

Take-Home · Session 1

The Promised Spirit

What We Found

The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, not a force: in John 14-16 he teaches, reminds, speaks, guides, and bears witness, and Scripture says he can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30).

Pentecost kept two ancient promises: Ezekiel 36:26-27 (the Spirit placed within us, a heart of flesh for a heart of stone) and Joel 2:28 (the Spirit poured out on all flesh), which Peter quotes that very morning.

The wind and fire recall Sinai, as many Fathers and scholars have seen: as God formed Israel there, the Spirit forms the Church at Pentecost.

My Guess · sealed until Session 8

My sealed answer to "How can you tell whether the Holy Spirit is truly at work in someone?" is written and turned in. We open these in Session 8.

Voices of the Church

St. Cyril of Jerusalem · *Catechetical Lectures 16, summary*

One Spirit like one rain: white in the lily, red in the rose, producing a different beauty in each soul he enters while remaining himself undivided.

St. Basil the Great · *On the Holy Spirit, summary*

We are baptized into one name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: the Spirit shares the one divine rank, adored and glorified with the Father and the Son.

St. Irenaeus of Lyons · *Against Heresies 3.24.1, summary*

Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and every grace.

Live It This Week

- Pray the Come, Holy Spirit prayer each morning, slowly, as address to a Person.
- Read John 14-16 in one sitting and underline every verb whose subject is the Counselor.
- Before one difficult conversation this week, silently ask the Holy Spirit to speak first.

Memory Verse

Acts 1:8 · But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses...

Before Next Session

Read Galatians 5:16-26 twice.

Catechism references for this session: 683-686, 731-732, 737-741

Take-Home · Session 2

Flesh and Spirit at War

What We Found

"Flesh" in Paul is not the body: several works of the flesh (envy, enmity, party spirit) need no body at all. Flesh is the whole self bent away from God; the body is good and destined for resurrection.

Galatians 5:16 states victory as a consequence: walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the flesh. Grace leads, we cooperate.

Romans 7's anguish resolves in Romans 8's power: by the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the body and live. The struggle is normal and may be long; surrender is not the Christian's settled state, for grace gives real power for growth, repentance, and perseverance.

Ezekiel 36:27 promised the Spirit would cause us to walk; Paul's command assumes the promise has been kept.

Voices of the Church

St. Augustine · *Confessions 8, summary*

Two wills fought in one man, old habit against new love, until grace carried him across. The war is real and winnable, and it is not soul against body.

St. John Chrysostom · *Commentary on Galatians, at 5:17, summary*

If flesh meant body, blame for sin would fall on the God who made it. Flesh names the earthbound choice of the will.

St. Catherine of Siena · *The Dialogue, summary*

In the cell of self-knowledge the soul learns both its poverty and God's goodness, escaping despair on one side and presumption on the other.

Live It This Week

- Name your most predictable daily skirmish and pray for the Spirit's help before it, not after.
- Read Romans 7:14 through 8:17 in one sitting.
- When you fall, return to the Lord immediately instead of hiding first.

Memory Verse

Galatians 5:16 · But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Before Next Session

Read Galatians 5:19-21 slowly, and Genesis 4:1-7.

Catechism references for this session: 405, 1264, 2515-2516

Take-Home · Session 3

The Works of the Flesh

What We Found

Paul's fifteen works sort into clusters: body, worship, community, appetite. Eight of fifteen wreck community, a proportion that suggests how seriously Paul takes the sins the pious excuse in themselves.

"And the like" keeps the list open: the flesh is one heart-direction with endless expressions, so it cannot be managed by inventory. It must be crucified (Galatians 5:24), a death begun in baptism.

Genesis 4:7 pictures sin as a beast crouching at the door: personal, hungry, and resistible. Cain was not doomed; warned at the door, he still chose to open it, so to speak.

The warning of Galatians 5:21 is addressed to the baptized and meant seriously: unrepented mortal sin, grave matter chosen with full knowledge and deliberate consent, forfeits the kingdom, which is why the Church offers confession as the remedy.

