

A Novena for the Charisms and Fruits of the Holy Spirit!



Today begins the nine-day Novena to the Holy Spirit in preparation for the Feast of Pentecost.

We love the Holy Spirit! We are all familiar with the traditional Novena to the Holy Spirit that honors the “**Sanctifying Gifts**” enumerated in Isaiah 11, namely:

- **Fear of the Lord**
- **Piety**
- **Fortitude**
- **Knowledge**
- **Understanding**
- **Counsel**
- **Wisdom**

Here is a link to the traditional Novena to the Holy Spirit that highlights these Sanctifying Gifts

<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/novena-to-the-holy-spirit-for-the-seven-gifts-309>

During the 2020 Pandemic, I wrote a new Novena to the Holy Spirit, for City of the Lord, that honors the nine **Fruits of the Spirit** (Galatians 5:22)

- **Love**
- **Joy**
- **Peace**
- **Patience**
- **Kindness**
- **Faithfulness**
- **Goodness**
- **Gentleness**
- **Self-Control**

And the nine **Charismatic Gifts of the Holy Spirit** (1 Corinthians 12)

- **Word of Wisdom**
- **Word of Knowledge**
- **Faith**
- **Gifts of Healing**
- **Prophecy**
- **Miracles**
- **Discernment of Spirits**
- **Tongues**
- **Interpretation of Tongues**

We will send out each Day's Novena for nine days until the eve of Pentecost. I encourage us all to pray and reflect on this Novena together as a Community, that the Power of the Holy Spirit would produce the Gifts intended for the building up of the Church and the fruit that Glorifies Him in each of us and the Mission of City of the Lord. I hope you are blessed by this new prayer- Jeff Looker

Novena for the Charisms and **Fruits of the Holy Spirit**

Day 1

Charismatic Gift: **Prophecy**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Love**

Scripture:

1 Cor 14:1:

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.

Reflection:

We read in 1: Corinthians 12 about the “extraordinary” gifts of the Holy Spirit. These Charismatic gifts of the Spirit are distributed as the Spirit wills and are bestowed by Him upon the believer for the “common good” (1 Cor 12:7).

These gifts are intended for the building up of the Church, and we are supposed to “earnestly desire” them! (1 Cor 12:31) This verse continues and says, “but I will show you a more excellent way...”What is the more excellent way? **Love**.

1 Corinthians 13 begins, “If I speak in the tongues of men and Angels but I have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal”.

We may earnestly desire the charismatic gifts, but if we do not exercise them in love, we are not anointed, but “annoying”. Love is the way. Love is not a “gift” per se, it is the way we distribute the graces and gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit for the benefit of others.

The fruit of love allows the Gift of Prophecy to flow to others as edification, encouragement, and comfort (1 Cor 14: 3). Prophecy builds the body of Christ and Prophecy in Love is “the better way”.

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, I desire to Love others as you love. In my own strength, I do not have that ability. I need your Grace to love others and to use the gifts you have given me, in love. Help me to hear you, and to recognize your voice amid the noise of my life. Speak your will to me that I may grow in the gift of Prophecy, according to your will, in order to edify, encourage, and comfort others.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 2

Charismatic Gift: **Gifts of Healing**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Joy**

Scripture:

John 16:24

"Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be complete."

Reflection:

Complete Joy. What would that be like? No Pain, no suffering, no worry, no fear? All of us have experienced joy in some measure in our lives, but has it been "complete"? One meaning of the word Jesus used for complete is translated as "fulfilled." Jesus used a similar word at His death on the cross- "It is Finished" (complete). Fulfillment or completion means a promise made has come to pass. A plan has been seen through to the end.

Joy is our destiny when we successfully "complete" the journey of this life as disciples. Does that mean joy cannot be experienced in this life even though it is not "complete"? Of course not. The Holy Spirit came to fill us with the gifts and the fruit of joy is one of the fulfillments of receiving the gifts of the Spirit.

