

Creating A Spiritual Roadmap For 2026!

Jesus is inviting you to begin a new journey with Him! And Jesus is asking you to trust that He will lead you safely in the the loving arms of Our Heavenly Father at the end of it. But you can't make it to your destination without a map. The following questions will help you create a 'spiritual roadmap' with God, so that you know the paths that He wants you to follow & the ones He wants you to avoid. (Please use the RESOURCE PAGE that has the Virtues, Vices, Precepts, and Gifts & Fruits of The Spirit to complete these questions.) It may be difficult to answer some of these questions, but rest assured, God knows you perfectly and loves you for who you are right now & He is always here to help you! If you get stuck, just pray; 'Come Holy Spirit' or 'Come Lord Jesus' or 'Father, help!'. Now, take a deep breath, relax, and enjoy this prayerful assessment! And Hold onto the hope that you WILL arrive somewhere with Jesus that you never thought was possible, a place with God beyond your wildest dreams! Amen!

1. In 2025, which of the 5 Precepts did you prayerfully observe? (use a check mark to indicate your response)

- 1 Attend Mass on Sundays and days of obligation ☐
- 2 Confess your sins at least once a year ☐
- 3 Receive the Eucharist at least once a year ☐
- 4 Observe days of fasting and abstinence ☐
- 5 Provide for the needs of the Church ☐

4. What is the strongest strongest/most evident Gift of The Spirit in your life, and which is the to least evident?

Strongest _____ Least Evident _____

2. What is the strongest/most evident virtue in your life, and which is the weakest/least evident?

Strongest _____ Weakest _____

2. What is the strongest/most evident vice in your life, and the weaknest/least evident?

Strongest _____ Least Evident _____

5. What is the strongest/most evident Fruit of The Spirit in your life, and which is the least evident?

Most evident _____ Least Evident _____

Results

Strengths

1. What Is Your Strongest Virtue?

2. What is your weakest/least evident Vice?

3. What Gift of The Spirit is the strongest/most evident in your life?

4. What Fruit of The Spirit is the strongest/most evident in your life?

Weaknesses

5. What Is Your Weakest Virtue?

6. What Is Your Strongest/Most Evident Vice?

7. What Gift of The Spirit do you need more of?

8. What Fruit of The Spirit do you need more of?

Strength or Weakness

9. How many of the Five Precepts did you observe last year?

5 4 3 2 1 0

You assessed yourself, gathered the results, and now, you can complete the most important step in the process; PRAYER! I have provided a 'fill-in-the-blank' style prayer which uses your answers from the previous questions. This is only a suggestion for you; you can always write your own prayer instead! Either way, the goal is to tell Jesus that you want to imitate Him as a role model for how to live a life filled with love! I also encourage you to cut out and hang this prayer someplace where you will see it, so that you can pray it every day in 2026. My wife & I have already completed the 'spiritual roadmap' so I have provided my own answers. Why? Well, by sharing the ways that I need to grow closer to God, you can help keep me accountable while I go on my own journey with Jesus!

Resource Page 1

7 Gifts of The Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:1-2)

WISDOM is both the knowledge of and judgment about “divine things” and the ability to judge and direct human affairs according to divine truth. **Sacrament – Baptism, all the baptized receive the Holy Spirit**

UNDERSTANDING is penetrating insight into the very heart of things, especially those higher truths that are necessary for our eternal salvation—in effect, the ability to “see” God. **Sacrament – The Eucharist, because we literally ‘see God physically present in front of us’**

FEAR OF GOD is, in this context, ‘holy fear’ is where we revere God and avoid separating ourselves from him—as opposed to “servile” fear, whereby we fear punishment. **Sacrament - Reconciliation**

PIETY is, principally, reverence towards God with love & affection, worshiping God (especially through the Holy Mass), respecting the dignity of all people, and honoring the saints and not contradicting Scripture & Tradition. Since God is the Father of all, the worship of God is also called piety. **Precept of The Church – Attend Sunday Mass & All Holy Days of Obligation**

