

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading (Acts 8:5-8, 14-17)

Questions for Mystagogical Reflection:

In what way might contemporary Christians experience or understand the cost of discipleship as experience by our ancestors in faith, such as Stephen and Philip? Many of the Jews in Jerusalem turned a deaf ear to the good news, while the Samaritans enthusiastically embraced it. How does that speak to us today? What does this reading have to teach us about evangelization? How do you witness to your faith? In what way is your parish and evangelizing community? In what way does today's reading challenge the contemporary church? What are the implications of the laying on of hands? What does it mean that the Spirit was conferred?

Second Reading (1 Peter 3:15-18)

How does this reading from 1 Peter have relevance to contemporary society? In what way might you relate to the message in this reading? What does it teach you about faith? About suffering? What are the implications for the life of the church? For you? What is the challenge? How does this reading invite a change in attitude on your part? Is there any situation in your life that might benefit from the message in this reading?

The Gospel (John 14:15-21)

Step 1: Naming One's Experience

What were your first impressions: What was your first response to the gospel? What captured your attention?

[Each person names his or her initial impressions. Statements should be brief. No reasons should be given at this time. All simply listen without agreeing or disagreeing.]

Step 2: Understanding

In a brief statement, what do you think this gospel is trying to convey?

Step 3: Input from Vision/Story/Tradition.

Overall view of the readings

In the second reading, the community is reminded to hold firm in the midst of persecution. God will use it to further the reign of God. Persecution will not deter the Spirit. Through baptism we are plunged into Jesus' death. We will share in the suffering of Jesus, and our sharing will have redemptive effects. We are called to martyrdom. The tombs of the martyrs shout to a world lost in the abyss of meaningless pursuits.

We are baptized priest, prophet, and king. By virtue of our baptism we are mandated to go and do what Philip in the first reading showed us how to do—proclaim the good news. Philip showed us the effects of enthusiastic evangelization on a hungry world.

Gospel Exegesis

Jesus exhorted his followers to keep the two great commandments. Disciples must love the Lord their God with their entire, body, soul, and spirit. They are to love one another, as Jesus himself loved – unto death. Jesus promises to send his Spirit to dwell within.

The Paraclete (Advocate) referred to in this pericope means a counselor, or one who supports a defendant at a trial.

It is the role of the “Spirit of truth” to impart the truth about Jesus Christ to the world... To know the Spirit one must know Jesus: similarly, to know the Father demands knowledge of and relationship with the Son. Ultimately, Jesus promises a relationship with God similar to his own.

Step4: Testing.

Would anyone like to share an experience from their lives that connects with the biblical interpretation just shared.

Step 5: Decision

How do the scriptures call us to transformation?

Doctrinal Issues

What church truth/teaching/doctrinal issue could be drawn from the gospel for the Sixth Sunday of Easter?

Possible Doctrinal Themes

Holy Spirit, Christian witness, evangelization, baptism, Paschal mystery, symbols: cross, water, oil, laying on of hands.

Closing Prayer

Through the resurrection of his Son, God has redeemed you and made you his children. May he bless you with joy.

Amen

The Redeemer has given you lasting freedom. May you inherit his everlasting life.

Amen

By faith you rose with him in baptism. May your lives be holy, so that you will be united with him forever.

Amen

Charism and Gifts of The Holy Spirit

Charism means a special spiritual gift or grace, often understood in Christianity as an extraordinary power given by the Holy Spirit for the good of others and the Church. It comes from the Greek word *charis*, meaning “grace” or “gift.”

- **Purpose:** Charisms are not for personal benefit but for the *common good of the Church*. They help Christians fulfill their mission and reveal the presence of the Holy Spirit in the world.
- **Examples:** Commonly recognized charisms include:
 - **Healing** – the ability to restore health through prayer.
 - **Prophecy** – speaking God’s truth to guide others.
 - **Discernment of spirits** – recognizing what comes from God versus other influences.
 - **Wisdom** – offering inspired insight for decision-making.
 - **Speaking in tongues** – praying or praising in a spiritual language.
- **Distinction:** Charisms differ from the *Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (like wisdom, understanding, counsel) and the *fruits of the Spirit* (like love, joy, peace). Those are for personal sanctification, while charisms are outward-facing gifts for service.