Voices of the Church

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

The great vices are commanders, each leading an army of smaller sins into the soul. The battle plan we draw from his image: meet the captains, not only the foot soldiers.

St. Augustine · *City of God 14.28, summary*

Two loves built two cities: love of self unto contempt of God, and love of God unto contempt of self. His two loves are a lens for reading the works: ask which love each one serves.

St. Thomas Aquinas · *Summa Theologiae I-II q. 84, summary*

Capital sins are heads, sources from which other sins flow as means to their ends. The application is ours: find the head, and the fight gets simpler.

Live It This Week

- Make a ten-minute examination of conscience using the four clusters.
- If anything on the list is a settled pattern, bring it to confession before Session 5.
- Pray Genesis 4:7 at the door of your most familiar temptation.

Memory Verse

Galatians 5:24 · And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Before Next Session

Read Ephesians 5:3-14 and John 3:19-21.

Catechism references for this session: 1852, 1861, 1866

Take-Home · Session 4

The Unfruitful Works of Darkness

What We Found

Paul's nouns are deliberate: light bears fruit, darkness manufactures works, and sterile ones. Sin has effects but nothing worth calling fruit: nothing alive, nothing that feeds anyone or carries seed.

Ephesians 5:8 says we were darkness and are light in the Lord: transformation, not relocation. "Walk as children of light" means live out what baptism made you.

John 3:19-21: darkness is a loved preference defended by hiding, not a lack of information. The way out is doing what is true and coming to the light.

Exposure is love's work when it aims at healing: "Awake, O sleeper... and Christ shall give you light" (Ephesians 5:14).

Voices of the Church

St. Justin Martyr · *First Apology 61, summary*

Within a century of the apostles, the Church's own name for baptism was illumination: those who receive it are enlightened in their understanding.

St. Ambrose · *On the Mysteries, summary*

Those preparing for baptism turned from west to east, renouncing darkness to face the rising sun. At the Easter Vigil, the faithful's candles are still lit from the one flame of Christ.

St. John Henry Newman · *"Lead, Kindly Light," summary*

Sick at sea, Newman asked the kindly Light for one step at a time. Walking as children of light often means enough light for the next step, not the whole road.

Live It This Week

- Make one hidden thing visible this week: honestly in prayer, or to a trusted friend; if it is grave, bring it to sacramental Confession, which nothing else replaces.
- Read John 3:16-21 each evening and review the day for light and hiding.
- Put the next Easter Vigil on your calendar.

Memory Verse

Ephesians 5:8 · For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light.

Before Next Session

Read Galatians 5:22-23 and 1 Corinthians 13. Next session the orchard opens: love, joy, and peace.

Catechism references for this session: 1216, 1695, 2466

Take-Home · Session 5

The First Fruits: Love, Joy, Peace

What We Found

Works are plural, fruit is singular (Galatians 5:19-23): a mob of works against one fruit, a contrast Christians have long read as one life forming in the soul, the character of Christ.

Agape in 1 Corinthians 13 is portrayed through concrete, costly action far more than feeling: love wills the good of the other at cost.

Philippians, written from prison, returns again and again to rejoicing: joy is the settled gladness of belonging to God, and it can share a cell with suffering.

Christ's peace (John 14:27) is not circumstantial like the world's: it is right order with God, given on the night before the cross.

Voices of the Church

St. Thérèse of Lisieux · *Story of a Soul, Manuscript B, summary*

She found her place where Paul points: the Church has a heart, the heart burns with love, and her vocation was love itself. Everything else runs on charity or runs on nothing.

St. Philip Neri · *early biographies (Gallonio, 1600), tradition*

Holiness that laughed: his earliest biographers, beginning with Gallonio (1600), record the jokes that punctured his own reputation. Cheerfulness so cultivated disposes a soul to grace; it was more than temperament.

St. Augustine · *Confessions 1.1, summary*

You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you. The application we draw: peace is a homecoming before it is a rearrangement of circumstances.