KNOWLEDGE is the ability to judge correctly about matters of faith and right action, so as to never wander from the straight path of justice. **Sacrament – Holy Orders; The Pope, Bishops, & Priests are taught The Truth & have a sacred duty to share that with their Parish**

COUNSEL allows a man to be directed by God in matters necessary for his salvation. **Sacrament – Holy Matrimony**

FORTITUDE denotes a firmness of mind in doing good and in avoiding evil, particularly when it is difficult or dangerous to do so, and the confidence to overcome all obstacles, even deadly ones, by virtue of the assurance of everlasting life. **Sacrament – Anointing of The Sick**

12 Fruits of The Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

LOVE is selfless, focused on the other person, given freely and gladly without condition or the expectation of repayment, expressed in service, and willing to suffer on another’s behalf.

JOY is an interior contentment that comes from being close to God and in right relationship with others. Joy also comes with speaking and upholding the truth, honesty and integrity in relationships, enduring hardships and decent conduct.

PEACE is the harmony that occurs when justice prevails. It happens when resources are shared equitably, power is used for service, interdependence is fostered, information is shared openly and honestly, the dignity of each person is respected, legitimate differences are tolerated, the disadvantaged receive help, hurts are forgiven and the common good is upheld.

PATIENCE is the virtue of suffering interruption or delay with composure and without complaint; to suffer annoyance, insult or mistreatment with self-restraint, refusing to be provoked; and to suffer burdens and difficult tasks with resolve and determination. It is also the willingness to slow down for another’s benefit, to set aside one’s personal plans and concerns, to go at another’s pace, and to take whatever time is necessary to address their need.

KINDNESS is a warm and friendly disposition toward another. A kind person is polite and well mannered, respectful and considerate, pleasant and agreeable, cheerful and upbeat, caring and helpful, positive and complimentary.

GENEROSITY is a big-heartedness grounded in an abundance mentality. It is unselfish and expresses itself in sharing. It is extended to family and friends, strangers, and particularly those in need, and is offered not only as money, food and clothing, but also as time shared and assistance provided.

FAITHFULNESS is demonstrated by loyalty to friends, duties performed, promises kept, commitments fulfilled, contracts completed, vows observed and being true to one’s word.

GENTLENESS is sensitivity for another person. It is concerned with another’s welfare, safety and security. It is grounded in humility. The approach is careful, tender, considerate, affectionate and mild-mannered, free of all pushiness, roughness or abrasiveness.

SELF-CONTROL (Chastity) is self-mastery regardless of the circumstances, to be in control of one’s self rather than to be controlled by temptations, events or other people, especially when under pressure or in times of crisis. It is to remain calm, cool and collected, reasonable and even-tempered; to be alert and conscious, to proceed with caution and prudence, and to avoid an impulse or kneejerk response; to be a moderating influence; and to have the strength and courage to reject evil and choose good.

Resource Page 2

Seven Lively Virtues

1. Faith is the impulse to turn to God in prayer, believe He is real & loves us, and the strength to believe that God gave us his Son to make a way for us to share in the love of the Holy Trinity.
2. Hope strengthens the intrinsic desire for happiness in the heart of every human person. It keeps us from discouragement; it sustains us during times of abandonment; it opens up our hearts in expectation of eternal good. Abundant hope preserves us from selfishness.
3. Love has its foundation in Jesus' death on the cross, and with eyes of faith we see God's love for us and for the whole world. Such love calls forth a response from us. Knowing we are loved, we dare hope for our salvation. From this firm and certain hope, love for others flourishes.
4. Prudence draws lessons from experience, comprehension, disciplined reason, foresight, circumspection, & cautiousness.
5. Justice allows us to live out what is 'owed' to God (worship) and by extension other people through religion, obedience, vindication, honesty, fraternity, generosity, kindness, responsibility/duty, & defense/protection.
6. Fortitude is a virtue and a Gift of The Spirit, as virtue it is known as courage, perseverance, & patience.
7. Temperance is self-control through humility, meekness, abstinence/sobriety, chastity, diligence, studiousness, & modesty.