Charisms highlight the diversity of gifts within the Christian community. Each person may be entrusted with different charisms, and together they form a mosaic of grace that builds up the Church. They are seen as signs of God’s active presence, empowering believers to live out their faith in unique and impactful ways.

The first time I spoke here I said everyone has their own faith journey – their own relationship with God. Some express their faith through works. Others express their faith through prayers and so on. As for charisms, there are 24 specific charisms recognized in Catholic tradition. There are many ways to put into action. If you don’t know what or how you could contribute, you can

focus on discerning your own charism. They have at least 24. Of these, we would look for which one or more appeals to them.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit -- 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 shall renew the face of the earth.

The 24 Charisms

The Catholic Church recognizes 24 charisms (spiritual gifts) as special graces given by the Holy Spirit to build up the Body of Christ. These are distinct from the general gifts of the Spirit (like wisdom or understanding) and are oriented toward service, mission, and strengthening the community.

Here is the full list with brief descriptions:

- Administration – Organizing people and resources effectively for God’s purposes.
- Apostleship – Building new communities of faith and guiding them in the Gospel.
- Caregiving – Offering practical and compassionate care to those in need.
- Communication – Sharing truth clearly and effectively to inspire or teach.
- Craftsmanship – Creating beauty or functional works that reveal God’s glory.
- Discernment – Recognizing God’s will and distinguishing truth from error.
- Evangelization – Proclaiming the Good News in ways that draw others to Christ.
- Encouragement – Strengthening others through words of hope and affirmation.
- Faith – Exceptional trust in God’s promises and ability to inspire confidence in others.
- Generosity – Joyfully giving resources to support God’s work.
- Healing – Channeling God’s power to restore health and wholeness.
- Hospitality – Creating a welcoming environment that reflects God’s love.
- Intercession – Praying persistently for others with visible fruit.
- Knowledge – Insight into God’s truth and ability to apply it wisely.
- Mercy – Compassionate action toward those who suffer.
- Mission – Commitment to spreading the Gospel across cultures and boundaries.
- Music – Using song or instrumental talent to lift hearts to God.
- Servant Leadership – Guiding others with humility and Christlike service.
- Trust – Confidence in God’s providence, even in uncertainty.
- Prophet – Speaking God’s truth boldly to challenge and inspire.

- Service – Meeting practical needs with joy and dedication.
- Teacher – Explaining and transmitting the faith clearly and faithfully.
- Wisdom – Seeing reality from God’s perspective and offering sound judgment.

As you can see, there are plenty of charisms. They represent the many ways to be of service to others. Based on your talents and calling, which one or more appeal to you. They could be come part of your spiritual journey.

Theological Significance

- **Charisms are gifts for mission:** They are not primarily for personal holiness but for serving others and building up the Church.
- **Rooted in Scripture:** St. Paul highlights charisms in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4.
- **Discernment is key:** Discovering one’s charisms involves prayer, reflection, and testing in community.

In summary: The 24 charisms are diverse gifts of the Spirit, ranging from practical skills like administration and caregiving to spiritual powers like healing and prophecy. They remind us that every baptized Christian has a unique role in God’s mission.

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The seven gifts are drawn from the tradition of the Church and are often listed as follows:

1. **Wisdom:** The ability to know God and to esteem divine things above worldly things. Wisdom is what King Solomon asked God for.
2. **Understanding:** The ability to have a deeper insight into the mysteries of the faith and to judge all created things with certainty.
3. **Counsel:** To rightly guide and judge what is right and good in difficult situations.
4. **Fortitude:** Also known as courage, this gift gives strength to persevere through challenges and temptations.
5. **Knowledge:** The grace to know God's presence and purpose in our lives and to see the world from a divine perspective.

6. **Piety:** A deep reverence for God and a desire to serve and please Him out of love.
7. **Fear of the Lord:** Not a sense of terror, but rather a profound respect and awe for God's greatness, combined with a desire to avoid sin out of love for Him.

Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy

Corporal Works of Mercy

feed the hungry
give drink to the thirsty
clothe the naked
shelter the homeless
visit the sick
visit the imprisoned
bury the dead.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

counsel the doubtful
instruct the ignorant
admonish sinners
comfort the afflicted
forgive injuries
bear wrongs patiently

pray for the living and the dead

Prayer for the Presence of the Holy Spirit

“Holy Spirit, I welcome your presence into every area of my life. Dwell richly within my heart and make me constantly aware of Your nearness. Remove spiritual dullness and awaken my soul to God’s truth. Let Your peace settle my thoughts and guide my actions. I surrender my will to You and ask that You lead me daily in obedience, holiness and deeper fellowship with God.” – John 14:16

Prayer for Wisdom and Understanding

“Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten my mind to perceive the mysteries of the universe in relation to eternity. Spirit of right judgment and courage, guide me and make me firm in my decision to follow Jesus’ way of love. Spirit of knowledge and reverence, help me see the lasting value of justice and mercy in my daily life. Amen.”

Prayer for Guidance and Strength

“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 shall renew the face of the earth. Holy Spirit, Divine Helper, I pray that You will produce in me the fruits of Your presence: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Praying to the Holy Spirit can be done daily, in moments of need, or as part of personal devotion. These prayers help believers open their hearts to God’s transformative presence, fostering a life guided by divine wisdom and love.

John 14:16 states: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever – The Spirit of Truth” (NIV)

John 15:26 states Jesus said to his disciples: “When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me. And you also testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

Meaning of “Advocate”

The term **Advocate** comes from the Greek word *Parakletos*, which can also be translated as **Comforter, Counselor or Helper**. It refers to the Holy Spirit, who is sent to guide, teach, and empower believers, continuing the work of Jesus of earth. The Holy Spirit is described as the Spirit of truth, emphasizing His role in revealing God's truth and sustaining the faith of believers.

In Summary, John 14:16 is a cornerstone verse illustrating the Holy Spirit's role as a perpetual guide, comforter, and advocate, ensuring that believers are in never spiritually orphaned and can live in alignment with God's truth.

Names of The Holy Spirit

By Ray Pritchard

Breath of Life (Genesis 2:7)

My Spirit (Genesis 6:3)

The Spirit of God (Genesis 41:38)

Oil (1 Samuel 16:13)

Your Good Spirit (Nehemiah 9:20)

Your Spirit (Nehemiah 9:30)

The Breath of The Almighty (Job 32:8)

The Spirit of God (Job 33:4)

The Spirit (Job 34:14-15)

Your Holy Spirit (Psalm 51:11)

Your Spirit of Creation and Renewal (Psalm 104:30) Your Presence (Psalm 139:7)

Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding (Isaiah 11:2) The Spirit from On High (Isaiah 32:15)

Breath of the Lord (Isaiah 40:7)

His Spirit (Isaiah 48:16)

Spirit of the Sovereign Lord (Isaiah 61:1)

The Dove (Matthew 3:16)

Wind (John 3:8)

Counselor (John 14:16)

The Promised Holy Spirit (Acts 2:23)

Spirit of Holiness (Romans 1:4)

Spirit Himself (Romans 8:26)

Holy Spirit Who Is In You (1Corinthians 6:19)

One Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Seal (Ephesians 1:13)

The Vindicator Of Christ (1 Timothy 3:16)

Holy Spirit Sent From Heaven (1 Peter 1:12)

The Spirit Who Gives Rest (Isaiah 63:14)

Power of the Most High (Luke 1:35)

The Spirit Given Without Limit (John 3:34)

Spirit of Truth (John 14:17)

The Gift (Acts 2:38)

Spirit of Sonship (Romans 8:15)

Spirit Who Is From God(1Corinthians (2:12)

Same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4)

The Promise (Galatians 3:14)

Holy Spirit Of God (Ephesians 4:30)

Holy Spirit Whom He Poured Out(Titus 3:5)

Names of The Holy Spirit

By Rose Publishing

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Breath of the Almighty

Comforter

Eternal Spirit

God

Holy Spirit

Power of the Highest

Spirit of Adoption Spirit of Burning

Spirit of Christ

Counselor

Spirit of Counsel

Free Spirit

Good Spirit

Lord

Spirit of Might

Spirit of Judgment

Spirit of Glory

Spirit of God

Spirit of Grace

Spirit of Truth

Spirit of Wisdom

Spirit of the Living God

Spirit of Revelation

Spirit of the Fear of the Lord

Spirit of the Son

Spirit of Yahweh

Spirit of Knowledge

Spirit of Understanding

Spirit of Life

Spirit of Prophecy

Spirit of the Father

Spirit of the Lord (God)

Spirit