

The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Third edition

by Sherry Weddell

Helping
Catholics
succeed
at a primary
discipline
of the
Christian life:

discerning

developing

and using

their spiritual gifts (charisms)

To each is given the
manifestation of the Spirit for
the common good. To one is
given through the Spirit the
speaking of wisdom, and to
another the speaking of
knowledge according to the
same Spirit, to another faith
by the same Spirit, to another
gifts if healing by the one
Spirit, to another the working of
miracles, to another
prophecy, to another the
ability to distinguish
between spirits, to another
various kinds of tongues, to
another the interpretation of
tongues. . . . For just as the
body is one and has many
members, and all the members
of the body, though many, are one
body, so it is with Christ.

-I Corinthians 12:7-10,12

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
A Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts	5
The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory	9
<i>How to take and score the inventory</i>	10
<i>Inventory questions</i>	11
<i>Answer sheet</i>	20
<i>I've taken the inventory. Now what do I do?</i>	21
The Quick and Catholic Charism Handbook	23
References	56
Appendix	57
Answer Sheet Key	60

Introduction

About the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory

There are many inventories on the market, designed to help Christians discern the gifts that God has given them, but, until now, all have been created by and for Protestant Christians. After using Protestant inventories to help hundreds of Catholics through the gifts discernment process, it became increasingly clear to me that not only did the Protestant inventories fail to reflect Catholic teaching on the charisms, they often did not draw successfully on the lived experience of the average Catholic. I was also aware that some were treating the discernment of the gifts of lay Christians primarily as a more efficient way to recruit and coordinate volunteer effort within the parish, rather than as a means to empower apostles for the evangelization of the world, as called for by the Second Vatican Council. It was clear that there was a need for an instrument with a truly Catholic perspective.

When I created the first edition of this inventory, I was greatly indebted to the work of many Protestant experts and teachers, especially C. Peter Wagner, who graciously gave me permission to modify his Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire for a Catholic audience. For the first edition, I also drew upon the original Houts Inventory of Spiritual Gifts, The Trenton Spiritual Gifts Analysis, and the Wesley Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire.

I rewrote most of the material for the second and third editions. This edition is rooted in what I and my many collaborators have learned over the past 8 years as we have listened to thousands of Catholics talk about their experiences of being used by God. The third edition reflects Catholic teaching as contained especially in the documents of Vatican II, recent papal teaching on the role of the laity, and the universal Catechism of the Catholic Church. It also draws upon the writings of the early Church Fathers and the experience of saints and faithful Catholics throughout the centuries.

Of course, this inventory and the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Discernment Program was not created in chemical isolation. I am

*"There can be no
perfect virtue,
none that bears
fruit, unless it
be exercised by
means of our
neighbor."*

St. Catherine of Siena
(1347-1380)

*"Blessed
be God
in all his
gifts."*

The constitution of the
Order of Preachers
(Dominicans), 1228

indebted to the scintillating administrative, editing, and artistic gifts of Virginia King, Sharon Fox, Sherry Curp. Mike & Teresa Drollman, Mark Shea, Tommer Peterson and Anthony Shefter whose contributions vastly improved the inventory. Lynn Isaacs, prophet, helper, and teacher, was a great source of encouragement and co-taught many a workshop in the early days. I would also like to thank Bud Heckel who prays for me on a daily basis. Thanks to Ron Ryan, who suggested the whole idea in the first place. I owe much to the faith and support of Virginia King and all at Western Washington Catholic Charismatic Renewal who gave me the opportunity to teach and write about gifts discernment for three years.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the Western Province of the Dominican Order and to its provincial, Fr. Daniel Syverstad, who has supported the work of the Catherine of Siena Institute so generously. Finally, it is a joy to acknowledge how much I owe to Fr. Michael Sweeney, O.P., who has vetted, encouraged, challenged, and championed me in a way possible only for an encourager steeped in St. Thomas. I have been blessed by his friendship and the support of many in Blessed Sacrament Parish in Seattle.

It is my prayer that this inventory will be a useful tool, enabling many Catholics to discover the charisms they have been given, in order that they might experience the joy of finding and filling their unique place in the mission of Christ's body, the Church. Blessed be God in all his gifts!

Sherry Weddell
Colorado Springs, Colorado
January 2002

A Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts

What is at the heart of life as a Catholic?

