

Family Formation

Session 3: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Possible songs: “Come Holy Spirit” (Fr. Mike Semana), “Spirit of the Living God”

Handout and Worksheet: “7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit”, “Scenarios for the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit”

Background for Parents

This week, we will focus on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and how the Holy Spirit is active within each of our lives. The next session, you will pray over each of your children for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. If you need to, familiarize yourself with who the Holy Spirit is before you gather your family together. (One good source would be the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.) This session we include the discussion the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the next session will include the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

With the family

Begin with discussing who the Holy Spirit / the Advocate is.

- Can we see Him? Can we feel Him?
- Give examples of the close love they experience with a parent/close friend.
- Can you imagine the love we could feel if we were to become friends with the Holy Spirit and experience His love!!

Jesus loves us so much!! When it came close to the time for Jesus to return to the Father, He said to His apostles, “It is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate (Holy Spirit) will not come to you” (Jn 16:7).

- What did Jesus mean when He said it is better for us that He go?
- There must be something very special & important about the Holy Spirit coming into our lives if it is better for Jesus to go so the Holy Spirit can come!

Jesus said He would not leave us orphans, that He would send another, meaning the Holy Spirit.

Jesus told the disciples to wait until the Holy Spirit came—“Wait for the fulfillment of the Father’s promise” (Luke 24:49).

Tell or read the story of Pentecost, Acts of the Apostles 2:1-41, and discuss.

- They had been afraid before the Holy Spirit came.
- After the Holy Spirit filled them, they were no longer afraid and were ready to go preach in Jesus’ name.

It is very easy to role play and act out the Scripture passage of the Descent of the Holy Spirit—how they are so afraid and unsure of what to do before the Holy Spirit comes, and then after the Holy Spirit comes, how they no longer are afraid, preach with confidence, and are filled with the Holy Spirit to overflowing.

Point out that we also need the Holy Spirit to fill us and strengthen us; we are too weak on our own.

It’s the same Holy Spirit that lived inside Jesus that lives in us but in differing amounts!! But it is the same Spirit.

Pass out the worksheet “7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” Teach and pray the “Come Holy Spirit” prayer on the top. Read and discuss the worksheet together. Give examples of these gifts in operation within your own life. Fill out and discuss “Scenarios for the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit” as a family. Point out any areas where the gifts of the Holy Spirit apply to your children in their life.

If your family enjoys role playing, divide into two groups and have each group practice a short skit on a different gift of the Holy Spirit. Have the other group guess which gift was highlighted. The skits can portray situations similar to the ones in “Scenarios for the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit” handout.

Tell the children that during the next session, you will be praying over each of them individually for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Briefly explain what it is. Then allow your children some quiet, private time to fill out the bottom of the sheet where they list 1 or 2 of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that they would especially like to ask for. This seems to be very important—it’s been our experience that even years later, children can still remember which gifts they asked for. In your family prayers throughout the week, remember to pray for the Father to bless your family when you pray for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit should be something that your entire family looks forward to with anticipation.

Answers to “Scenarios for the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit”:

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

Throughout the week

Point out the gifts of the Holy Spirit that you see them operating within yourself and others throughout the week. Make an extra effort to ask for these gifts yourself and then share with your family the fruits. As incidences arise in your family that need the Holy Spirit’s presence, make an effort to stop with your family and ask for the Holy Spirit to come with His gifts.

7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

*“Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful
and enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created
and You shall renew the face of the earth.”*

Wisdom: This gift makes us friends with God. Wisdom helps me to understand things from God’s point of view. Wisdom gives our souls power to experience divine things.

How will Wisdom help me? Wisdom will draw me into a closer relationship with God. I will start to see things from God’s point of view. I will experience God as infinite goodness.

Understanding: Understanding reveals hidden things. It helps me to begin to understand the deep meaning of supernatural truths such as the Mass, Eucharist, and the Sacraments. Understanding purifies my soul and I begin to see myself as God sees me.

