

The Gifts Inventory Guide

A participant's guide for Session 12 of Walk by the Spirit

This guide has two parts, and the difference between them is the most important sentence in it. Part 1 concerns the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and you already have all seven: they are conferred in Baptism and strengthened at Confirmation (CCC 1266, 1303, 1830-1831). They live and flourish in sanctifying grace, so if you are conscious of grave sin, bring it to Confession first; the inventory then measures docility from inside the life of grace. Part 1 therefore does not ask whether you have each Gift; it asks how docile you are to it, where it is flowing and where you are resisting. Part 2 concerns charisms, which are different: the Spirit apportions them individually, one to this person and another to that, for the building up of others (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; CCC 799). Part 2 asks the question that would be wrong in Part 1: which have I been equipped with?

Keep the two questions in their own rooms. Confusing them produces anxiety over charisms you were never meant to have, and pride over charisms that were never evidence of holiness. Fruit, not impressive gifting, is the measure of holiness (Matthew 7:20, Session 8).

Part 1 • The Seven Gifts: A Docility Examination

For each Gift: read the definition and the Scripture, then the signs. Prayerfully mark your docility on the scale: 1 means mostly resisting, 5 means habitually responsive. This is an examination made in the presence of a merciful Father, not a performance review. Be honest; he already knows, and he is not grading.

Fear of the Lord • Session 9

What it is. Filial awe: the settled refusal to treat the Holy One as common, and the dread of wounding the Father we love, not of being punished by a tyrant.

Anchor. Proverbs 9:10 • "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Signs this Gift is flowing

Reverence at Mass and with holy things; unhurried prayer; sin grieves you as betrayal of Love before it scares you as risk; God's name is safe in your mouth.

Signs of resistance

Casualness with the sacred; rushing through prayer and sacraments; treating sin as rule-breaking to be gamed; humor that spends holy things for laughs.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Begin each prayer with thirty silent seconds of remembering whom you address. Arrive early to Mass once this week for five minutes of silence before the tabernacle.

Piety · Session 9

What it is. The family affection of the household of God: the instinct that prays "Abba, Father," and the tender reverence that flows outward to all the Father loves: the Church, the saints, the poor, our parents.

Anchor. Romans 8:15 · the spirit of sonship in which we cry, "Abba! Father!" (paraphrase)

Signs this Gift is flowing

Warmth toward God as Father rather than employer or examiner; affection for the Church even in her wounds; honor toward parents and elders; instinctive care for the saints and the dead.

Signs of resistance

Religion as transaction or performance; contempt for the Church when she embarrasses; coldness toward the people and places the Father cherishes; prayer only when needing something.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Pray one unhurried Our Father daily, refusing to rush the first two words. Do one deliberate act of honor this week: toward a parent, the parish, or someone the Father loves.

Knowledge · Session 10

What it is. Accurate pricing of created things: seeing every creature as real, good, and pointing beyond itself to the Creator, neither idolized nor despised, and seeing sin at its true cost.

Anchor. Wisdom 13:5 · from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator.

Signs this Gift is flowing

Gratitude that traces gifts to the Giver; healthy detachment from possessions and reputation; honest grief over your sins in proportion to their weight; delight in creation that ends in praise.

Signs of resistance

Loving good things out of proportion (money, approval, comfort, a person); cynicism that despises the world God called good; sins minimized, renamed, or graded on a curve.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Once this week, take ten minutes outdoors and trace one beautiful thing back to its Maker in deliberate prayer. In your next examination of conscience, name one sin at full price, without the usual discount.

Fortitude · Session 10

What it is. Spirit-given firmness in difficulty and constancy in pursuing the good: strength to stand, and the harder strength to endure, staked on who God is rather than on guaranteed outcomes.

Anchor. Daniel 3:17-18 · our God is able to deliver us... but if not, we will not serve your gods.

Signs this Gift is flowing

Faith held where it costs (workplace, family, illness); perseverance in commitments after the feelings fade; willingness to be the one who speaks; endurance without theatrics.

Signs of resistance

Silence purchased with belonging; quitting what God has not released you from; courage contingent on likely success; avoiding every room where faith might cost.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Name your current furnace and pray Daniel 3:17-18 over it daily, including "but if not." Take one small stand this week you have been postponing.

Counsel · Session 11

What it is. The Spirit's promptness in the concrete decision: knowing which good to do now, the right word at the right time, prudence perfected by docility.

Anchor. Matthew 10:19-20 · it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Signs this Gift is flowing

Decisions preceded by prayer and honest consultation; a track record of timely words that healed rather than won; peace after deciding; willingness to say "let me pray about it" and mean it.