Seven Deadly Sins (Vices)

1. Pride is self-assertion and selfishness. A pre-occupation with ourselves instead of God & the needs of others.
2. Avarice is greed, the selfish reach to grab and keep for oneself; it is unmerciful because it does not consider the needs of others.
3. Envy resents another's happiness; and rejoices at others loss of happiness or material goods.
4. Wrath wills harm and destruction; it is unjust anger towards another person, or even God Himself. It refuses peace, and perpetuates fear & domination. It swears, curses, and blasphemes God's Holy Name by saying 'Oh my G-D!' at the most trivial things.
5. Sloth is a refusal, or purposeful neglect to act towards something good, especially daily prayer. Hunger and thirst for God is absent and when someone is offered an opportunity to receive life from God, they turn towards created things for satisfaction.
6. Lust dissipates and divides the soul, desiring every attractive body; it reveals an impure heart focused on the 'parts' of people, instead of looking at them with God's eyes as a unique person worthy of dignity & respect and not someone to be used for selfish gain. It turns from the beauty of God and runs towards vain beauty.
7. Gluttony wants to consume an inordinate amount of worldly goods; it lives in comfort and avoid discomfort at all costs. It binges on food, media, knowledge, sports, or anything that can make it 'feel full', and refuses to be 'filled up' by God through prayer.

The five precepts of the Catholic Church: is the 'gasoline' for your car because they are the 'absolute minimum of prayer and moral effort, to grow in love of God and neighbor.' They are given, from love, to help us to avoid pitfalls on the way to salvation;

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and days of obligation
2. Confess your sins at least once a year
3. Receive the Eucharist at least once a year
4. Observe days of fasting and abstinence
5. Provide for the needs of the Church

Example - Jacob Wilson

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the strong virtue of HOPE in my life and thank you for the humility to recognize that I am weak in the virtue of FORTITUDE. I humbly ask that You bring me healing & freedom from the vice of COWARDICE, so that I may love you more and more with every breath I take. I need to mature in the virtue of FAITH to overcome this vice. By your grace & blessing, I know that I can overcome this vice by relying solely on You and surrendering myself to Your will for my life. Please grant me success in this endeavor, so that I may come to see you with new eyes, hear you with new ears, know you with a new mind, and encounter you deep within a new heart. I look forward to sharing this spiritual journey with my family, children, friends, and everyone I encounter, so that they too may come to know you in a more real and intimate way.

Holy Spirit, thank You for the Gift of COUNSEL that is so present in my life. Please bless me with a new outpouring of the Gift of FEAR OF THE LORD. I thank you ahead of time for this wonderful blessing, which allows me to know You more intimately and lead a life of holiness and overcome the temptation to sin. Holy Spirit You are my Advocate & my Comforter. Please advocate for me when I feel that no one is supporting me and please comfort me during the pains & sufferings of this life. Thank you Holy Spirit for the great abundance of the Fruit of FAITHFULNESS in my life. I hope that at the end of 2026 I will see a new abundance of The Fruit of JOY in my life with You. I do not want to only hold onto this fruit for myself. Please grant me the desire to share this fruit with everyone around me, so that we can celebrate the wonderful things you will have done in my life, which will lead others to give thanks for what You have done in their lives as well!

Your Prayer!