Following Jesus. (CCC, 519-521.)* Like the first disciples, we may struggle as we start to try to follow Jesus. We may be scared. We may not know how to start. We may resist letting God enter certain areas of our lives. Where can we find the courage, the love, the wisdom, the power to follow Jesus as a disciple? From exactly the same source as the first Christians—from the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Jesus called the Holy Spirit the “paraclete,” which means “the one who is called to one’s side” or “consoler” or “advocate.” The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, who awakens faith in us and communicates the life of God to us (CCC, 684). “No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:3).

While Jesus was both fully God and fully human, Jesus’ humanity was entirely anointed with the Holy Spirit in a unique way. It was the power of the Holy Spirit working through Jesus’ human nature that enabled him to heal and to work miracles. It was the Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead (CCC, 695). Jesus promised the same Spirit to those who followed him, who would enable his disciples to be his witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8).

How does the Holy Spirit enter my life?

The sacraments of initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—are among the most powerful ways through which the Holy Spirit enters our lives. When we are baptized, we are made temples where the Holy Spirit dwells (CCC, 1265) and are given “the power to live and act under the prompting of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Holy Spirit” (CCC, 1266). The sacrament of Confirmation brings the grace received in Baptism to completion (CCC, 1304). Confirmation

*“Whether
extraordinary
or simple
and humble,
charisms are
graces of the
Holy Spirit
which directly or
indirectly benefit
the Church,
ordered as they are
to her building up,
to the good of men,
and to the needs
of the world.”
CCC, 799**

**Catechism of the
Catholic Church,
1994 edition.*

*"There is
a general rule
concerning all
special graces
granted to any
human being.
Whenever the
divine favor
chooses someone
to receive
a special grace,
or to accept a
lofty vocation,
God adorns
the person chosen
with all the gifts
of the Spirit
needed to fulfill
the task at hand."*

St. Bernardine of Siena
(1380-1444)

"increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit within us," and "gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ" (CCC, 1303). The Eucharist completes Christian initiation (CCC, 1322). In the sacramental liturgy, the Holy Spirit puts us into communion with Christ (CCC, 688).

Although all baptized Christians have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit, usually the full life-changing power of the Spirit's presence is first manifested when a Christian undergoes a spiritual awakening and begins to seriously live his or her faith. This spiritual awakening is often called by different names, such as "conversion" or "renewal" or the "Baptism in the Holy Spirit." It may happen suddenly or gradually, but the end result is the same: a Christian begins to seek God's presence, desires to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and in so doing, opens himself or herself to be used by the Holy Spirit.

Christians also have on-going access to the Holy Spirit in a number of ways. The Holy Spirit enters our life when we read the Bible, study authoritative Church teaching, worship God through the liturgy, or receive the sacraments. We can also open our lives to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit through personal prayer, by exercising our God-given charisms (spiritual gifts), through living our individual vocations, as well as through the witness of the saints (CCC, 688).

What is a charism or spiritual gift?

Charism is simply the Greek word used in the New Testament for "favor" or "gratuitous gift." Charisms, or spiritual gifts, are special abilities given to Christians by the Holy Spirit to enable them to be powerful channels of God's love and redeeming presence in the world. Whether extraordinary or ordinary, charisms are to be used in charity or service to build up the Church (CCC, 2003).

How do charisms or spiritual gifts differ from natural talents?

Charisms, or spiritual gifts, differ from natural talents in two important ways. Charisms are not "in-born" or inherited from our parents, but are given to us by the Holy Spirit, whom we received through the sacraments of initiation—through Baptism and Confirmation. Charisms are also supernaturally empowered. They are focused outward and enable Christians to bear results for the Kingdom of God above and beyond our normal human abilities.

As disciples, we offer our entire selves, including our personalities, natural talents, education, life experience, and background to God to be used for his purposes. Our natural talents can become wonderful

tools for God's purposes, and sometimes an already existing natural gift is transformed by the Holy Spirit into a supernaturally empowered charism. But when we serve God, we are not limited to just the gifts with which we were born! Some charisms may seem "extraordinary" (such as prophecy, healing, or discernment of spirits) and others quite "ordinary" (such as administration, service, hospitality, or mercy), but all charisms are supernaturally empowered. We use our charisms together with our natural talents and all that we are to serve God and our neighbor.