Live It This Week

- One clause of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 per morning, aimed at one specific person.
- When anxiety spikes, pray John 14:27 slowly instead of rehearsing the circumstance.
- One hidden act of love that cannot be repaid or discovered.

Memory Verse

Romans 5:5 · ...God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Before Next Session

Read Colossians 3:12-14 and Luke 6:27-36. Next session: the fruits that make life together possible.

Catechism references for this session: 736, 1822-1829, 2304-2305

Take-Home · Session 6

The Fruits That Build: Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Generosity

What We Found

Colossians clothes us before it commands us: "God's chosen ones, holy and beloved" comes first, then put on kindness and patience like garments, taken up again each day.

Patience is long-temperedness modeled on God's own "slow to anger": everyone testing our patience is someone God is being patient with, ourselves included.

Luke 6:27-36 exercises all four fruits under hostile conditions, and gives one reason: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Goodness can be sharp (rebuke, overturned tables) when charity and justice govern the edge and the aim is the other's good; the moment sharpness enjoys itself, it has changed teams.

Isaiah 58: the fast God chooses is mercy. Piety and generosity do not live in separate rooms.

Voices of the Church

St. Cyprian of Carthage · *On the Good of Patience, summary*

Patience is the strength that keeps every other virtue intact under pressure; charity without it does not survive a single injury.

St. Vincent de Paul · *witness of his life and conferences, summary*

His conferences press humility and perseverance in serving the poor, without counting on applause. The lesson of his life: kindness that requires gratitude is commerce, not fruit.

St. Lawrence of Rome · *early tradition via St. Ambrose*

Asked for the Church's treasures, the deacon presented the poor: these are the treasures of the Church. Handed on as the Church received it.

Live It This Week

- One corporal and one spiritual work of mercy before next session.
- Pray by name each morning for the person who most tests your patience.
- Give one genuinely anonymous gift.

Memory Verse

Colossians 3:12 · Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience.

Before Next Session

Read Galatians 5:22-23 one more time, and Proverbs 25:28.

Catechism references for this session: 1832, 2447, 2544-2547

Take-Home · Session 7

The Guarded Fruits: Gentleness, Faithfulness, Modesty, Self-Control, Chastity

What We Found

The honest answer to nine versus twelve: the Greek text lists nine, self-control among them; the traditional Latin text (the Clementine Vulgate) carries twelve, adding longanimity, modesty, and chastity, and the Catechism (1832) hands on the tradition's twelve, while the Church's current Latin edition, the Nova Vulgata, follows the nine. The added fruits are repeatedly commended and commanded in Scripture; the list differs, the doctrine does not.

Gentleness is strength under control: the Jesus who is "gentle and lowly in heart" also cleansed the temple, and Moses, meekest man on earth, confronted an empire. Gentleness is more than harmlessness; it is strength placed at the service of love.

Faithfulness is love extended through time, loyalties in right order: the king's good servant, and God's first.

Proverbs 25:28: without self-control we are a breached city. Modesty, self-control, and chastity are walls that keep a self intact so there is a self to give.

Voices of the Church

St. Francis de Sales · *Introduction to the Devout Life III.9, summary*

Be gentle even with yourself after a fall, correcting your faults with calm repentance rather than fury. Harshness toward oneself, we might add, is often pride wearing a hair shirt.

St. Thomas More · *martyrdom, 1535; Paris Newsletter account, summary*

On the scaffold: the king's good servant, and God's first. He kept every faithfulness he owed because he kept them in order.

St. Maria Goretti · *martyrdom, 1902; canonization accounts, summary*

Dying, she forgave her attacker by name; he repented and stood at her canonization. Her forgiveness and her chastity were one self-possession, given away in love.

Live It This Week

- Set one concrete, measurable guard on your weakest wall this week.
- After your next fall, correct yourself gently and immediately, without the rage.
- Keep one small promise circumstances would excuse you from.

Memory Verse

Galatians 5:22-23 · But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.

Before Next Session

Read Psalm 1, Matthew 7:15-20, and John 15:1-11. The sealed answers you wrote in Session 1 return next session, so plan to be there.

