

What are Charisms?

One of the ways the Holy Spirit is outpoured upon the Church is through Charisms. When a person has a charism, supernatural grace is given to lead others to experience the healing power of Jesus' love. The charisms are associated with specific activities of service that build up the Body of Christ. By God pouring out excessive grace on each member in service to others, amazing things happen with each member playing a key role (cf [1Corinthians 12](#)).

Why should I discover my Charism?

1. Doing our charism energizes us and helps us avoid burnout and frustration.
2. We experience joy and feel like we have a purpose and have found our place.
3. We are effective and fruitful, and are able to witness beautiful moments of grace.
4. Confidence is bestowed so that we know what to do in a given situation.
5. Gratitude replaces judgement and jealousy as we discover the gifts of others.
6. We can work as a team/Body of Christ, each having a special role to play.

How about some examples?

The Catherine of Siena Institute has identified 24 of the most common charisms and provide resources for discernment. Here is a list:

PASTORAL CHARISMS

Focus: nurture of individuals & community
Encouragement; Hospitality; Helps; Pastoring; Mercy

COMMUNICATION CHARISMS

Focus: transforming lives through communicating truth
Evangelism; Prophecy; Teaching

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARISMS

Focus: meeting structural needs of organization/group
Giving; Leadership; Service; Administration

CHARISMS OF HEALING

Focus: being a channel of God's healing & restoration
Healing; Intercessory Prayer

CHARISMS OF UNDERSTANDING

Focus: understanding the ways of God and humanity
Knowledge; Wisdom; Discernment of Spirits

LIFESTYLE CHARISMS

Focus: distinctive lifestyle and freedom for unusual ministry
Celibacy; Faith; Missionary; Voluntary Poverty

CREATIVE CHARISMS

Focus: creative activity that orders and beautifies
Craftsmanship; Music; Writing
What is your Charism?

Every baptized person has at least one charism and most have 2 to 4 charisms. What is yours? In Confirmation, God pours out the Holy Spirit upon us so that we may carry out the mission of the Church, namely to bring others to Jesus. What is the unique way God desires you to bring others to Himself? This process is called discernment, which means it involves paying attention to how God works in your life.

Step 1: Attend a parish workshop on charisms or walking through the process with someone from the parish. You will learn about the various charisms and how to find out which one you might have.

Step 2: Do an interview to help determine which charism to start discerning. The interview usually takes about an hour and uses the inventory taken in step 1.

Step 3: Experiment with one charism and see what happens. This involves taking 1-2 hours/week actually doing the activity associated with the charism. You should notice in 4-6 weeks that unexpected graces began to consistently happen indicating you have the charism or that the accompanying signs do not happen and you do not have the charism.

Prayer for Community Discernment of Charisms

Lord Jesus, you are the life of our community.
You save us and lead us in right paths.
You established the Church to be your body in the world
to carry your work forward and bestow your grace
through the sacraments. Holy One, you are Lord of the Gifts.
Today we ask you to revive and unleash the power
our parish has received so often in the sacraments.
We ask that the charisms you have given to members of our
community would emerge and become visible,
That you help us support and nurture each other as we discern
and exercise our spiritual gifts.

A Prayer for Community Discernment

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That you help us support and nurture each other as we discern
and exercise our spiritual gifts.
That together with you, we may become a channel of God's mercy and
love for the individuals, the neighborhood, the town, the city, and
the nation in which you have placed us.
When you called, even Lazarus awoke. Call our community, Lord,
and unite us to your loving purposes. Amen.