What is the difference between the seven "gifts of the Holy Spirit" found in Isaiah 11, the "fruits of the Holy Spirit" listed in Galatians 5, and spiritual gifts (charisms)?

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 "Christ-likeness" necessary for the effective use of our charisms (CCC, 1830-1832). Charisms, on the other hand, are gifts given to us to give away. Charisms are always focused outward; they are especially empowered ways by which God's love and goodness reaches our neighbor through us.

How many charisms are there?

We don't know. There are three primary lists of gifts in the New Testament, in Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. We don't have any reason to believe that these lists are meant to be exhaustive. The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory covers 24 of the most common charisms, including most of those listed in St. Paul's letters. Two other charisms are described in the Appendix beginning on page 57. There are additional charisms that are not covered in this inventory at all.

Are all baptized Christians given charisms?

Yes, according to both the New Testament (Ephesians 4) and the teaching of the Catholic Church (CCC, 951).

Some charisms seem to be "temporary" (that is, they are given for a single time only) and some charisms seem to be given on a "permanent" basis. Any Christian may be used by God in an unusual or unique way at a given point in time. For instance, a Christian without a gift of healing might be used by God to heal in a particular situation.

"Charisms are to be accepted with gratitude by the person who receives them and by all members of the Church as well. They are a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit and are used in full conformity with authentic promptings of this same Spirit, that is, in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms."
CCC, 800

"It is in this sense that discernment of charisms is always necessary. No charism is exempt from being referred and submitted to the Church's shepherds. Their office is not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but 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."
CCC, 801

"Temporary" charisms cannot be further developed and so are not covered by the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory.

In addition, all Christians are given one or more "long-term" or permanent charisms, empowered ways in which God uses us over and over again throughout life. "Long-term" charisms are the kind of spiritual gift that can be discerned by use of the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory, can be deliberately developed, and should be taken into account when we try to discern our vocation(s) in life.

Is there a connection between understanding what charisms I have been given and discerning my vocation or mission in life?

Every Christian has a vocation or "mission" in life, a work of love through which each individual is called to follow Jesus and for which each individual was created (Ephesians 4: 7-16). Since we're all on a mission from God, we all need the power of God to be able to accomplish our mission! Charisms are both *tools* given to disciples so that they are able to accomplish their mission and important *clues* as to what their mission in life might be.

If I have a spiritual gift or charism, why don't I know it?

Permanent or long-term charisms need to be discovered and developed, just like natural gifts. The reason most Catholics don't know about their charisms is because they haven't been taught about the need to discern and develop them. Since the Second Vatican Council, there has been a greater emphasis in official Church teaching on the individual mission or vocation of every baptized Christian and on the role of the Holy Spirit and of charisms in enabling Christians to live their vocations effectively. Once we recognize the need to discern and exercise our charisms, the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory can be a useful tool to help us in that process.

How can the inventory help me discern my charisms?

The inventory can help you pinpoint the best places to begin your discernment. Discerning our charisms is a process that takes time. Becoming clear about the gifts we have been given can take weeks or months, since we are seeking to understand the ways in which God seems to regularly use us for his Kingdom.

The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory

It is very important to remember: **Taking the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory is only a beginning step in a long process!** The inventory is designed to help you begin to identify patterns in your life, but it is intended to be used only as part of a more extensive discernment process.

Getting a high score in "encouragement" or "prophecy" doesn't necessarily mean that you have actually been given that charism. It is indicating that you may have that charism or one like it and is simply identifying an area for further discernment.

*"Therefore, you
blessed ones. . .
ask your Father,
ask your Lord,
for the special gift
of his inheritance,
the distributed
charisms. . . .*

*Ask, he says, and
you shall receive. In
fact, you have
sought and
you have found,
you have knocked,
and it has been
opened to you."*

**Tertullian's treatise
On Baptism (c. 200)**

How to take and score the inventory:

Find the answer sheet on page 20. I strongly recommend that you do not remove the answer sheet from the booklet, but make a copy of page 20 and use the copy for your answers. If you do this, you will always be able to make more copies of the answer sheet. (If you need more answer sheets, turn to the back cover for ordering information.)

Follow the inventory directions at the top of page 11 and mark your answers on the answer sheet. Read the questions carefully. The questions are to be read literally. If you have no experience with something described in a question, don't worry about it. Just mark "0" for that question and go on. Everyone will answer "0" to some questions.