Catechism references for this session: 1809, 1832, 2337-2347, 2521-2522

Take-Home · Session 8

The Tree and Its Fruit

What We Found

Our sealed guesses met Jesus' own answer: "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16, 20). Feelings, credentials, and even wonders can counterfeit; character ripened over years is far harder to counterfeit and is the sign Jesus points to.

The fruit test is for recognition, not condemnation: whom to trust and what to flee, never a license to read hearts. "Judge not" stands earlier in the same sermon.

John 15 answers the cause: abide. The branch's whole job is to remain; apart from the vine, nothing. The Spirit is the sap (CCC 1108); abiding is concrete: his word, prayer, the sacraments, the Eucharist.

The Father prunes the fruitful branch to make it bear more: the image lets us receive trials as occasions for deeper fruitfulness rather than proof of abandonment.

What nearly everyone underestimated: time. Counterfeits tend to be fast; fruit usually ripens slowly, a pastoral observation worth keeping beside Jesus' criterion.

Voices of the Church

St. Augustine · *Tractates on John, summary*

Christ did not say "without me you can do little." He said nothing. The humility that admits it is the same act as the abiding that receives everything.

St. Bonaventure · *The Mystical Vine, traditionally attributed, summary*

The vine was pruned, bound, and pierced, and its wine is his blood. Abiding is union with the crucified and risen Lord, above all in the Eucharist.

St. Teresa of Avila · *Life, ch. 11, summary*

Four ways to water a garden, from hauled buckets to rain the Lord sends himself: our labor is real, and it is never the water.

Live It This Week

- Start one small, sustainable abiding practice this week.
- Reread John 15:1-11 daily.
- Write a new answer to the Session 1 question and keep it in your Bible at Matthew 7:20.

Memory Verse

Matthew 7:20 · Thus you will know them by their fruits.

Before Next Session

Read Isaiah 11:1-3.

Catechism references for this session: 755, 787, 1108, 2074

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).

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; 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

- Thirty silent seconds before prayer each day: remember whom you are addressing.
- One unhurried Our Father daily; do not rush the first two words.
- 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.

Catechism references for this session: 1266, 1303, 1830-1831, 2144

Take-Home · Session 10

Seeing and Standing: Knowledge and Fortitude

What We Found

The Gift of knowledge prices creation accurately: every created good is real, good, and pointing beyond itself. Its failure modes are idolatry (stopping at the creature) and contempt (despising it); Wisdom 13:5 walks the ridge.

The same Gift shows sin its true size, because sin is disordered love of created goods: delight in creation and tears at confession are both accurate pricing.

"But if not" (Daniel 3:18) is fortitude's signature: firmness staked on who God is, not on guaranteed rescue.

Timidity's prescription is rekindling, not personality change: the Spirit given us is power, love, and self-control (2 Timothy 1:6-7). The Spirit strengthens the baptized; our part is to stir up and cooperate with the grace given.

Endurance outranks attack: the ordinary field of fortitude is the long illness, the costly workplace, the daily rebuilt marriage.

Voices of the Church

St. Ignatius of Antioch · *Letter to the Romans* 4

"I am God's wheat, and I am to be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, so that I may prove to be pure bread of Christ." Fortitude complete in one sentence, fed on the Eucharist it echoes.

St. Thomas Aquinas · *Summa Theologiae* II-II qq. 123 and 139, *summary*

The Gift adds confidence beyond natural courage's ceiling, and endurance is courage's harder half.

St. Joan of Arc · *trial testimony*, 1431, *summary*

Asked if she was in God's grace: if I am not, may God put me there; if I am, may God keep me there. Pressured into an abjuration, she took it back at the cost of her life: fortitude that recovered is fortitude still.

Live It This Week

- Ten minutes outdoors: trace one beautiful thing to its Maker in deliberate prayer.
- Name your furnace and pray Daniel 3:17-18 over it daily, including "but if not."
- Rekindle concretely: confession or a Holy Hour, asking for fortitude by name.

Memory Verse

2 Timothy 1:7 · For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.

Before Next Session

Read 1 Kings 3:5-14 and James 1:5-8.

