

Jim's Notes
February 21, 2007
Acts 19:1-7

The gifts of the Holy Spirit have always been manifested in the Catholic Church, in a more pronounced manner at certain times in history than at others. At the same time the Church has also cautioned the faithful to discern spirits and to remain within the context of the life and Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But 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 *sacramental graces*, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore *special graces*, also called *charisms* after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning "favor," "gratuitous gift," "benefit" (see *Lumen Gentium* 12). Whatever their character—sometimes it is extraordinary, such as the gift of miracles or of tongues—charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church (see I Corinthians 12). (CCC 2003)

Below are some examples of statements made by recent popes and bishops on the subject of manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in recent years:

Popes Paul VI and John Paul II have expressed their support of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Paul VI, in 1975, personally invited the renewal to hold its annual conference in Rome. In 1979, Pope John Paul II told charismatic leaders meeting in Rome,

“I am convinced that this movement is a sign of the Spirit's action...a very important component in the total renewal of the Church” (*Open the Windows*, ed. Kilian McDonnell, Greenlawn Press, South Bend, IN 1989, p. 26).

“The vigor and fruitfulness of the Renewal certainly attest to the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church in these years after the Second Vatican Council. Of course, the Spirit has guided the Church in every age, producing a great variety of gifts among the faithful. Because of the Spirit, the Church preserves a *continual youthful vitality*. And the Charismatic Renewal is an

eloquent manifestation of this vitality today, a bold statement of what "the Spirit is saying to the churches" (Rev. 2:7) as we approach the close of the Second Millennium. For this reason, it is essential that you seek always to *deepen your communion with the whole Church*: with her Pastors and teachers, with her doctrine and discipline, with her sacramental life, with the entire people of God." (Address of the Holy Father John Paul II to the Participants of the Sixth International Assembly of the Charismatic Renewal, 15 May 1987)

The bishops of the United States, in their 1984 pastoral letter to the American Church on the Charismatic Renewal:

"...the charismatic renewal is rooted in the witness of the gospel tradition: Jesus is Lord by the power of the Spirit to the glory of the Father."

In 1997, the bishops "encourage[d] those in the Renewal...to continue in faithful cooperation with the mission and the vision of the local church in which they serve." (*Grace for the New Springtime*, NCCB's *Ad Hoc* Committee for Catholic Renewal).