Signs of resistance

Deciding first, praying after (if at all); advice given quickly and consulted never; the right word at the wrong time; chronic second-guessing that refuses to ask for light.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Pray James 1:5 daily over one named decision this month, and consult one wise person before finalizing it. Before your next hard conversation, ask the Spirit for the word and the timing.

Understanding · Session 11

What it is. Penetration of revealed truth: seeing into the faith already held, so that creed and Scripture open from within rather than merely accumulate.

Anchor. 1 Corinthians 2:12 · we have received the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us.

Signs this Gift is flowing

Lines of the Creed or Scripture that keep opening deeper; doctrine connecting to life rather than filed away; the liturgy growing more transparent, not more routine, with the years.

Signs of resistance

Faith on autopilot: reciting without seeing; treating doctrine as trivia or tribal password; boredom in the presence of mysteries that bored no saint.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Take one line of the Creed you recite without thinking and sit with it fifteen minutes, asking the Spirit of understanding to open it. Read one Gospel scene slowly this week, asking what is inside it.

Wisdom · Session 11

What it is. Seeing the whole in God's light and savoring what is seen: judging divine things by kinship with them, doctrine become taste, the summit where knowledge becomes love.

Anchor. Psalm 34:8 · O taste and see that the LORD is good!

Signs this Gift is flowing

God's perspective reframing your losses and successes; the things of God growing sweet, not merely true; simplicity increasing; others seeking out your judgment on what matters most.

Signs of resistance

Correct faith with no flavor; sophistication that analyzes what it never tastes; the world's scoreboard (money, status, comfort) quietly reinstalled as the real one.

My docility. 1 2 3 4 5 (circle one)

Where I most notice resistance: _____

One way to grow. Ask for wisdom by name each morning this week (James 1:5). After Communion, stay two extra minutes in silence: wisdom is fed at that table before any book.

Closing Part 1 · My Growth Commitment

Of the seven, the Gift where my resistance is currently highest is: _____

For the next thirty days, my single concrete practice of docility to this Gift will be:

Each morning of those thirty days, pray: Come, Holy Spirit, and meet no resistance in me today.

Part 2 · Charisms: A Discernment Worksheet

Charisms are graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, ordered to her building up, to the good of men, and to the needs of the world (CCC 799). The Second Vatican Council teaches that the Spirit distributes them among the faithful of every rank, and that they may be outstanding or "more simple and widely diffused" (Lumen Gentium 12). Scripture's first Spirit-filled man was a craftsman (Exodus 31:1-5). Expect your equipment to look ordinary; most charisms look like Tuesday.

The New Testament's lists are samples, not a closed catalogue:

- Romans 12:6-8 · prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, contributing (giving), leadership (he who gives aid), acts of mercy
- 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 · utterance of wisdom, utterance of knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues
- 1 Corinthians 12:28 · apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in tongues
- Ephesians 4:11 · apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers
- 1 Peter 4:10-11 · in summary, two families: whoever speaks, whoever renders service

Modern experience fills in the same families: teaching, hospitality, administration, encouragement, giving, craftsmanship, music, intercession, mercy toward the sick and poor, evangelization, and more.

Three Preliminary Indicators

For any suspected charism, three helpful preliminary indicators, outward-facing because charisms exist for others. They serve, and never replace, the essential criteria: conformity with the faith, the rule of charity, and discernment in communion with the Church's pastors (CCC 801):

1. Fruitfulness. When I do this, are other people actually built up? Is there fruit in them, not just satisfaction in me?
2. Confirmation. Do mature Christians who know me recognize this in me, sometimes before I did? Has the community asked me for it unprompted?
3. Joy. Is there life and energy in the doing, even when it is hard work? Felt joy can ebb in dry seasons, so this is the weakest of the three indicators; but over time, a charism tires the body without deadening the soul.

My Worksheet

Where have others been visibly helped by something I did or made? List concrete instances, not qualities.

What have mature Christians said I should do more of?

What service gives me joy even when it costs me?

Reading the three answers together, I am probably equipped to serve the Body through:

The first place I will employ it, within two weeks:

Cautions, in Charity

Read before finishing

Charisms are not holiness. Even tongues, prophecy, and mountain-moving faith profit nothing without love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). Measure your growth by the fruit of the Spirit, never by the impressiveness of your gifts.

Discern in communion. Review this worksheet with a pastor, spiritual director, or mature Christian friend. No charism is exempt from reference to the Church's shepherds, whose office is to test everything and hold fast what is good (CCC 801; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21).

Expect the ordinary, welcome the extraordinary. Do not despise a quiet charism for lacking drama, and do not chase a dramatic one for its drama. The Giver chooses; gratitude and employment are our part (CCC 800; Christifideles Laici 24).

Gifts run on the vine. Charisms exercised outside abiding wither into performance. Keep the practice you chose in Session 8.

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