

5.

GIFT AND GIVER OF GIFTS

Catholic Tradition testifies unceasingly to the Holy Spirit as “Gift.” Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is [asking for a drink], you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water” (John 4:10). Later he explained that this gift of “living water” was indeed the Holy Spirit (John 7:37–39). St. Peter urged the witnesses of the first Pentecost to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, “and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).⁶² What a Gift it was—and is!

St. Thomas Aquinas, in the thirteenth century, explained that the Holy Spirit could properly be called “Love” and “Gift.”⁶³ Following St. Thomas, Bl. John Paul II recently taught: “It can be said that in the Holy Spirit the intimate life of the Triune God becomes totally gift, an exchange of mutual love between the divine Persons, and that through the Holy Spirit God exists in the mode of gift. It is the Holy Spirit who is the

personal expression of this self-giving, of this being-love. He is Person-Love. He is Person-Gift” (*Dominum et Vivificantem*, 10). He goes on to explain that this “uncreated gift”—the Holy Spirit—is the source (*fons vivus*) of all gifts of God to creatures: “the gift of existence to all things through creation; the gift of grace to all human beings through the whole economy [plan] of salvation” (*Dominum et Vivificantem*, 10).

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

This Gift is also the giver of gifts. The phrase “gifts of the Holy Spirit” could rightly be applied to a plethora of workings of the Holy Spirit, beginning with creation and continuing with the great variety of actions of the Holy Spirit throughout history and down to our own day. And yet, this needs some explaining. In Catholic theology, the phrase “gifts of the Holy Spirit” most often refers to the seven attributes of the Messiah proclaimed by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 11:1–2. This is how Yves Congar translates the passage from the Latin Vulgate:

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse
 and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
 And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him,
 The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
 The spirit of counsel and might,

The spirit of knowledge and piety
and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.⁶⁴

Congar notes that in the Western church *until* the thirteenth century “gifts of the Holy Spirit” could refer to the Pauline charisms and other workings of grace, such as virtues. Around 1235, a French theologian by the name of Philip the Chancellor first distinguished virtues, charisms, and the “gifts of the Holy Spirit” listed in Isaiah 11:1–2. This view was never a dogma of the Catholic Church, but it was “enshrined” in Catholic thought when St. Thomas Aquinas related these seven gifts in Isaiah to corresponding theological and “cardinal” virtues as follows:

Theological Virtues	Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa. 11:1–2)
Faith	Knowledge, Understanding
Hope	Fear (of the Lord)
Charity	Wisdom
Cardinal (Moral) Virtues	
Justice	Piety
Prudence	Counsel
Temperance	Fear (of the Lord)
Fortitude	Fortitude ⁶⁵

St. Thomas saw the gifts of the Spirit as being at the service of these virtues, so that the virtues could be practiced perfectly.⁶⁶

However, Franciscan theologian Bl. John Duns Scotus rejected the specific distinction between the gifts and the virtues, and “the Council of Trent was careful not to condemn Duns Scotus’ position.”⁶⁷ Then, St. Bonaventure, another great Franciscan of the thirteenth century, developed his own commentary on the “gifts of the Spirit” from Isaiah as manifestations of God’s grace. He did this in a treatise that he called “Conferences [or “Collations”] on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” In his first conference on grace, Bonaventure says that “grace descends upon rational minds through the Incarnate Word, the Crucified Word, and the Word operating through the Holy Spirit.”⁶⁸ Referring to the third channel of grace, Bonaventure quotes Titus 3:5–7 (that “he saved us through the bath of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit; whom he has abundantly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior”), and then remarks: “Dearly beloved! It is the Holy Spirit who is the giver of graces and the love proceeding from the Father and the Son. Consequently, whatever the Father accomplishes and the Son offers is nothing without the Holy Spirit. For He unites us to the Father and the Son.”⁶⁹ Bonaventure begins his conferences on the gifts of the Holy Spirit noting that

while there are “seven sevenfold items” (seven sacraments, exercises of justice, works of mercy, beatitudes, “qualities,” virtues, and gifts of the Holy Spirit), he will speak of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, starting with the “last gift,” fear of the Lord, and ending with the highest gift (related to charity by Aquinas), wisdom,⁷⁰ for “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9:10).⁷¹

St. Bonaventure’s designation of the seven messianic attributes of Isaiah 11:1–2 as “the gifts of the Holy Spirit” reinforced these as *the* seven gifts of the Spirit in Catholic Tradition, though, as we shall see, St. Paul’s list of gifts (charisms) of the Spirit were not forgotten.