Answer on the basis of what has actually happened in your life to this point, not what you wish were true, or think should be true, or hope will be true in the future. Do not spend too much time pondering your answers, but just put down your spontaneous response to the question.

When you are done, add up the five columns ACROSS the answer sheet for each line (there are 24 lines) and put the total for each line in the blank space under TOTAL. The possible total scores range from 0 to 15.

There is no significance to the absolute numbers by themselves. Those who score higher on the inventory are not more gifted than those with lower scores. Do not compare your scores with those of someone else. High scores often reflect an out-going personality or a greater life experience and self-confidence, but they say nothing about a person's giftedness. The only result that is significant for you is your own.

To understand your results, circle your six highest scores (in case of a tie, include all the tied top scores) and then turn to page 60 and hold your answer sheet so that your first score at the top of the page lines up with the word "Administration." All the rest of your scores will then line up with the name of the appropriate charism. Look at the areas where you score highest. These are areas of possible giftedness and are probably the best places to begin further discernment.

When you have finished, turn to page 21 and read "I've taken the inventory. Now what do I do?"

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then **mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet** as follows:

0 = NEVER 1 = LITTLE 2 = SOME 3 = OFTEN

1. When I find myself in a disorganized situation, I help things become better organized.
2. Others have told me that I seem unusually fulfilled and content as a single person.
3. One of the most satisfying ways to express my Christian faith is to create physical objects that are useful or beautiful.
4. I have accurately "recognized" whether a person's words or actions were of divine, demonic or merely human origin.
5. People tell me that I am a remarkably effective listener or counselor who is able to comfort and heal others by talking with them.
6. Talking about Catholicism with those who have little knowledge of it is one of the most fulfilling and important things I can do.
7. I have trusted God to bring the seemingly impossible to pass and have seen God provide in a remarkable way.
8. It gives me great joy to give as much as I possibly can to those in need.
9. I have seen God heal the sick in a remarkable way through my treatment, care, and/or prayers.
10. It is much more fun and effective for me to work in the background and help some one else succeed than to be "up-front" myself.
11. I know that hospitality is an important part of living as a Christian and I do whatever I can to make guests and visitors feel welcome.
12. Others have told me that my prayers for them have been answered in wonderful or even extraordinary ways.
13. I read and study a great deal in order to understand the universe God has made.
14. One of the most helpful and fulfilling things that I do as a Christian is to find ways in which people can work together to change things for the better.
15. I am drawn to and work well with people who are ignored or rejected by society.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

0 = NEVER 1 = LITTLE 2 = SOME 3 = OFTEN

16. People of a different race or culture have told me that they feel very comfortable with me and have been spiritually nourished by my presence and friendship.
17. Singing or playing a musical instrument is one of my favorite ways to pray.
18. I understand the importance of Christian community and do everything I can to make it possible for Christians to spend time together sharing their experiences of following Jesus.
19. I know that it is vital that God's people respond to his call today with their whole hearts; I do whatever I can to make this clear to other Christians.
20. One of the most important ways I express my faith as a Christian is by doing the practical work that it takes to make good things happen.
21. People tell me that I have helped them learn new concepts or skills that made a real difference in their lives.
22. I could live more comfortably, but choose not to in order to live like the poor and identify with Jesus.
23. I love the experiential wisdom of the Catholic tradition and enjoy solving practical problems by applying spiritual truths in creative ways.
24. I love to use words creatively and have been told that I am an unusually gifted writer.
25. Providing the planning and coordination that it takes to make good things happen is a very fulfilling way for me to live my faith and serve others.
26. Being single is a positive state of life that enables me to serve God and others more freely.
27. I am particularly good at solving problems related to the creation, repair, or maintenance of material objects.
28. My own faith has been strengthened when I have "sensed" the Spirit of God resting on or dwelling in certain people, places, or things.
29. People talk to me when they are troubled or in need of direction and have told me that they have been greatly comforted or helped as a result.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

