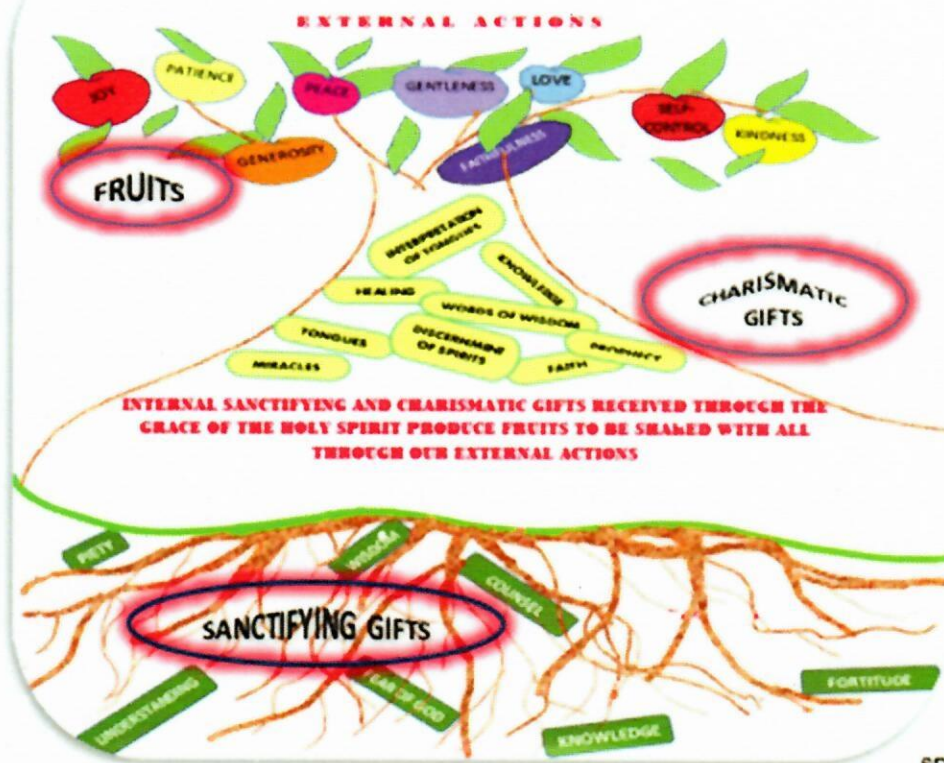


DESIRE THE GIFTS - LIVE THE FRUITS



GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



John 15:10 *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

Nehemiah 8:10 *Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength!*

JOY... Not just exuberantly happy because of worldly happenings or success, but a deep knowledge and abiding assuredness of Our Lord's faithfulness and love for us, even when we have fallen away. How does outward joy manifest? We have all felt it. There is a heightening of spirits, a celebration of our successes, a cheerfulness of a specific happening. And all this is good, and

uplifts your mind, momentarily. However, perfect joy is achieved in a much deeper way; and it is only received within God's grace. If our relationship with God is deep, faithful, and lasting, His grace is poured into our very soul. This grace within us energizes our being and enlightens our mind to understand God's words in a deeper way that affects our actions and desires. The infilling of the gift of knowledge produces the fruit of joy. Why? Because we know without a shadow of a doubt that we are loved immensely and that all outward hindrances and pains are not comparable to His massive love. This provides healing for our spiritual woundedness and gives us inward joy, knowing that we can tolerate and even succeed against sin, evil, and discouragement. That is perfect joy, total acceptance of God's will resulting in peace with Our Lord's plan in our life, in all situations. Celebrate everlasting joyfulness, and share God's love with all.

Psalms 71:23 *"My lips will shout for joy as I sing your praise."* **HOLY SPIRIT COME!**

And as Pope Francis stated: "Hard times may come, when the cross casts its shadow, yet nothing can destroy the supernatural joy that 'adapts and changes, but always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved.' That joy brings deep security, serene hope and a spiritual fulfillment that the world cannot understand or appreciate."

INTERCESSORY PRAYER TO ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI THE FRUIT OF JOY:

St. Francis, we ask you to take your prayers to our Savior. We long to share this fruit of JOY with all people, the JOY that exists because we trust in our Lord's faithfulness, even when all else seems to fail. We need the hidden glee that we can find deep in our hearts knowing that no earthly defeat can cause our disappointments to weaken us. Help us to realize as you did, Francis, that we rely on the strength and JOY of The Lord. **AMEN**