How will Understanding help me? Understanding will help me to draw closer to God because I will begin to truly believe in God’s love for me. I will begin to understand difficult things like the Mass, Jesus’ real presence in the Eucharist, and the Sacraments.

Knowledge: This gift will give me knowledge of holy things and creation. I will begin to see what is of God and what is not. I will begin to fall in love with everything that God has made.

How will Knowledge help me? Knowledge will help me to appreciate the life that God has given me. I will begin to see God’s presence in people, things, and in nature and I will treat them with proper dignity.

Counsel: The Holy Spirit will direct, guide, and counsel us on the right thing to do in every circumstance.

How will Counsel help me? When I do not know what to do, I can ask for this gift of Counsel so I can make the decision God would want me to make. It will help me to know WWJD.

Piety: This gift will make my relationship with God become stronger. As I begin to trust God more, my confidence in Him will grow. I will begin to understand that other Christians are truly my brothers and sisters—we are in the same family of God and I will treat them with respect and dignity.

*How will **Piety** help me?* Piety will help me to trust God more. It will help me have a better friendship with Him. Piety will help me to see other people as my brothers and sisters in God’s family. This will help me to be willing to sacrifice for others and to pray for them.

Fortitude: This gift brings the tremendous strength and courage of the Holy Spirit Himself so that I will be able to do what God is asking me to do.

*How will **Fortitude** help me?* When I hit obstacles in life, fortitude can give me tremendous “Holy Spirit strength,” which is so far beyond human strength. Fortitude will help me to stand up for what I believe in and not cave in to peer-pressure.

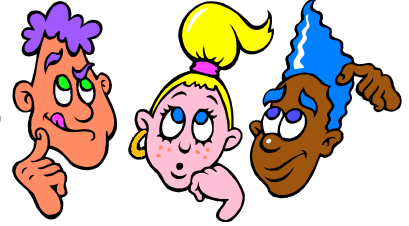
Fear of the Lord: This gift is a deep fear and hatred of sin because we love God so much that we never want to do anything to hurt or displease Him. Fear of the Lord is not being afraid of God; it is a fear of sin.

*How will **Fear of the Lord** help me?* When I’m in a tough position at school or at home, if my desire to please God is the strongest influence in my life, then I will choose the kind and loving way. This gift will help me to stay on the pathway to heaven.



Come Holy Spirit, come!

Scenarios for the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit



1. Tina knows that God would like her to forgive her friend, Joan, who called her bad names yesterday, but she just doesn't think she can do it. Tina prays to the Holy Spirit for strength to be able to forgive and forget Joan's words. The next day Tina is surprised when she is able to put aside her feelings of hurt towards Joan and continue as if nothing ever happened.

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

2. Sam knows a boy at school whose family is poor and often this boy does not have enough food to eat. Sam shares his lunch with him and decides to bring extra for him the next day. Sam begins to truly love this boy as a brother in Christ.

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

3. George is walking down the street. Suddenly 3 guys on bicycles start bullying him. George remembers to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and help regarding what he should do.

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

4. Bob looks around his world and he is overwhelmed with how good God is and how beautiful everything is! Bob can really feel God's love for him in all the things surrounding him.

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

5. Sharon's father has just been picked up for driving while intoxicated. Sharon feels embarrassed but she is able to recognize the good in the situation. She can feel God's love and goodness—now her father can get the help he needs. She can see beyond the surface things that are taking place, and sees that God has a plan for both her and her father.

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

6. The group of friends that Theresa hangs out with are planning on stealing candy from the store. Theresa loves God so much that she never wants to displease Him. She decides not to go to the store with these girls (and over the next couple of months, Theresa starts to find other friends to be with).

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

7. Tim is at Mass. All of a sudden he begins to understand a little bit better that Jesus is truly present in Eucharist.

Which gift of the Holy Spirit? _____

Name 1 or 2 gifts of the Holy Spirit that you would especially like to receive and why.

1. _____ Why? _____

2. _____ Why? _____