But what about all the suffering in the world? How can we have joy when there is so much pain and suffering? If God would only take away the pain and suffering in the world, then our joy would be complete, right? What did Jesus say?- *"Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be complete."* Joy is tied to asking. The word Jesus used for asking also can be translated "desire". Jesus is saying in essence, when you desire what I desire, you will have my joy, which is complete.

So what is Jesus' desire? In Luke 4:18 Jesus reads from Isaiah 61: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, *to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*".... And he began to say to them, *"Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*

Jesus fulfills the desire of the Father to bring freedom, healing, and restoration to His people. Jesus' joy is complete when he fulfills His mission as Redeemer. As believers we share in that mission... to bring release to captives, sight to the blind... in other words, healing. Joy is complete when we co-labor with Jesus in healing a broken world.

Healing is a mystery (like most things in the spiritual life!) When we pray for healing, we are being obedient to the revelation Jesus gave to pray for the sick and do greater things than he did! His commission was to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and raise the dead (Matt 10:8). Why are some healed and others not when we pray? Just like joy will never be complete on the earth, neither will healing. Only when we meet the Lord when our journey is fulfilled will our joy and our healing be "complete."

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, you are the promise sent by Jesus. You are the fulfillment of the Father's desire. Lead me to desire what Jesus desires. Give me a passion to co-labor with Jesus in His mission to bring healing and restoration to a world that has rejected you, but that you still love. Fill me with the gifts of healing according to your will, that joyfully I may be an instrument of healing to others.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 3

Charismatic Gift: **Faith**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Peace**

Scripture:

Luke 8:25

He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"

Reflection:

Our scripture for today is Jesus' response to the disciples in the boat after he calmed the storm. Jesus' words highlight an important spiritual principle: fear and faith are always at odds.

The charismatic gift of faith is a supernatural gift of confidence in God. This gift allows the believer to move boldly and to raise up the gift of faith within the body of Christ to benefit and strengthen the church. Obviously our boatload of disciples above needed more of this gift!. What was the fruit of their lack of faith? Fear. Because of their fear and not faith, they marveled at Jesus ability to calm the wind and the waves.

No one is at peace if they are filled with fear. No one lacks peace that is filled with faith. If we want to reap a great harvest of peace, we need more faith. Now, we can all muster up faith from time to time: We have faith the pilot flying the plane has sufficient training and experience to land safely at the destination or else we wouldn't get on board! But how often when a family member or friend expressed fear or a crisis, do we have the confidence in God to speak faith into their lives? When the impossible stares us in the face, what rises up? Fear or faith?

At the end of the Mass, what are the final words? Go in Peace... In other words- Go with confidence that the sacrament you received has given you the grace to move in faith. We need the gift of faith in order to have the fruit of peace. Peace- the quiet confidence in God (and not ourselves), creates a receptivity for the gift of faith. Faith and Peace work together.

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, I desire more faith. In my own strength, I do not have the ability to be free from fear. I need your gift of faith in abundance, according to your will, so that peace may reign in my heart. May this gift of faith and the fruit of peace that you offer to be a source of strength to share your great love with others and to build up and to strengthen faith within the church.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 4

Charismatic Gift: **Interpretation of Tongues**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Patience**

Scripture:

Luke 24:30

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. *They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"*

Reflection:

The gift of interpretation of tongues, like many of the Charismatic gifts, needs to be experienced to be appreciated. Like the gift of prophecy, when the gift is authentically expressed there is a stirring of the

heart- a “burning” as the two on the road to Emmaus described it. On the road to Emmaus the two believers were sad that their redeemer was dead. Coincidentally, that supposedly dead redeemer was walking next to them and very much alive! Jesus remarked to them how, in essence, they “didn’t get it”, and proceeded to interpret how all of scripture was about him. He was interpreting himself, the “Logos” the word, Jesus.