0 = NEVER 1 = LITTLE 2 = SOME 3 = OFTEN

30. Non-Christians or non-practicing Christians have told me that I have helped them develop a living faith in Christ and his Church.
31. Other people have observed that I am unusually willing to take risks and to step out into the unknown because I have a deep trust in God's love and provision.
32. I give money and things freely to others because God has given so much to me.
33. I have prayed for and/or cared for others and unexpected healing has occurred as a result.
34. Using my gifts to help another person accomplish something significant is a creative experience for me; I have been told that my assistance makes a big difference.
35. People tell me that they have been encouraged and even healed because I have invited them to spend time in my home or with my family and/or friends.
36. I have sensed a "call" to pray intensely for people or places that I didn't know well and have prayed for that situation until I felt that I was "done."
37. I love the rich intellectual heritage of Catholicism, which is an important source of nourishment for my intellectual and spiritual life.
38. Others have told me that I am a person of unusual vision and direction and have worked with me to make a vision happen.
39. I identify with the pain of those who suffer or are oppressed and seek to comfort them with the love of Jesus through my actions.
40. I move freely outside the culture of my childhood in order to share Christ with more people.
41. I am musically gifted; my ability to write or perform music has delighted and nourished others and given me much satisfaction.
42. People have told me that they have been spiritually encouraged and strengthened by being part of a small Christian group that I facilitated.
43. I have known what God wanted to say to certain people in particular situations and have been told that others were encouraged or moved to action because I shared the message I had been given.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

0 = NEVER 1 = LITTLE 2 = SOME 3 = OFTEN

44. I'd rather be active and do something practical for God or other people than just sit around talking.
45. I enjoy spending time learning new things and then figuring out how to help others learn them as well.
46. I am readily accepted by the poor because I live simply.
47. I make good practical use of information or ideas that I learn and have helped others do the same in their own lives.
48. Writing is a good way to pray and is one of my favorite spiritual exercises.
49. I have been told that my ability to organize has enabled others to better accomplish a complex task that served God and people.
50. I readily identify with the celibate lifestyle of many of the saints.
51. I enjoy making beautiful or useful things, especially when I know that it benefits others and gives glory to God.
52. I have sensed that a person, place, or thing was affected by an evil spirit and have had this sense confirmed by later events or other evidence.
53. Individuals who talk to me about their lives tell me that they grow personally and spiritually as a result of our time together.
54. I have shared how God's presence and love has blessed my life in a way that is meaningful or intriguing to non-Christians or non-practicing Christians.
55. I am very confident that God answers prayer and will provide all that I need to serve others and fulfill my God-given mission in life.
56. I give sacrificially when confronted with the urgent needs of other people, the Church, or groups that work for worthy causes.
57. Others have told me that God has used me to heal them of serious physical or mental illness when the chances for recovery were small.
58. Other people have told me that my personal assistance enabled them to achieve things that they could never have done by themselves.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

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59. I gladly open my home and give food and shelter to others, even when I am not prepared to have guests.
60. Praying for others is one of my favorite spiritual practices; seeing God answer my prayers in such wonderful ways has greatly strengthened my faith.
61. I enjoy discovering "new" ideas or truths for myself by reading or observing situations first hand.
62. I know that providing the sense of direction and hope that enables a group of people to accomplish new things is one of the most effective ways in which I serve God and others.
63. People who are struggling with suffering or injustice have told me that I have been a real source of practical help and comfort.
64. I am frustrated when I have little opportunity to relate to or work among people of a different language or cultural background.
65. Writing or performing music is a wonderful creative experience for me; others have told me that they really enjoy my music.
66. One of the best ways that I can serve God and others is by doing whatever it takes to enable a group of Catholics to come together and explore their faith.
67. When I share truths from Scripture or Catholic teaching with others, I do it in a way that calls for a personal response and sparks worship, repentance, or action in individuals or groups.
68. I am able to see unmet organizational needs or "holes" that others miss and enjoy doing what it takes to fill the "hole" and make a difference.
69. People tell me that I am able to explain complicated matters in a way that is clear, easy to remember, and interesting.
70. I am drawn to the spiritual challenge of living simply in a materialistic culture.
71. Other people tell me that I am very perceptive, and talk their problems or decisions over with me in order to take advantage of my insights.
72. I find writing to be a very satisfying and creative means of expressing my faith.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

