

## Discernment of spirits

In 1Corinthians, St. Paul talks about the gift of discernment of spirits. What is the discernment of spirits and how is it useful for Christians today? In around 1521, when St. Ignatius of Loyola was recovering from his injuries after being hit by a cannonball, he developed what is now called the Ignatian discernment of spirits. As Ignatius pondered about his life, he noticed different interior movements. Some thoughts made him feel happy, while other thoughts made him feel sad. He came to understand that the thoughts that made him feel happy usually came from God, particularly the Holy Spirit, whom he calls the “good spirit,” while the thoughts that made him feel sad usually came from the devil, whom he calls the “bad spirit.”

According to the Ignatian discernment of spirits, the “good spirit” guides a person towards God, while the “bad spirit” leads a person away from God. The Ignatian discernment of spirits enables a person to identify and choose the movements inspired by the “good spirit” over the “bad spirit.”

The first and most essential rule for the discernment of spirits is Matthew 7:20, in which Jesus said, “By their fruits you will know them.” St. Paul lays out these fruits in Galatians 5:19-23: the fruits of the “bad spirit” are immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, hatred, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, selfishness, dissensions, etc. The fruits of the “good spirit” are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, etc.



A classic case for discernment of spirits is when a person begins with good intentions; i.e., a person sets out to do good, but ends up with bad fruits. To begin with, the person was inspired by the Holy Spirit to do something good, but in the process, the “bad spirit” leads the person away from God by bringing doubt, confusion or guilt. Eventually, the person gives up disappointed and disillusioned. In these cases, the person had fallen into the snares of the evil one, especially when the evil one uses deception by appearing to be a “good spirit,” but in reality, is a “bad spirit” in disguise.

What are some techniques that we can use to fight the “bad spirit?” St. Ignatius suggests that we must know our demons and to go on the offensive against the temptations of the “bad spirit” by engaging in the opposite virtue. Do not just wait for the temptation to come. For example, if the temptation is lust, go on the offensive against lust by engaging in pure thoughts, develop a liking for holy books, music and films.

St. Serapion of Egypt was renowned throughout the desert for his holiness. One day, the devil appeared to St. Serapion as an angel of light. Hoping to deceive the holy monk, the devil announced, “I am the Archangel Gabriel and I was sent to honor you.” St. Serapion quickly responded, “Surely you have come for someone else. Who am I that an angel would come to visit me? I am nothing but an unworthy servant!” The devil, confused and astonished at St. Serapion’s humility, didn’t know what to do and simply departed from the saint.

Prayer List: Liu Guifang, Lydia Chen, Lu Shumi, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing, Pan Bohao and Xu Taicheng.

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## PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Georgia Bulletin reported that the Archdiocese of Atlanta will not hold the Eucharistic Congress in 2025 due to budget constraints. Deacon Dennis Dorner made the announcement to cancel the Eucharistic Congress: "While we will no longer be hosting the Eucharistic Congress in 2025, we are working on plans for a major public procession and other ways the archdiocese can celebrate and witness to the priceless gift of the Eucharist during the coming Jubilee Year of 2025." Our church was especially looking forward to the Eucharistic Congress because it was supposed to be the first time the archdiocese would hold a "Chinese Track." Despite our disappointment in the decision by the archdiocese, our church hold a week-long Eucharistic Revival from June 18 to June 24, 2025. Our invited guests include Most Reverend John Lee Juo-wang, Bishop Emeritus of the diocese of Tainan, Taiwan and Fr. Francis Ching of the Companions of the Cross based in Toronto, Canada, as well as a Chinese band led by Mr. Jianren Zhu from Los Angeles. Come, participate and make the most of that week with our special guests. They are coming to Atlanta especially for you, in order to inspire and deepen your devotion to the Eucharist!



January 19 is potluck Sunday! This is a great activity for everyone to foster fellowship in our church community. If you are celebrating your birthday in the month of January, we have ordered a birthday cake for you. Lunch begins after the 10:30am Mass. Please bring your favorite dish to share.

Attention children and parents: We will have Sunday School this Sunday. Parents are welcome to sit in the Sunday School classes.

### 2025 Year of the Snake



新年快樂!

Our special Mass for the Feast Day of the Holy Name of Jesus will be on January 19, 2025 in lieu of the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time. Our Chinese New Year Mass, solemn tribute to our ancestors and Chinese New Year celebration will be on February 2, 2025.

The theme of our Chinese New Year celebration is: "Out with the Old and In with the New: Spiritual Renewal During the Lunar New Year." We invite everyone, young and old, to participate in our New Year's Wishes for Catholics activity. For details, please pick a copy of an explanation of this activity in the church foyer.

There are only a few copies left of the 2025 Chinese Liturgical calendars in the church foyer. Please remember to take a copy or two home with you, and share with your family and friends. Although the cost of materials and production has increased, the suggested donation for each calendar is still \$5, same as last year.

Attention all volunteers for "Helping Mamas," the volunteer date has been rescheduled to March 8, 2025.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		<b>Eucharistic Adoration</b>
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	<b>Anointing of the Sick</b>	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		