A common lament of many believers is that “I don’t hear God speak to me.” I pray but.. nothing. Maybe hearing God is a special thing for the Saints or the extra holy? Someone once said “humans speak punctuated by silence. God is silent, punctuated by speaking.” Discerning the voice of God is a lifelong pursuit. Intimacy with God is one of the jobs of the Holy Spirit- bringing us into communion with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is patient with us as he prepares our hearts for deeper and deeper encounters with God. For our part, patiently pursuing the presence of God and listening for his voice is worth the effort.

The gift of interpretation of tongues is a gift that is best expressed in a community context. As 1 Cor 14:13 says- when one speaks in tongues we should pray for the power to interpret. It is beautiful to realize that a word in tongues and then an interpretation, both gifts of the spirit, are a community effort to hear God speaking to us. Yes, as individuals, we can hear the voice of God. He is always speaking but we often are not listening. The community context of the interpretation of tongues highlights God's heart that we need one another. Which brings us back to patience.

Why is patience with our brothers and sisters in Christ such a challenge? Perhaps it is because their failings and sins remind us of our own inadequacies. The fruit of patience should be a means of uniting us in our need for one another. It is together, as the body of Christ, that the Holy Spirit can truly reveal the Word.

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, open my ears, open my heart. I desire to have you reveal the Father and the Son in a deeper way to me. Increase my patience as I wait upon your work in me. Increase my love for others so that I have the patience needed to allow you to complete your work of sanctification. Give me the gift of interpretation of tongues, according to your will, that together with my brothers and sisters, we can know your will as you speak to and through us. Amen

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 5

Charismatic Gift: **Word of Wisdom**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Kindness**

Scripture:

Ephesians 1:16

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.

Reflection:

This scripture speaks of two ways we can come to the knowledge God; through wisdom and revelation. Wisdom- what we can acquire through study, experience and wise counsel, and revelation- a supernatural impartation of understanding or insight that is a grace from the Holy Spirit. Both are necessary for the spiritual life, but too often believers will choose one over the other. It is always a balance; too much wisdom without revelation can create a static spirituality- “following the rules” so to speak. Too much revelation without wisdom creates an immaturity that can harm the believer and the body of Christ.

The Charismatic gift of the word of wisdom in a way bridges the ideas of wisdom and revelation. Word of wisdom is a supernatural impartation of heavenly wisdom or guidance that benefits the believer and the community. It transcends the wisdom we could acquire through our own efforts and cuts to the

root of the issue at hand. Jesus dealt with the Scribes and Chief priests with a word of wisdom when he said, *“give to Caesar what is Caesars’ and give to God what is God’s”*. (Luke 20:25). The word of wisdom from Jesus cut through the surface of deception they posed with their question of *“is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?”* and disarmed their malice with a much kinder answer than they deserved.

Which brings us to kindness. Romans 2:4 says, *“God’s Kindness is meant to lead you to repentance”*. The kindness of God is our model to follow as believers. The Lord sees mankind in all our fallen pursuits, yet he still loves the world and sent His only Son to redeem it (John 3:16). In the way we humans measure things, this is an injustice. Mankind has rejected God and deserves punishment! Justice demands it! That may be the conventional “wisdom” among some, but the revelation is missing. The revelation of the kindness of God expressed as mercy must be measured into the justice of God. Only in Jesus, do justice and mercy meet perfectly. One translation of Psalm 85:10 says, *“Kindness and truth have met, righteousness and peace have kissed.”*

The Holy Spirit has come to reveal to us how, in Jesus, wisdom and revelation are one, how justice and mercy meet and how the kindness of God shows us the sacrificial kindness that we are called to imitate through His grace.

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, you are the font of revelation. Everything I know about God has been revealed by you. Your kindness is without limits. I earnestly desire more of your gifts so that I can be your instrument in blessing others and advancing the Kingdom. I desire your gift of word of wisdom, according to your will, so that by exercising this gift in kindness, I can bring your wisdom and revelation into the lives of others for the building up of the body of Christ.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right

and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 6

Charismatic Gift: **Word of Knowledge**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Goodness**

Scripture:

John 4:16

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly." The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet."