Catholics frequently pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are particularly associated with the sacrament of confirmation, but which must deepen and grow throughout a Christian’s life. It is these gifts that conform us to the one who possesses the fullness of these gifts, as Isaiah prophesied: Jesus. A beautiful example of Catholic prayer for the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the conclusion of St. Bonaventure’s treatise *The Tree of Life*, who is Jesus. This prayer is included in the book’s appendix.

The Sending of the Spirit in the Sacraments: Baptism

The Holy Spirit is the Gift of God who is God. When and how is the Holy Spirit given? To the church, at Pentecost.

Today, to the one who comes into the Church, the answer is, at baptism, as St. Peter first proclaimed at Pentecost to those who witnessed the first sending of the Spirit: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ . . . and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Act 2:38). John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the one who would “baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matt. 3:11; Lk. 3:16; cf. Mk. 1:8; John 1:33). Pope John Paul II explained that the fire refers to the cleansing purification of the Spirit, and that Jesus’s passion and death was a “baptism of fire,” which he longed to receive (see Lk. 12:50), in order to cast this fire on the earth—the fire of the Holy Spirit. That fire came to the earth at Pentecost, when the words of Jesus after his resurrection were fulfilled: “John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5). Pope John Paul then relates all this to the sacrament of baptism:

In the light of Pentecost we can also understand better the significance of Baptism as a first sacrament, in so far as it is a work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself had referred to it in his conversation with Nicodemus: “Truly,

truly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (Jn 3:5). In this same conversation Jesus refers also to his future death on the cross (cf. Jn 3:14–15) and to his heavenly glory (cf. Jn 3:13). It is the baptism of [Christ's] sacrifice, from which the baptism by water, the first sacrament of the Church, received power to effect her birth from the Holy Spirit and to open to mankind the "entrance to God's kingdom." Indeed, as St. Paul writes to the Romans; "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:3–4). This baptismal walk in newness of life began on Pentecost Day in Jerusalem.⁷²

Pope Benedict XVI similarly reflected on the relationship between Pentecost and "baptism in the Holy Spirit" in a reflection given on Pentecost 2008:

In fact, Jesus' entire mission aimed at giving the Spirit of God to men and women and at baptizing them in his regenerative "bath" (cf. Titus 3:5). This was brought about with his glorification (cf. Jn 7:39), that is, through his death

and Resurrection: then the Spirit of God was poured out in superabundance, like a cascade capable of purifying every heart, extinguishing the fire of evil and kindling the flame of divine love in the world. . . .

Thus Pentecost is in a special way the Baptism of the Church which carries out her universal mission starting from the roads of Jerusalem with the miraculous preaching in humanity's different tongues. In this Baptism of the Holy Spirit the personal and community dimension, the "I" of the disciple and the "we" of the Church, are inseparable.

The Holy Spirit consecrates the person and at the same time makes him or her a living member of the Mystical Body of Christ, sharing in the mission of witnessing to his love.⁷³

These reflections from two recent popes identify "baptism in the Holy Spirit," through which the Spirit is given to the individual, with the sacrament of baptism. Sometimes in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is given *before* baptism, as in the case of Cornelius and his household in Acts 10, but Peter's response makes it clear that he understood that the sending of the Spirit and water baptism were meant to go together: "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" (Acts 10:47).

According to Catholic teaching, the gift of the Spirit imparted at baptism cleanses from all sin, enables the Holy Spirit to “take up residence” in the baptized person as in a temple (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; cf. John 2:21), and incorporates the baptized into the body of Christ, the Church (Acts 2:41–42; Eph. 2:18–22; 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 12:13). Although Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI speak of being “baptized in the Spirit” and as occurring in sacramental (water) baptism, that does not imply that this biblical phrase can *only* refer to this sacramental sending (and receiving) of the Holy Spirit. This book’s final chapter, on the Holy Spirit in the Church today, will explore this phrase and its meaning as understood and used by Catholics in the contemporary charismatic renewal movement.

The Sending of the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments: Confirmation

The main theological problem of confirmation is explaining how it is distinct from baptism because (as we just discussed) the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in a person through the sacrament of baptism. While the outward sign of baptism is immersion or pouring of water, confirmation is conferred by the imposition or laying on of hands (CCC 1288), which we see in Acts 8:17 and 19:6. An anointing with perfumed oil was added early on to the laying on of hands, recalling that Jesus

was anointed “with the Holy Spirit and with power” (Acts 10:38), which is why the followers of Christ are “Christians” or “anointed ones” (CCC 1289).

