader's pocket. Wisdom: a taste for God's perspective; the scholarship and the friendship conflict, and you find you already know which one heaven weighs

heavier. Understanding: seeing into what you believe; the Creed line you have said five hundred times suddenly opens like a door. Counsel: the next right move in a live moment; everyone at the party looks at you, and you know, specifically, what to do now. Fortitude: the good done at cost; you defend the absent kid in the group chat, knowing the price, and the quieter form, enduring the long unfixable thing without going bitter. Knowledge: creation at true size; you watch the likes come in and feel, accurately, how much they weigh. Piety: the family instinct; Mass stops feeling like inspection and starts feeling like the kitchen of a house you belong to. Fear of the Lord: the awe that will not trade Him; alone, with a real opportunity to get away with it, you find there is something you will not spend. Close the round by naming what all seven scenes had in common: not one of them was about feeling religious. The gifts are for Tuesdays.

Scene Two: The Distributed Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

Households read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 at home. Have verses 4-11 read aloud now.

Question 3. Paul's list here, wisdom in speech, healing, prophecy, tongues, looks different from Isaiah's, and it comes with different plumbing: "to one is given... to another... to another." Compare the two lists as two kinds of gift: who gets which, and, from verse 7, what is the distributed kind FOR?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

The sorting the whole night runs on. The seven gifts of Isaiah go to EVERY confirmed Christian, and their job is the receiver: making the soul holy, docile, quick to the Spirit's promptings. The charisms of Corinth are DISTRIBUTED, deliberately unevenly, one to this person and another to that, and verse 7 states their job in five words: FOR THE COMMON GOOD. St. Thomas's map: grace that makes you pleasing to God, versus graces given through you for others. Practical cash-out for your table: nobody may look at another's charism and conclude they got less Spirit, because the sanctifying gifts come whole to everyone (Basil's sunlight); and nobody may treat their charism as a trophy, because it is principally for others and for the Body. The comparison game that runs every youth group and every parish committee dies at verse 7, if anyone lets it.

Scene Three: Live Discovery

Do not announce the passage. Read the clue and let the tables hunt. Allow three or four minutes; if they stall, tell them it is in the second book of the Bible, near the end, while Moses is still on the mountain.

DIG DEEPER

The clue. "The first person in the entire Bible whom God says He has FILLED with the Spirit of God is not a prophet, not a priest, and not a king. He works with his hands: gold, silver, bronze, stone, wood. God names him personally, and gives him the Spirit for a construction project. Find the craftsman."

When found, have the discovering table read Exodus 31:1-5 aloud.

Question 4. Bezalel, filled with the Spirit of God "with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship," to build the sanctuary. Of everyone in Scripture, why might God have chosen a craftsman for the first "filled with the Spirit" in the Bible? What does it do to your picture of what the Spirit's gifts are for?

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Let the surprise breathe before interpreting it. The Spirit's first recorded filling produces neither a sermon nor a miracle but excellent work, and note the text's own precision: work for the SANCTUARY, a sacred commission, skill given so that God's dwelling would be built beautifully. The extension to ordinary life is our application, and a sound one: a God who fills a craftsman for His house dignifies craft as such, so homework done with real craft, a shift worked honestly, code written cleanly, a room made beautiful for people you love, all of it stands in Bezalel's light. For the teenager convinced the Spirit only equips the kids who can talk about Jesus fluently in public: the first Spirit-filled man in your Bible would likely have been the quiet one at your table, and God named him personally. Excellence at the work in your actual hands is a spiritual résumé. It always was.

The Push-Back: A List Scripture Never Made

Build the objection at full strength before answering it. Ask the group to make it as strong as they can with you.

The objection. The famous "seven gifts of Confirmation" are a construction, not a revelation. Isaiah 11 describes the Messiah, one man, not Christians; no New Testament text ever says believers receive these seven; the count itself, as this very study admitted in Session 3, depends on a Greek translation variant, since the Hebrew has six. And when Paul, an actual apostle, lists the Spirit's gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, his lists look nothing like Isaiah's: no piety, no fear of the Lord, plenty of prophecy and administration. The medieval Church took one poetic verse, ran it through a translation quirk, numbered it, and built a catechetical industry on it. Sincere, maybe; scriptural, no. Confirmation prep should teach what the New Testament teaches about the Spirit's gifts, and retire the septet.

Question 5. The factual claims here are almost all true, and the group knows it, because this study told them first. So concede what is owed, then answer the real question: on what grounds does the Church pray Christ's own gift-list over ordinary Christians? You built the answer an hour ago in Question 1; now deploy it against the strongest version of the doubt.