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73. I enjoy and am unusually good at coordinating the many "pieces" of a larger task or goal.
74. I am glad that I am single because I am freer to serve God.
75. Others have noticed that I am unusually competent and creative in dealing with my physical surroundings.
76. Others acknowledge that I have accurately "recognized" the presence of God's Spirit or an evil spirit in a person, place, or thing in the absence of tangible evidence.
77. One of the most satisfying ways to express my faith is by listening and talking to those who seek out my encouragement, nurture, or counsel.
78. I enjoy sharing with non-Catholics the joy and peace which my Catholic faith has given me.
79. When making important life decisions, I rely upon the guidance, love, and providence of God to an unusual degree.
80. I do without things myself in order to be able to give more to others.
81. I know that many of the sick that I care and/or pray for will be healed in remarkable ways.
82. Personally providing the practical assistance that enables someone else to achieve good things is one of the best ways that I can serve God and help people.
83. Strangers and new-comers have told me that I have made them feel especially welcome and comfortable.
84. God seems to use my prayers as a way through which his love can reach others; people are often helped in remarkable ways when I pray for them.
85. Others have told me that the insights that I have gained from my study have helped them grow in their own intellectual and spiritual lives.
86. I am able to communicate my ideas or vision for a better future in a way that motivates others to work to help make the vision happen.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

0 = NEVER 1 = LITTLE 2 = SOME 3 = OFTEN

87. One of the most important ways I express my Catholic faith is through practical deeds of love and care for the poor, the sick, or those suffering from injustice.
88. I have learned a new language well in order to be an effective agent of God's purposes among people of a different culture than my own.
89. I often express my faith in and love for God through music.
90. I enjoy and have been told that I am particularly good at guiding and encouraging the spiritual growth of a group of Christians.
91. I identify with the ministry and experience of the Old Testament prophets or of prophetic saints because God seems to use me in the same way.
92. Other people tell me that I really know what it takes to get a job done, and that my personal willingness to do whatever is necessary makes a big difference.
93. I have explained aspects of the Catholic faith to others and have seen them "get it" and grow spiritually as a result.
94. Others have told me I have sacrificed a great deal materially in order to follow Jesus and be close to the poor.
95. I have helped others make good decisions that reflected the purposes of God in the midst of uncertainty.
96. People really enjoy my writing and have told me that their lives have been touched or enriched by reading things that I have written.
97. An important way I express my faith is by providing the planning and coordination that enables good things to be accomplished.
98. I am emotionally and spiritually fulfilled without the special intimacy of marriage.
99. Working creatively with my hands is a form of prayer or contemplation for me.
100. I have been able to help others because I could tell the difference between unusual human behavior caused by emotional disturbance and that influenced by a demonic presence.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

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101. Others have said that talking to me has really helped them grow spiritually and/or discern God's direction for their life.
102. I have shared my faith with people who have no church background and have seen them desire to know more about the Catholic faith as a result.
103. When I or others close to me are in need, I am excited by the opportunity to trust in God and see how wonderfully he will provide.
104. I am so confident that God will meet my own financial needs that I am free to give sacrificially.
105. I have been used by God to restore strength and health to someone who suffered from a serious emotional or physical illness.
106. One of my favorite ways to live out my faith is to use my abilities to personally help someone else accomplish a task or lifework to which God has called him or her.
107. I express my Catholic faith by welcoming guests or strangers to my home or community as I would welcome Jesus.
108. I know from experience that praying is one of the most helpful and satisfying things that I can do for someone else.
109. Study is an important spiritual exercise for me because, when I study anything, I know that I am contemplating an aspect of God's loving activity in the universe.
110. I have successfully led a group through the process of turning a faith-based vision or goal into reality.
111. I find it very satisfying to personally serve those who are sick, powerless, or reject by society and have been told that my efforts make a real, practical difference in their lives.
112. I enjoy worshipping and sharing my faith with Catholics of another ethnic or cultural background.
113. Others have told me that my music has given them a lot of pleasure and/or drawn them closer to God.

On the separate answer sheet provided, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the question of the same number. Read each question and determine to what extent it is true of your life. Then mark your answer by circling the appropriate lighter numeral on the answer sheet as follows:

0 = NEVER 1 = LITTLE 2 = SOME 3 = OFTEN

- 114. I have helped a specific group of Christians grow spiritually by bringing people together on a regular basis to pray, study, or share their faith.
- 115. Others have told me that I have really helped them by sharing an encouraging or challenging word from God with them at a critical moment in their life.
- 116. I am a jack-of-all-trades, willing to do whatever it takes to serve God and others and to make good things happen.
- 117. One of my favorite ways to express my Catholic faith is by helping others learn truths, information, or skills that will help them grow spiritually and as human beings.
- 118. I identify with the saints who embraced poverty for Christ's sake.
- 119. I often come up with good, faith-based solutions to complex problems.
- 120. One of the best ways I can express my human experience and/or Christian faith is through writing.