“Anointing” is a rich biblical concept that reflects many aspects of the Holy Spirit’s actions. Oil in biblical times symbolized joy and abundance. Anointing with oil resulted in cleansing, making athletes limber, healing, and making people “radiant with beauty, health, and strength” (CCC 1293). In short, the grace of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation (called “chrismation” in the East) is a completion of the grace of the Spirit in baptism, bringing about a greater “fullness” of the Holy Spirit’s action.

Another biblical term the Catholic Church associates with confirmation is to be “sealed” with the Holy Spirit. Pope John Paul II refers to a number of these texts:

We “were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the first installment of our inheritance” (Eph 1:13–14). To the Corinthians Paul wrote: “But the one who gives us security with you in Christ and who anointed us is God; he has also put his seal upon us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a first installment” (2 Cor 1:21–22; cf. 1 Jn 2:20, 27; 3:24). The letter to the Ephesians adds the significant admonition not to grieve the Holy Spirit with which we “were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30). From

the Acts of the Apostles we can deduce that the sacrament of confirmation was administered through the imposition of hands after baptism “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (cf. Acts 8:15–17; 19:5–6).⁷⁴

The *Catechism* notes that a seal is a mark of ownership: “This seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service forever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial” (CCC 1296). In the Roman (Latin rite) Catholic Church, confirmation is conferred by the laying on of hands and anointing with the words, “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit”; the Byzantine rite uses the formula “. . . the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1300).⁷⁵

Most explanations of confirmation focus on the Holy Spirit being given through this sacrament for power to witness, to live and to serve as Christians in the world. Some theologians find a parallel to the relationship of baptism and confirmation with the Paschal feast and Pentecost: “Baptism absorbs us into the death and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6:3–11), and confirmation means life through the fruit of the Pasch, which is the sending of the Spirit by the Lord.”⁷⁶ Another analogy is between the presence of the Holy Spirit in Jesus at his incarnation and the Spirit’s descent upon him at his baptism at the Jordan. As Congar explains:

In the same way, baptism makes us be conceived and born as sons of God within the Church, and confirmation enables us to participate in Christ's messianic anointing. . . .

It has even been suggested—quite rightly—that at confirmation it should be stated that the candidate participates in those offices of Christ himself that were so frequently mentioned during the Second Vatican Council—the offices of king, priest and prophet . . . the Second Vatican Council declared: “Bound more intimately to the Church by the sacrament of confirmation, they (believers) are endowed by the Holy Spirit with special strength. Hence, they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith both by word and deed as true witnesses of Christ” (*Lumen Gentium*, 11).⁷⁷

Thus, through the sacrament of confirmation the faithful are equipped for their apostolate (what they are sent by Christ to do). However, to carry out the apostolate, St. Paul explains that each Christian is given special gifts or “charisms” to equip the person to fulfill their mission or apostolate on earth by God's power, and not simply through his or her own human abilities.

The following section will discuss these “special gifts,” but one question that recurs in present-day Catholicism is *when* the sacrament of confirmation should be conferred. In the

early church, adult converts were baptized, were confirmed, and received the Eucharist for the first time together as their initiation into the Church, usually at the Easter Vigil liturgy. However, with the increase of infant baptisms and the practice in the Latin Church of the bishop's confirming the baptized, the rites of baptism and confirmation became separated in time. It is beyond the scope of this book to present the reasons for the appropriate age of confirmation, since in the Catholic Church today infants or young children are rarely confirmed when they are baptized and the age of confirmation varies. The salient point is that the sending of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation is a vital part of Christian initiation, imparting the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit and empowering the confirmed person to live a life of public witness to their faith in Jesus Christ.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

In the first centuries of Christianity, “gifts of the Holy Spirit” referred to the charisms (Greek *charismata/pneumatika*) listed by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:7–10, 28; Romans 12:6–8; and Ephesians 4:11–12. These gifts—we will call them “charisms” to avoid confusion with the “gifts” discussed earlier from Isaiah—are essential “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12). Could the church of Jesus Christ exist without apostles,

prophets, evangelists, and teachers? Could it continue the ministry of Jesus without the gifts of discernment, healing, and miracles? Would Christians be guided by the Holy Spirit without words of wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, and those with extraordinary faith? Could God be worshiped “in spirit and truth” (John 4:23–24) without prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit, including prayer in “various kinds of tongues” (1 Cor. 12:10; cf. Acts 10:46; 19:6)?

