



**“Called and Gifted”**  
**By Sherry Weddell**  
**PMA Presentation Nov. 16**

**Learn how you can help your parishioners and volunteers identify the graces given to them from the Holy Spirit.**

- What is a charism or spiritual gift?
- How do they differ from natural talents?
- What is the connection between my charism and vocation?

**Make this meeting even more valuable to you ...  
take the *Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory* ahead of time!**

Come to St. Irenaeus, St. Andrew, St. Joseph, or St. John Fisher to spend about 1/2 hour completing the inventory. Copies will also be available starting at 9am on November 16 at our meeting location. If you prefer, order your own copy (\$10) at [www.siena.org](http://www.siena.org) or (888)878-6789. Called and Gifted Resources will be available at discounted prices at our meeting.

**Those who complete the  
*Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory*  
for themselves  
prior to the meeting  
will be entered into a drawing for  
a wonderful prize!**



**PMA on November 16, 10am to 1pm (lunch included!)  
At Christ the Redeemer in Orion Township**

## Catherine of Siena Institute's "Called and Gifted", a summary

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"Charism" is the Greek word used in the New Testament for "favor" or "gratuitous gift." Charisms, or spiritual gifts, are special abilities given to all Christians by the Holy Spirit to give them the power both to represent Christ and to be a channel of God's goodness for people. Whether extraordinary or ordinary, all charisms ought to be exercised in the service of God (CCC,2003).

### **ARE ALL BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS GIVEN CHARISMS?**

Yes. According to Catholic teaching, it is the faith of the Church that you possess one or more of the charisms (CCC, 951).

### **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TRADITIONAL SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND 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 given to us to give away, and are one of the ways God continues to enter the world through our assent and cooperation. They always benefit others.

### **HOW MANY CHARISMS EXIST?**

There are three primary lists of gifts in the New Testament (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4), and St. Thomas Aquinas lists about 14 charisms in his Summa. We have no reason to believe that these lists are meant to be exhaustive. The Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory (the Institute's handbook on gifts discernment) covers 24 of the most common charisms.

### **WHY SHOULD I DISCERN MY CHARISMS?**

God is calling you to a work of love that will fill your life with purpose and joy, and discerning your charisms can help you discover that call. Δ Knowing the charisms that you have been given can greatly clarify your decision making. Δ Understanding your charisms can help you simplify your life and avoid burnout. Δ Discerning your charisms can help you discover how God has gifted you to make you more effective at what you do for a living. Δ Understanding your charisms can free you from the need to compare yourself to others. Δ Understanding your charisms can make a big difference in family life. Δ The Church is calling all Catholics to participate in a new evangelization, and your charisms empower you to play an essential role. Catholics are to

actively help spread the Faith through our relationships at work, in our families, and among friends. Our charisms are tools given to us both to help us convince people of the reality of Christ and to be a sign of God's loving presence in the world.

### **HOW DO CHARISMS DIFFER FROM NATURAL TALENTS?**

- Charisms are not inherited but are given to us by the Holy Spirit.
- Charisms enable us to have an effectiveness that surpasses our natural, human abilities.
- Charisms are always for the benefit of others, rather than us.

We use our charisms together with our natural talents and all that we are to serve God and our neighbor.

### **HOW DOES INDIVIDUAL DISCERNMENT OF CHARISMS AFFECT THE PARISH OR THE LARGER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY?**

Discerning charisms communally enables a parish to thrive on the gifts of its people. Far from being "just another program," this is a whole new way to look at our parishes. Our communities are filled with organizational and pastoral needs that are usually met by recruiting anyone who shows any interest or who, perhaps, is just unable to say, "No". Because we seldom look first at the gifts and call of individuals, our communities too often contain generous and energetic people who have been burned-out or even traumatized trying to fill "vacuums" for which they were ill-equipped. The discernment of their gifts also draws people from the periphery of the community to the center. Many lay Catholics emerge from the gifts discernment process with a much stronger sense that they have something important to give to the larger Christian community and to the world. They need to discern their charisms in order to meet this call, and the parish is the most accessible setting for discernment. As partners in the mission of Christ, everyone has been "called and gifted" for the sake of the world!

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