The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory—Answer Sheet

Directions: On this answer sheet, each short row headed by a heavy black number corresponds to the inventory question of the same number. Each row contains the lighter numerals 0, 1, 2, and 3. Read each question carefully and **determine to what extent it is true of your life to the present.** To mark your answer, circle the appropriate lighter numeral for each question as follows: 0 = NEVER; 1 = LITTLE; 2 = SOME; 3 = OFTEN

	N	L	S	O	N	L	S	O	N	L	S	O	N	L	S	O	N	L	S	O	TOTAL			
1	0	1	2	3	25	0	1	2	3	49	0	1	2	3	73	0	1	2	3	97	0	1	2	3
2	0	1	2	3	26	0	1	2	3	50	0	1	2	3	74	0	1	2	3	98	0	1	2	3
3	0	1	2	3	27	0	1	2	3	51	0	1	2	3	75	0	1	2	3	99	0	1	2	3
4	0	1	2	3	28	0	1	2	3	52	0	1	2	3	76	0	1	2	3	100	0	1	2	3
5	0	1	2	3	29	0	1	2	3	53	0	1	2	3	77	0	1	2	3	101	0	1	2	3
6	0	1	2	3	30	0	1	2	3	54	0	1	2	3	78	0	1	2	3	102	0	1	2	3
7	0	1	2	3	31	0	1	2	3	55	0	1	2	3	79	0	1	2	3	103	0	1	2	3
8	0	1	2	3	32	0	1	2	3	56	0	1	2	3	80	0	1	2	3	104	0	1	2	3
9	0	1	2	3	33	0	1	2	3	57	0	1	2	3	81	0	1	2	3	105	0	1	2	3
10	0	1	2	3	34	0	1	2	3	58	0	1	2	3	82	0	1	2	3	106	0	1	2	3
11	0	1	2	3	35	0	1	2	3	59	0	1	2	3	83	0	1	2	3	107	0	1	2	3
12	0	1	2	3	36	0	1	2	3	60	0	1	2	3	84	0	1	2	3	108	0	1	2	3
13	0	1	2	3	37	0	1	2	3	61	0	1	2	3	85	0	1	2	3	109	0	1	2	3
14	0	1	2	3	38	0	1	2	3	62	0	1	2	3	86	0	1	2	3	110	0	1	2	3
15	0	1	2	3	39	0	1	2	3	63	0	1	2	3	87	0	1	2	3	111	0	1	2	3
16	0	1	2	3	40	0	1	2	3	64	0	1	2	3	88	0	1	2	3	112	0	1	2	3
17	0	1	2	3	41	0	1	2	3	65	0	1	2	3	89	0	1	2	3	113	0	1	2	3
18	0	1	2	3	42	0	1	2	3	66	0	1	2	3	90	0	1	2	3	114	0	1	2	3
19	0	1	2	3	43	0	1	2	3	67	0	1	2	3	91	0	1	2	3	115	0	1	2	3
20	0	1	2	3	44	0	1	2	3	68	0	1	2	3	92	0	1	2	3	116	0	1	2	3
21	0	1	2	3	45	0	1	2	3	69	0	1	2	3	93	0	1	2	3	117	0	1	2	3
22	0	1	2	3	46	0	1	2	3	70	0	1	2	3	94	0	1	2	3	118	0	1	2	3
23	0	1	2	3	47	0	1	2	3	71	0	1	2	3	95	0	1	2	3	119	0	1	2	3
24	0	1	2	3	48	0	1	2	3	72	0	1	2	3	96	0	1	2	3	120	0	1	2	3

I've taken the inventory. Now what do I do?

Now the fun begins! Pick the area of possible giftedness that you find most interesting and begin to experiment with it. Participants in the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Program commit to spending two hours a week "experimenting" with the charism of their choice. For instance, someone "experimenting" with the charism of hospitality could deliberately plan to invite more people to their home, volunteer to be part of their parish's hospitality committee, read a book on hospitality, or spend time thinking and praying about their experiences of being hospitable in the past. Actual hands-on "trying it out" seems to work best, especially if supplemented by prayer, reading, and talking about your experience with others.