Reflection:

Today's scripture is a scene from Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus, returning to Galilee, chose to take a route that Jews of the time fiercely avoided- through Samaria. Perhaps a word of knowledge prompted Jesus to go through Samaria to encounter the Samaritan woman and deliver a gift to her that contained the goodness of God. Jesus said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (John 4:10). Perplexed by Jesus' words, the woman asked questions to understand His presence until Jesus spoke a Word of knowledge to her about her five husbands. When Jesus revealed this Word of knowledge, it changed the conversation from the practical (The well is deep, you don't have a bucket, etc..) to a more serious spiritual conversation about where the Samaritans worship and the Messiah.

Jesus' word of knowledge dilated her heart, and this allowed her to eventually receive the revelation of Him as the Messiah. This revelation animated her to become an evangelist to the whole town- "I met a man who told me everything about my life."

Psalm 34 says, "Taste and see the goodness of the Lord!" Taste is a powerful sense. Think back to a time you encountered the taste of a food that immediately brought you back to a childhood memory or a moment in time or a particular place.

Experienced wine aficionados will often turn up their noses at inferior vintages because it doesn't have the "taste" that satisfies. When Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman and shared a word of knowledge prompted by the Holy Spirit, it gave her a "taste" of the goodness of God. At that moment, nothing else would ever satisfy her. We can imagine she spent the rest of her life unsatisfied with the taste of her old life, seeking a new life that demonstrated the fruit of that goodness.

A word of knowledge is a gift to others if delivered in humility and maturity, as Jesus demonstrated. The Holy Spirit is seeking believers to bless others with a "taste" of the goodness of God. Whom shall He send?

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, I desire to be an instrument of blessing to others. You are the gracious gift of the Father and the Son to a world that is parched and weary. You are the living water that flows from Heaven. Allow me to taste and see Your goodness. I desire to increase in the gift of the word of knowledge, according to Your will. May the use of this gift bring others to the revelation of Jesus as Lord.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 7

Charismatic Gift: **Miracles**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Faithfulness**

Scripture:

Luke 19:15-17

When he returned, having received the kingly power, he commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made ten pounds more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

Reflection:

Today's scripture is a parable Jesus told about a master who entrusted his servants with his money and asked them to trade with the money until his return. We know that the servants who were faithful and obedient were rewarded, and the servant that was fearful was punished.

One of the keys to this parable lies in what the master said to the faithful servant upon His return. The master says, "you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities." Wow, that is quite a reward! I doubt the servant thought he would ever govern over ten cities for a simple act of obedience. The reward for his faithfulness far exceeded what the servant did to deserve it. This highlights a spiritual truth; God is generous. This parable illustrates that faithfulness in the small calls forth the generosity of God.

Our human ego is tempted to want to do great things for God so that in some way God "owes" us something in return. Obedience in the small or a faithful act that never gets noticed just doesn't seem worth the time. Who will notice faithfulness to the small things such as kindness to a stranger or visiting the sick? Jesus said, "when you do this to the least of my brothers you do it for me." (Matt 25:40). Faithfulness to what God is asking in the small and unnoticed isn't impressive to man, but it opens the generosity of God.

The Gift of Miracles is an extravagant generosity of God that transcends the natural and demonstrates His power and glory and sovereignty over creation. Resurrection miracles, multiplication of food, legs lengthening, metal, and screws disappearing from repaired bones are just a few examples. Jesus of

course routinely performed the miraculous by the power of the Holy Spirit. But Jesus said, “he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.” (John 14:12) Greater things than Jesus?

Who was the most faithful man in history? Jesus of course. Jesus’ faithfulness to his mission as savior and redeemer called forth the mercy and generosity of the Father to all mankind. Jesus’ act of obedience created a benefit of salvation that was extravagant beyond what we deserved. “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8)

The gift of miracles, like much of the work of the Holy Spirit, is a mystery. We can’t earn it. We can’t merit it. Like all the Charismatic gifts it is pure grace, freely given at the will of the Holy Spirit for the benefit of all. If we want to grow in this gift, one sure path we know from our scripture for today; be faithful in the small, and our reward will be great.