ANSWER *(share after the discussion)*

Concede cleanly and collect the honesty credit: Isaiah 11 is messianic; the seven-count follows the Septuagint, exactly as we said in Session 3; and no New Testament verse enumerates "the seven gifts of the confirmed." A Catholic who pretends otherwise loses this argument and deserves to. But the objection assumes the Church's claim is "this verse lists what Christians get," and that was never the claim. The claim is an inheritance argument, and every link is Scripture: the Spirit with His fullness rests on the Messiah (Isaiah 11); the fullness was promised to the whole messianic people, not retained by the Head (Joel, Session 4; the resting distributed at Pentecost, Session 7); and the Spirit believers actually receive is the Spirit OF CHRIST, not a second, lesser Spirit (Romans 8:9). the Church's tradition reads Psalm 133 as painting it a thousand years early (a Christological typology, held as such): the precious oil poured on Aaron's HEAD runs down the beard, onto the collar of his ROBES; what is poured on the Head reaches the Body, and reaches it as the same oil. So the seven-gift list is the Church doing exactly what she says she is doing: describing the character of the Spirit her members receive, using the portrait Scripture painted of that Spirit at maximum resolution, which is Isaiah's portrait of Him resting on Christ. Paul's lists do not compete with it; they name the distributed charisms, the other kind, sorted an hour ago. The honest remainder, stated plainly: the ENUMERATION, seven and these seven, is the Church's catechetical

crystallization, tradition's way of teaching a fullness, and a Catholic should say so without flinching; what Scripture itself guarantees is not a number but the Person, the whole Spirit of Christ, whole to each. The list is the label the family wrote on the inheritance. The inheritance is Him.

DIG DEEPER

Psalm 133. If time allows, read all three verses: the oil on Aaron's head, running down on the beard, onto the collar of his robes, and the psalm calls this the image of a people dwelling in unity. The anointing that starts on the Head and reaches the whole Body is not just tonight's argument; it is the Bible's picture of what a united Church IS.

One Last Glimpse

Read Matthew 7:16-17 aloud yourself, without introduction.

Jesus says: you will know them by their fruits; a sound tree bears good fruit. Say only this, and then stop: tonight was the equipment. But equipment can sit in the box, and gifts can be carried unopened for decades. How would anyone, including you, actually KNOW the Spirit is at work in a life? Jesus says there is a way to know, and it grows. Next week: the produce.

Send: Closing Questions

1. Of the seven gifts, which one, honestly, is the one you most operate without, and what is one situation this month where you will deliberately ask for it on the spot?
2. Bezalel's Spirit-filled work was craftsmanship. What is the work actually in your hands right now, school, job, home, and what would doing it "filled with the Spirit of God" change about how you did it this week?

Live It This Week

For every household, parent and candidate together: gift-spotting. Once a day, each of you names ONE gift of the seven you saw operating in the other person that day, out loud and specifically: "I saw fortitude in you when you..." or "That was counsel, what you said to your sister." One sighting each, once a day. You are not complimenting; you are bearing witness to the Spirit's activity in someone who probably cannot see it in themselves. By Sunday you will both have seven pieces of evidence.

Closing Prayer

Leader: *Lord God, You filled a craftsman before You filled a king, You poured on the Head what You intended for the whole Body, and You have never once shipped an empty box. Give these households eyes this week to spot Your gifts in each other, and courage to say what they see. Wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord: unpack them all in us. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Scripture Memory Verse

"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." (1 Corinthians 12:7)

Part 3: Leader Reference Card

Every passage used in Session 11, in order of use. RSV2CE.

- **Isaiah 11:1-3** (Build, Scene One: revisited; memory verse recited)
- **Romans 8:9** (Build, Scene One: the Spirit of Christ in believers)
- **1 Corinthians 12:1-11** (read at home this week; verses 4-11 aloud in session)
- **Exodus 31:1-5** (Build, Scene Three: live discovery, Bezalel)
- **Psalms 133** (Push-Back answer and Dig Deeper: the oil from Head to Body)
- **Matthew 7:16-17** (One Last Glimpse: known by their fruits)

Catechism: CCC 1830, 799, 800 (with 1831 behind Scene One from Session 3).

Voices: St. Basil the Great (On the Holy Spirit, 9); St. Gregory the Great (Moralia on Job); St. Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 111).

Distribute at the door: Take-Home 11, one per household.