A few charisms like discernment of spirits, celibacy ("practicing" celibacy for two hours a week is missing the point!) faith, and prophecy can not be "experimented" with on a scheduled basis. (*Hmm—let's see, I'm scheduled to prophesy on Friday from 1-3 p.m. . . .*) These charisms can be explored, however, by reading, prayer, meditating on the ways in which God has used you in the past, and by observing how he uses you in the present.

There are three basic "signs" of a charism that should all be consistently present over time:

1. *Effectiveness*: a charism will do what it's supposed to do. If you have a charism of teaching, people will learn. If you have a charism of healing, people will get well. If you have a charism of leadership, people will follow you and "buy in" to your vision, and so on.

2. *Your experience*: God does not give us charisms as a form of penance! If you are exercising a spiritual gift, you will generally feel energized, satisfied, and joyful, as though this is where you belong. You will not necessarily feel that way every time you try to use this gift, but that will be the overall experience. (Tip: Some people can have very negative "first time" experiences. The key is observing your feelings over an extended period of time.)

3. *Response or affirmation from others*: This can come in direct or indirect forms. It's wonderful when people give you direct feedback ("I learned so much from your class" or "I feel so much better about my situation after talking it over with you"). Lots of positive feedback over time is a real affirmation.

But affirmation can also come indirectly, as we observe what people ask of us. Do people you don't know well seem to just "open up" to you and share their feelings and concerns with you? (You might have a charism of encouragement.) Does your home always seem to be full of people who just "drop in"? (Do you have a gift of hospitality?)

*"The Holy Spirit
is the principle
of every vital and
truly saving action
in each part of
the Body. He works
in . . . the many
special graces (called
'charisms'), by
which he makes the
faithful 'fit and
ready to undertake
various tasks and
offices for the
renewal and
building up
of the Church.'"*

CCC, 798

*"Communion of
charisms. Within
the communion of
the Church, the
Holy Spirit
'distributes special
graces among the
faithful of every
rank' for the
building up of
the Church. Now
'to each is given
the manifestation
of the Spirit for
the common good.'"*
CCC, 951

Others will often recognize our gifts and ask us to exercise them—even if we ourselves don't know what they are!

All three "signs," our effectiveness, our feelings, and the affirmation of others, should line up over time. If one of the "signs" is obviously missing, we probably need to continue our discernment process.

I'm in Christian leadership or professional ministry. How do I discern the difference between the demands of my job or leadership role, my experience, and my charisms?

The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory was designed with the average lay Catholic in mind. Discernment can be more complicated for those in some form of professional ministry or with years of Christian leadership or ministry experience. It's hard to separate out the requirements of our role, the expectations of others, and our own experience from our giftedness.

For instance, the modern paradigm for ministry is modeled on the pastoral charisms, especially encouragement. The one-on-one model of personal ministry (as commonly experienced in confession and spiritual direction) has been the fundamental paradigm for Catholic ministry for centuries. The training that priests and other ministers receive and the expectations of those they serve reinforce this model. This can make it difficult for those in ministry to acknowledge that they do not have the charism of encouragement and are not particularly effective in this area. But when we encounter a mature charism of encouragement in operation, the dramatic difference in effectiveness between an empowered gift and acquired listening skills can be painfully obvious.

We may have done it all—but how truly effective have we been? The discernment for those already in ministry requires the personal maturity and freedom to honestly look at our effectiveness over time. Discernment may be a longer and more painful process in such cases, because it requires that we disentangle our expectations and experience from our true effectiveness.

Those with the office of pastor need not despair if they discern that they don't have the charism of pastoring, nor do directors of religious education have to go into some other line of work if they don't have the charism of teaching. Most pastoral roles can be "tweaked" to better take advantage of the charisms we have been given. But most importantly, the charisms that the community needs have probably been given to *other* members of the community; they need to be discerned and called forth. *Together*, we have been given the gifts to do what God is calling us to do.

The Quick & Catholic Charism Handbook

*"Grace also includes the
gifts that the
Spirit grants us to
associate us with his
work, to enable us to
collaborate in the
salvation of others
and in the growth of the
Body of Christ,
the Church. . . .*

*There are furthermore
special graces, also
called charisms after the
Greek term used by St.
Paul and meaning
'favor,' 'gratuitous gift,'
'benefit.'"*

CCC, 2003