Catechism references for this session: 159, 1808, 1831, 2473

Take-Home · Session 11

The Summit Gifts: Counsel, Understanding, Wisdom

What We Found

Counsel is the Spirit's promptness in the concrete decision; understanding penetrates what faith already holds; wisdom judges divine things by kinship and savors what it sees: doctrine become taste.

Solomon's request pleased God, and James 1:5 throws the offer open: wisdom is given generously to any who ask. The summit Gifts are requested by need, not seized by talent.

The study's key distinction: the seven sanctifying Gifts are conferred on all the baptized (CCC 1266) for the receiver's holiness, flourishing in a life of grace; charisms are apportioned individually as the Spirit wills, and no one should presume to possess them all (1 Corinthians 12:29-30). This cures both anxiety and pride.

Charisms are the Spirit's distributed graces for the common good, present in the Church's life in every rank, from the extraordinary to the simple and widespread (Lumen Gentium 12; CCC 799-801, 2003), and discerned in communion with the Church's pastors.

Voices of the Church

St. Catherine of Siena · *witness of her life, summary*

An unschooled laywoman whose counsel reached magistrates and Gregory XI himself, urging the papacy's return from Avignon to Rome. The application we draw: counsel is Spirit-aided right judgment about the next concrete step, carried with a boldness office cannot explain.

St. Thomas Aquinas · *Summa Theologiae II-II qq. 8, 45, summary*

The scholar knows chastity by study, the chaste man by kinship. Wisdom is knowing God by kinship: charity makes the soul connatural with divine things.

St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross · *The Science of the Cross, summary*

A philosopher who followed truth into the Church, came to savor what she had once only analyzed, and died a martyr at Auschwitz. The image is ours: study is wisdom's runway when charity takes it airborne.

Live It This Week

- Pray James 1:5 daily over one named decision; consult one wise person before deciding.
- Sit fifteen minutes with one over-familiar line of the Creed.
- Come next week with this guide and a pen: the inventory session works only in person.

Memory Verse

James 1:5 · If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him.

Before Next Session

Read Exodus 31:1-5 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

Catechism references for this session: 799-801, 1830-1831, 2690

Take-Home · Session 12

Equipped and Sent

What We Found

Scripture's first man explicitly called filled with the Spirit was a craftsman: Bezalel, filled with ability, intelligence, knowledge, and craftsmanship to build God's dwelling (Exodus 31:1-5). Most charisms look like Tuesday.

Every distribution has one Giver and one direction: "to each is given... for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7); "employ it for one another, as good stewards" (1 Peter 4:10). No charism terminates in its holder.

The inventory's two parts stay distinct: Part 1 measures docility to the seven Gifts every baptized person possesses; Part 2 discerns the charisms apportioned individually, with fruitfulness, community confirmation, and joy as helpful signs, under the guidance of the Church and her pastors.

The thread resolved: once darkness, now light in the Lord (Ephesians 5:8), and light is for the night. Equipped children of light are sent, and the Father is glorified by our bearing much fruit (John 15:8).

Voices of the Church

Lumen Gentium 12 · *Second Vatican Council, summary*

The Spirit distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank, outstanding or simple and widespread, received with thanksgiving, discerned with the Church's shepherds.

St. Paul VI · *Evangelii Nuntiandi 75, summary*

The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: he impels the proclaiming and opens hearts to receive it. Techniques do not convert; the Spirit does.

St. John Paul II · *Christifideles Laici 24, summary*

Charisms are a wealth of grace for the whole Body: received in gratitude, employed in service, and exercised in reference and submission to the Church's pastors.

Live It This Week

- Complete Inventory Part 2 within two weeks and review it with a pastor, director, or mature friend.
- Employ one identified charism in concrete service before the follow-up gathering.
- Keep your abiding practice: fruit and gifts run on the same sap.

Memory Verse

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

Before Next Session

There is no next session; there is a sending. Complete the inventory, and walk by the Spirit.

Catechism references for this session: 799-801, 863-865, 1302-1303, 2003