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the strong virtue of _____ in my life and thank you for the humility to recognize that I am weak in the virtue of _____. I humbly ask that You bring me healing & freedom from the vice of _____, so that I may love you more and more with every breath I take. I need to mature in the virtue of _____ to overcome this vice. By your grace & blessing, I know that I can overcome this vice by relying solely on You and surrendering myself to Your will for my life. Please grant me success in this endeavor, so that I may come to see you with new eyes, hear you with new ears, know you with a new mind, and encounter you deep within a new heart. I look forward to sharing this spiritual journey with my family, children, friends, and everyone I encounter, so that they too may come to know you in a more real and intimate way.

Holy Spirit, thank You for the Gift of _____ that is so present in my life. Please bless me with a new outpouring of the Gift of _____. I thank you ahead of time for this wonderful blessing, which allows me to know You more intimately and lead a life of holiness and overcome the temptation to sin. Holy Spirit You are my Advocate & my Comforter. Please advocate for me when I feel that no one is supporting me and please comfort me during the pains & sufferings of this life. Thank you Holy Spirit for the great abundance of the Fruit of _____ in my life. I hope that at the end of 2026 I will see a new abundance of The Fruit of _____ in my life with You. I do not want to only hold onto this fruit for myself. Please grant me the desire to share this fruit with everyone around me, so that we can celebrate the wonderful things you will have done in my life, which will lead others to give thanks for what You have done in their lives as well!

Jesus, even though I am going to try to imitate you this year, please grant me the grace of forgiving myself for the ways that I have failed to love You. Please pour out your gentleness & kindness upon me, for what I have done & what I have failed to do. Jesus, You are the embodiment of Divine Mercy. Please have mercy on me, forgive my sins, save me from the fires of Hell, and lead my soul into Heaven, because I am in desperate need of Your love that is free of judgment & full of compassion.

Thank You God for the opportunity to begin a new life with you in 2026! I know that when I make a commitment to follow You more closely, there will be trials & tests. But through it all, help me to keep my eyes fixed on You, especially through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, receiving The Eucharist, & Attending Sunday Mass, since these things are the most intimate spiritual encounters that I can have with you while on earth. Please bless me with an increase in faith to believe that I actually hear Your Voice during Reconciliation & The Mass. And an abundance of faith to believe that I literally see and receive Your Body in The Eucharist. May I receive a supernatural, & profound peace within the depths of my heart, mind, & spirit, the next time I hear You at Reconciliation & see You in the Eucharist! May I be blessed with a new zeal & fervor to come to You more often in Confession & Holy Mass. May I also be emboldened by Your Spirit of Life to share the peace that comes from Your miraculous presence in the Sacraments! And at the end of this year, may I be able to look back and say that; '2026 was the year that I encountered God in such a profound and intimate way that I will never be the because of it!'

I humbly offer this prayer to you Heavenly Father, by the power of The Holy Spirit, and in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen!

*God's Merciful Love: The Catechism teaches that it is a grave sin if a Catholic breaks even one of the 5 Precepts of The Church. But the Catechism also teaches that it is only a venial sin if the person did not have full knowledge or full consent. If you were not taught or did not know that out of love for God, Catholics have to go to Mass every Sunday + Holy Days, or Reconciliation yearly, etc... then it is only a venial sin. Whereas it would be a mortal sin if you knew these things *and* chose not to participate by your own free will. The Good News is that God's **mercy** is **infinite** & we **can never outrun** His **love** for us! Regardless of your knowledge of the 5 Precepts, St. Joe's encourage you to experience the miracle of God's healing love within the Sacrament of Reconciliation! If you have any questions about Reconciliation, the 5 Precepts, or venial/mortal sin, please reach out to **Fr. Bill**. He will guide you through those questions with **kindness & compassion!** (You can contact the office to schedule to meet with him!) Remember, uncertainty is the 'devil's playground' but Reconciliation is guaranteed to bring peace & clarity from God, because we know we have been forgiven of *everything!* If you are ever unsure about having committed a mortal sin, the best thing to do is (1) contact your priest for clarification (2) go to Reconciliation as soon as possible (3) wait to receive the Eucharist until you have gone to Reconciliation.