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St. Peter's Square
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The gifts of the Holy Spirit: 7. Fear of God

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning .

The gift of *fear of God* , of which we speak today, concludes the series of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. It does not mean being afraid of God, we know that God is our Father and loves us and wants our salvation, and always forgives, always; so there is no reason to be afraid of him! The fear of God, however, is the gift of the Spirit who reminds us how small we are before God and his love, and that our well being nell'abbandonarci with humility, respect and trust in his hands. This is the fear of God: the abandonment in the goodness of our Father who loves us so much.

1. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in our hearts, gives us consolation and peace, and leads us to feel as we are, that is small, with that attitude - both recommended by Jesus in the Gospel - who puts all his concerns and his hopes in God and feels wrapped and supported by its warmth and protection, just as a child with his dad! This is the Holy Spirit in our hearts, makes us feel like children in the arms of our Father. In this sense, then, a good understanding of how the fear of God in us is to take the form of the tameness of gratitude and praise, by filling our hearts with hope. Many times, in fact, we fail to grasp the plan of God, and we realize that we can not assure ourselves happiness and eternal life. It is the experience of our limitations and our poverty, though, that the Holy Spirit comforts us and makes us feel like the only important thing is to be led by Jesus in the arms of his Father.

2. Why we need so much of this gift of the Holy Spirit. The fear of God makes us aware that everything comes from grace and that our true strength lies only in following the Lord Jesus and let the Father can bestow upon us His goodness and His mercy. Open your heart, because the goodness and mercy of God to come to us. This is the Holy Spirit with the gift of fear of God opens hearts. Open heart so that forgiveness, mercy, goodness, the caress of the Father to come to us, because we are infinitely loved children.

3. When we are pervaded by the fear of God, then we tend to follow the Lord with humility, docility and obedience. This, however, is not with attitude resigned, passive, too whiny, but with the wonder and joy of a child who recognizes served and loved by the Father. The fear of God, therefore, does not make us Christians shy, submissive, but it generates in us the courage and strength! It is a gift that makes us Christians believe, enthusiastic, who are not submissive to the Lord out of fear, but because they are moved and seduced by his love! Being conquered by the love of God! And this is a beautiful thing. Let ourselves be seduced by the love of the Father, who loves us so much, He loves us with all his heart.

But, let's be careful, because the gift of God, the gift of the fear of God is a "warning" in front of obstinacy in sin. When a person lives worse, when blasphemy against God, when exploiting

others, when they tyrannize, when he lives only for the money, for vanity, or power, or pride, then the holy fear of God puts us in warning: be careful! With all this power, all this money, with all your pride, and with all thy vanity, you will not be happy. No one can take with them on the other side nor the money, nor power, nor vanity, nor pride. Nothing! We can only bring the love that God the Father gives us the caresses of God, accepted and received by us with love. And we can bring what we have done for others. Be careful not to put money in the hope, pride, power, vanity, because everything can not promise us anything good! I think, for example, to people who have responsibility to others and allow themselves to be bribed; do you think that a corrupt person will be happy on the other side? No, all the fruits of his corruption has corrupted his heart and will be difficult to go to the Lord. I think of those who live of human trafficking and slave labor; do you think that these people who treats people who exploit people with slave labor in his heart the love of God? No, I have no fear of God and they are not happy. They are not. I think of those who manufacture weapons for fomenting wars; but do you think this job is. I'm sure if I do now the question: how many of you are fabricators of weapons? No one, no. These weapons makers do not come to hear the Word of God! These produce death, are merchants of death and make merchandise of death. That the fear of God make them understand that one day it all ends and will have to give account to God Dear friends, Psalm 34 gives us pray thus: "This poor man cried, and the Lord hears, saves him from all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them "(vv. 7-8). We ask the Lord for the grace to add our voice to that of the poor, to receive the gift of the fear of God and that we can recognize, along with them, covered with the mercy and love of God, who is our Father, our Dad . So be it.