St. Paul did not think so; for him the church is the body of Christ, with each “member”—each Christian—“given the manifestation of the Spirit [*pneumatikon*] for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:7). He exhorts: “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *let us use them . . .*” (Rom. 12:6), “when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love” (Eph. 4:16). The only proper use of these gifts is in love—charity—which is the meaning of St. Paul’s famous hymn to love in 1 Corinthians 13. Read in context, particularly the immediate context of 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, we see that this passage is an instruction about the proper use of the charisms. If St. Paul could not imagine a church, the body of Christ, without the Spirit’s pouring out charisms in abundance to equip and enrich her, neither could St. Luke. The Acts of the Apostles, written by Luke, show the charisms “at work” through the action of the apostles,

prophets, teachers, evangelists, servants (deacons), and “ordinary” Christians who preach, teach, serve, heal, work miracles, prophesy, and speak in tongues. The church of the New Testament is clearly “charismatic” in the Pauline sense: filled with the charisms of the Holy Spirit and dependent upon them for her life and ministry.

Catholic Understanding of the Charisms

What happened to those “charisms” as the church made her journey through history? They did not “disappear,” but became part of the life of the church in different ways. The apostolic charism was exercised by the bishops, who continued the ministry of the apostles. Ordained ministers carried on ministries of preaching, teaching, service, pastoral care (with words of knowledge and wisdom), and sometimes healing and even miracles, especially through the sacraments. Charisms did not disappear, but were “institutionalized,” that is, became part of the official ministries of the church, especially those of bishops, priests, and deacons—although “charismatic” figures who emerged later, like the “monks” or ascetics, were also recognized as having spiritual gifts of various sorts for the building up of the church and the edification of the faithful.

Occasionally movements in the church arose that called for and exemplified a renewal of the charisms or of a

particular charism. Montanism, named for its Phrygian priest-leader Montanus, was also called “the new prophecy” because it focused on the renewal of this gift among the faithful, as well as advocating more fasting and prayer than normal practice. The refusal of Montanus and his followers to submit their movement to the pastoral judgments of the bishops resulted in the movement’s going into schism from the catholic (universal) church, and unfortunately led to suspicion about charisms being exercised freely outside the formal structures and offices of the church. Likewise, the liturgy of the church became more formal, leaving less room for the freer exercise of charisms in communal worship that we see in 1 Corinthians 14, either by the faithful or by the presider.

For example, a very early Christian document, “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles” (the *Didache*), lists some “set” prayers for the Eucharistic liturgy, but also notes that if the presider is a prophet, he can give thanks as he wishes.⁷⁸

As the history of the church went on, the Pauline charisms were increasingly associated with unique and special gifts or manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the lives of saints, rather than as gifts possessed by all the faithful. It was the saints who had powerful gifts of preaching and teaching, healing and miracles, prophetic gifts, the ability to “read hearts” (i.e., words of knowledge), and so on. The consistent

and extraordinary manifestations of gifts such as healing, miracles, and prophecy became signs indicating sanctity and were incorporated into the Catholic Church's process of identifying saints (i.e., the canonization process). Or, as stated earlier, the Church understood certain charisms (anointed preaching, pastoral gifts, service) as given to those in ecclesial office through ordination. The Pauline concept of charisms given freely to everyone (1 Cor. 12:7) by the Spirit as he wishes (1 Cor. 12:11) seemed to have been forgotten.

Fortunately, because the Holy Spirit renews and refreshes the fullness of the Church's inheritance, there have been various times in the history of the Catholic Church where the broader, biblical understanding of the charisms has been restored. This has often occurred through saints and renewal movements, such as the thirteenth-century "poverty movement" led by Sts. Francis, Clare, and Dominic, through which many charisms were restored to the Church among their many followers. The Catholic mystics of the late middle ages and lay movements such as the Brethren of the Common Life also manifested a broader presence and exercise of charisms, as did the religious orders and lay groups (such as St. Philip Neri's Oratory) that emerged as part of the Catholic Reformation of the sixteenth century.

As a statement of the presence and broader use of charisms in the Church in recent times, nothing can surpass the

teaching on the charisms found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. These were included first in “The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” (*Lumen Gentium*). When an early draft of the document contained no mention of the charisms in its description of the Church’s “constitution,” Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens of Belgium gave a notable speech titled “The Charismatic Dimension of the Church,”⁷⁹ which led to the inclusion of the biblical teaching on charisms in this conciliar document:

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the People, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (cf. Cor. 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church, as it is written, “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit” (1 Cor. 12:7). Whether these charisms be very remarkable or more simple and widely diffused, they are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the Church. Extraordinary gifts are not to be rashly desired, nor is it from them that the fruits of apostolic labors are to be presumptuously expected.