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, you are generous beyond measure. I need more of your grace as I fight the temptation to try and impress you with my works and merits. Holy Spirit, I know that you are the gift. I surrender myself to you and ask for the grace of faithfulness. If it pleases you, increase the gift of Miracles in my life, that I would be your instrument in testifying to the great Love you have for your creation.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 8

Charismatic Gift: **Discernment of Spirits**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Gentleness**

Scripture:

Revelation 2:2-5

"I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear evil men but have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not, and found them to be false; I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have *fallen, repent and do the works you did at first*"

Reflection:

Today's scripture from the book of Revelation is John's vision for the Church at Ephesus. The Lord praised this church but also rebuked it. On the one hand, apparently the gift of discernment of spirits was well developed here. The message said, *"you cannot bear evil men but have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not, and found them to be false."* The gift of discernment of spirits is useful for a community to know whether they are following the right spirit- namely the Holy Spirit. There is so much confusion and noise in our world and unfortunately, the church is not immune from deception. Throughout our history, seemingly inspired, well-reasoned concepts, ideas, and theologies have arisen that were not from God and were in competition with authentic revelation. Think of all the great heresies throughout the ages and all of the wars and division caused within the church and between nations over these heresies. Prayerful application of the gift of discernment of spirits by the originators of the heresies would have been useful in rebuking the root of the deception they surrendered to.

Our human pride will often lead us to move in independence and seek our own ideas and solutions apart from God. Frank Sinatra's famous song "I did it my way" illustrates how this concept resonates in our secular culture. Often our efforts leave out the essential question, "what do you say about this Lord?"

Our scripture for today has the phrase, "I know your works, your toil and your patient *endurance*" These are man's efforts- what we can achieve in our own strength. Is this the kind of life

the Lord wants for us? Working, toiling enduring- struggling to “do it my way?” Of course not. This however **is** the way of our enemy, the evil one. He is delighted when I do it “my way.”

Jesus says in John 10:9-10 says, “I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life and *have it abundantly*.” This scripture speaks of Jesus as the good shepherd but also speaks of the “thief”. Have we spent enough quiet time listening to the voice of the shepherd? Have we built relationships with other mature Christians who can speak into our lives and help us discern whether we are hearing the voice of the Shepard or the thief?

We heard about the Lord’s praise for the church at Ephesus in discerning spirits, but what about the rebuke? It says, *“But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen, repent, and do the works you did at first.”* What were the works they did at first that they are supposed to return to? It could be many things. 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 gives us a clue: *“We give thanks to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your **work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ.* Remember, they were praised in Rev 2:2 for their works, toil, and patient endurance. But the reading from 1Thessalonians links works with faith. It links toil (labor) with love. It links patient endurance (Steadfastness) with hope. In other words, Faith Hope and Love were left out, and what remained was human effort. Return to Faith Hope and Love!

The Greek word **prautes** translated as “Gentleness” in Galatians 5:22 also can be translated “humility or docility.” Surrender or docility to the Holy Spirit is the essential disposition to keep us focused on what endures: Faith Hope and Love. Surrender aids us in resisting the temptation to do it “my way” Discerning the true voice of the Good Shepherd, individually and as part of a community of mature disciples is the right path to doing it “**His** Way”

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, my pride keeps me from surrendering to your will. I need your grace to develop a quiet and gentle heart that is receptive to you. I desire to only follow you and not to be deceived by the thief that comes to steal kill and destroy. Grant me the gift of discernment of spirits, according to your will, that I may only follow where you lead. May the fruit of gentleness fill my heart with faith hope and love, that with the aid of the Holy Spirit, I may return joyfully to you, my first love, Jesus.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!

