



Faith in 5 – Adult Charisms of the Holy Spirit

1. **Charism** (in Greek, charisma or charis) is used in the New Testament for “favor” or “gratuitous gift.” In the Catholic Church, charisms of the Holy Spirit are spiritual gifts. These are special abilities given to all Christians by the Holy Spirit to give them power both to represent Christ and to be a channel of God’s goodness for people. Whether extraordinary or ordinary, all charisms ought to be exercised in the service of God (CCC, 799). ([Source](#))

Charisms gives us the gift of inspiring others to become saints. Often charisms are seen as a complement to our human talents, though there are also charisms which are different from a person’s natural abilities. The Holy Spirit provides the grace to do more than we could ever imagine for the glory of God the Father, according to His Will and purpose.

2. There are gifts of the Holy Spirit that we are given to keep and gifts we are given to give away. The traditional seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the fruits of the Spirit are gifts given to us to keep. They are part of our inner transformation as Christians and provide the inner sanctification necessary for the effective use of our charisms (CCC, 1830-1832). Charisms of the Holy Spirit are bestowed on individuals for the good of others, the needs of the world and in particular, for building up of the Church.
3. A charism is a part of our faith and an expression of our relationship with God. In this way it differs from a natural or learned ability.

Charisms:

- Cannot be inherited from our parents;
- Thrive and grow when we use them to serve others;
- Can only be used for God’s loving purposes;
- Are directly and immediately dependent upon grace;
- Are profoundly and directly connected with our relationship with God.

When using charisms, they bring unspeakable joy and peace, fulfillment and energy. It is unusually effective and results in success.

4. The beauty of having a variety of charisms in the body of Christ is that it allows each of us to contribute uniquely to the fullness and good of the Church. A person who knows their charism is equipped to be an effective disciple of Christ, to serve their mission in the world and use their graces for the evangelization of the world.

“For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if

prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness” (Romans 12:4-8).

5. “Discernment is key to discover a person’s charism(s) and requires both internal and external validation. For example, a charism is often found when a person experiences interior peace when engaged in an activity related to the charism. Also, the Holy Spirit usually works through other people to validate a person’s charism, encouraging them to pursue it, even when that person does not know they are actively trying to discover their charism” ([Source](#)).
6. A charism in the finest sense, draws other people to God. An example would be the Italian painter, Michelangelo in his charism of craftsmanship. His painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel moves people to pray, adore and love God more deeply. **A charism is exercised in the context of the Christian’s overall discipleship in submission to Jesus Christ and His Church.**

Charisms of the Holy Spirit, [excerpts from this source](#):

- a. **Administration** – providing the planning and coordination to accomplish good things
- b. **Celibacy** – remaining unmarried and celibate for the sake of Christ
- c. **Craftmanship** – artistic or creative work that beautifies the physical world. More than creating, it is the outpouring of love of God and an expression of faith
- d. **Discernment of Spirits** – accurately perceiving a divine or demonic presence in people, places or things
- e. **Encouragement** – nurturing others through his or her presence and words of comfort, encouragement and counsel
- f. **Evangelism** – sharing the faith with others in a way that draws them to become disciples of Jesus and responsible members of His Church
- g. **Faith** - uncompromising trust in the love, power and provision of God
- h. **Giving** – exceptional generosity to those in need.
- i. **Healing** – through whom God cures illness and restores health when healing is unlikely to occur quickly or happen at all.
- j. **Helps** – using talents to enable others to serve God and people more effectively.
- k. **Hospitality** – warmly welcoming and caring for those in need of food, shelter and friendship.
- l. **Intercessory Prayer** – the intense prayer is the means by which God’s love and deliverance reaches those in need. Those with this charism can pray for others and do so for others without tiring.
- m. **Knowledge** - diligent study and intellectually activity that enable us to better understand God, ourselves and the universe.
- n. **Leadership** – sharing a compelling vision of a better future with others, directing the overall efforts of a group as they work to make the vision a reality.
- o. **Mercy** – through practical deeds of compassion that relieve the distress of those who suffer and help them experience God’s love in action.

- p. **Missionary** – the ability to enter into the hearts and minds of those from another culture with remarkable ease and grace.
 - q. **Music** – creative goodness to others through writing or performing music for the praise of God.
 - q. **Pastoring** – building Christian community by nurturing relationships and long-term spiritual growth of a group.
 - r. **Prophecy** – communicating a word or call of God to individuals or a group through inspired words or actions.
 - s. **Service** – recognizing the logistical gaps or unmet needs and doing whatever it takes to solve the problem and meet the need
 - t. **Teaching** – enabling others to learn information and skills that help them reach their fullest spiritual and personal potential
 - u. **Voluntary Poverty** – living a life of cheerful, voluntary simplicity or poverty in order to identify with Jesus and the poor.
 - v. **Wisdom** – remarkable insight that enables one to come up with creative solutions to specific problems and make good decisions.
 - w. **Writing** – creativity by using words to create works of truth or beauty that reflect the fullness of human experience and bring glory to God.
 - x. **Public Tongues** – speak divinely-inspired message in a language one has never learned.
7. There are charisms exhibited by some which may be false and must be discerned. The discernment of charisms is the responsibility of the Magisterium (CCC 799-801). The Magisterium, the teaching office of the Church, exists to test all things and hold fast to what is good, so that all the diverse and complementary charisms work together for the common good.

“If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world on fire.”
St. Catherine of Siena

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