Those who have charge over the Church should judge the genuineness and proper use of these gifts through their office not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good (cf. 1 Thess 5:12 and 19–21). (*Lumen Gentium* 12, cf. Vatican II, “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity” [*Apostolicam Actuositatem*], 3)

The Second Vatican Council restored the biblical teaching on the charisms in magisterial Catholic teaching. It is not surprising that two years after the close of the council a “charismatic renewal” began in the Catholic Church that renewed the widespread exercise of the charisms, from healing to speaking in tongues, across a broad spectrum of Catholic laity, religious, and clergy. It is estimated that since its inception about 120 million Catholics have been actively involved, at least for a time, in this “charismatic renewal,”⁸⁰ and certainly many other Catholics who do not identify themselves with this movement have discovered and exercised their own charisms as a result of the council’s teaching on the charisms. Bl. Pope John Paul II on more than one occasion stated that, according to Vatican II, the charisms are *coessential* with the sacraments and the hierarchical ministry of the Church in imparting grace and holiness to the faithful. On Pentecost of 1998, addressing a half million pilgrims gathered in Rome from the new “ecclesial movements,” he declared:

With the Second Vatican Council, the Comforter recently gave the Church, which according to the Fathers is the place "where the Spirit flourishes" (CCC, no. 749), a renewed Pentecost, instilling a new and unforeseen dynamism.

Whenever the Spirit intervenes, he leaves people astonished. He brings about events of amazing newness; he radically changes persons and history. This was the unforgettable experience of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council during which, under the guidance of the same Spirit, the Church rediscovered the charismatic dimension as one of her constitutive elements: "It is not only through the sacraments and the ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the people, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (cf. 1 Cor 12:11), he also distributes special graces, among the faithful of every rank. . . . He makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church" (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 12). You are tangible proof of the Spirit's outpouring. The institutional and charismatic aspects are co-essential as it were to the Church's constitution. They contribute although differently to the life, renewal and sanctification of God's people. It is from this providential rediscovery of the Church's charismatic dimension that, before and after the Council,

a remarkable pattern of growth has been established for ecclesial movements and new communities.⁸¹

To be sure, the teaching on the charisms we find in St. Paul has yet to be fully presented to and understood by most Catholics, at least in the United States. For example, in Year B for the twenty-sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Numbers 11:25–29 ends with Moses saying: “Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets! Would that the Lord might bestow his Spirit on them all!” The Gospel of the same day speaks of someone driving out demons in Jesus’s name, with the apostles expressing concern because the person was not one of their group. Jesus, however, says that anyone who does a mighty deed in his name cannot be “against us” (cf. Mark 9:38–43). How many Catholics are taught the Sunday these passages are read that Moses’s wish has been fulfilled in the New Covenant and that the gifts of prophecy, casting out demons, healing, and the other charisms listed by St. Paul have been lavished upon the Church, if we only open ourselves to the Holy Spirit and ask for them? Isn’t this what John Paul II was asking all Christians to do when he said on Pentecost 1998: “Open yourselves docilely to the gifts of the Spirit! Accept gratefully and obediently the charisms which the Spirit never ceases to bestow on us!”?

In spite of the teaching of Vatican II and recent popes, and despite the outpouring of the charisms among millions of

Catholics after the council, most Catholics in the West are still unaware of the charisms and their importance for the Church to operate as the body of Christ, guided by the prophetic word and empowered with real spiritual power for ministry and evangelization. Most Catholics think of charisms as no more than natural talents or goodwill directed to the service to others. These are certainly good things, but they fall far short of what St. Paul and Catholic Tradition teaches about the charisms of the Holy Spirit. Isn't it strange that when the phrase "gifts of the Holy Spirit" is used, most Catholics think of the Old Testament list of gifts from the prophet Isaiah, and *not* the New Testament gifts that St. Paul says all Christians possess and are essential for the life of the church of Jesus Christ? Evidently, the renewal of the charismatic dimension of Catholic life has barely begun.

Finally, in Galatians 5:22–23, St. Paul emphasizes another manifestation of the Holy Spirit as an essential characteristic of the Christian life, the "fruit" of the Holy Spirit. Jesus taught that whoever remained in him, the vine, would bear much fruit (John 15:8, 16). The "fruit" of the Holy Spirit are character traits that mark a Christian life clearly rooted in and founded on Jesus Christ. Certainly every Catholic needs to foster the growth of those "fruits" to full maturity, which is a lifelong process. The "end" or result of the presence of this mature fruit is eternal life. It is notable that

the *first* “fruit” of the Spirit listed is *love*, which is the deepest identity of the Holy Spirit himself, and of God, the Blessed Trinity (1 John 4:8, 16).