Day 9

Charismatic Gift: **Tongues**

Fruit of the Spirit: **Self-Control**

Scripture:

Acts 2: 1-4

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance”

Reflection:

Tomorrow is the big day! Pentecost has been called the “birthday of the church” Why? It was the Inauguration of our primary mission as a church to spread the Gospel of Jesus to all the nations! With the coming of the Holy Spirit, believers were animated and gifted in a powerful new way. Pentecost was the beginning, but the process of the Holy Spirit empowering and gifting the church has never ended and continues to this moment.

Our Catholic tradition teaches that at confirmation, there is a completion of Baptismal Grace by the impartation and sealing of the gifts of the Holy Spirit upon the believer. Billions of Catholics around the

world over millennia have received the sacrament of confirmation, but in our age, sadly, a very high percentage do not progress into a lifelong deepening of their baptismal call. Many devoted and holy Catholics have experienced the Holy Spirit as an unseen force, the power behind conversion and all that is holy, but unfortunately as a “great unknown”. Yes, the movement and will of the Holy Spirit will always be a mystery, as are most things of God. But the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. Jesus came to re-establish our unity with the Father, but the Father and the Son sent us the Holy Spirit! Although the Trinity is the mystery of all mysteries, logic follows that if we can have an intimate relationship with the Father and Son, as co-heirs with Christ, we can also have an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, in so far as we are docile to Him and He wills to be known through his power, supernatural graces and gifts. After all, Jesus called the Holy Spirit in John 14:16 the “parakletos” which is translated comforter, advocate, and counselor among other descriptions. These are words that convey intimacy.

A new movement of the Holy Spirit upon Catholics in the late 1960’s has seen many millions of believers worldwide have known a taste of intimacy with the Holy Spirit through the “baptism in the Holy Spirit” as a tangible, transformative, and authentic experience. The Holy Spirit was no longer an unseen force, not just a great unknown, but a real and powerful life-changing third person of the Trinity. Many describe the experience as going from knowing “about” God to actually knowing Him. Those that have stayed the course and matured in this transformation, have tasted the intimacy with God more and deeper, and borne fruit beyond what they were capable of without this encounter.

One manifestation of the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the gift of tongues. Unfortunately, the gift of tongues is not widely understood or trusted by many in the church, primarily because of a misunderstanding of the gift and the immature use of the gift by some believers. Paul in 1: Corinthians 14 instructs the Corinthian church extensively about self-control and proper use of the gift. The gift of tongues, like all nine of the charismatic gifts, must be exercised in **love** as 1 Corinthians 13 exhorts. This chapter describes many facets of love, but most of the descriptions are supported by the fruit of self-control. Controlling your own desires and ego to benefit another in love, is at the heart of the fruit of self-control.

Although not scriptural, the gift of tongues has been described as “the least of the gifts” by some. Perhaps because it is the only one of the nine charismatic gifts that the believer can develop and use at will as a prayer and praise language after it has been received by the Holy Spirit, as opposed to gifts such as healing or miracles that manifest solely at the sovereign will of the Holy Spirit.

We will close our Novena with an image drawn from Jewish tradition to describe the importance of tongues upon the other Charismatic gifts. Hanukkah is an eight-day Jewish holiday. The Hanukkah menorah used to celebrate the eight days has nine candles. The center candle is called the “shamash” translated “servant” or “helper.” The Shamash is lit first and then is used to light the other eight candles on the successive days of the festival. This is a beautiful illustration of how many believers experience the gift of tongues. Praying in tongues and praising in tongues serve to light up the other gifts. Tongues is the servant gift that is initially lit to help ignite more and more of the gifts as the Spirit wills, for the building up of the church, until the light of Christ burns brightly.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 gives a nice summary for today’s reflection and the end of our Novena *“Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control”*

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, reveal yourself to me in a new way this Pentecost. I desire a deeper intimacy with you and to be fully equipped with all the graces and gifts necessary to participate in your work of salvation. I desire to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and to move in the gift of tongues, according to your will. I hunger for more of you in every way. Grant me the grace of self-control so that I can love as you love and be a worthy steward of the gifts you entrust me with. Amen

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen. Come Holy Spirit!