**There is no proof that this is real!**

From 1558 to 1829, Roman Catholics in Europe were not allowed to practice their faith openly. Someone wrote the carol as a catechism song for the children. The words have a coded meaning, which helped the children to learn and remember the religious doctrine.

* The partridge in the pear tree was Jesus Christ.
* Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.
* Three French hens represented: faith, hope and love.
* Four calling birds were the four gospels:
	+ Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
* Five golden rings were reminders of the first five books of the Old Testament:
	+ Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.
* Six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
* Seven swans a-swimming represented the seven gifts from the Holy Spirit: Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership and Mercy.
* Eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
* Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self Control.
* Ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.
* Eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
* Twelve drummers drumming represented the twelve points of belief of the Apostles' Creed.

**7 Gifts of the Spirit**

The [*Catechism of the Catholic Church*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechism_of_the_Catholic_Church) lists the seven gifts as follows:[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_gifts_of_the_Holy_Spirit%22%20%5Cl%20%22cite_note-13)

* [wisdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisdom#Religious_perspectives): it is the capacity to love spiritual things more than material ones;
* [understanding](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Understanding): in understanding, we comprehend how we need to live as followers of Christ. A person with understanding is not confused by the conflicting messages in our culture about the right way to live. The gift of understanding perfects a person's speculative reason in the apprehension of truth. It is the gift whereby self-evident principles are known, Aquinas writes;
* counsel (right judgment): with the gift of counsel/right judgment, we know the difference between right and wrong, and we choose to do what is right. A person with right judgment avoids sin and lives out the values taught by Jesus;
* [fortitude](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courage) (courage): with the gift of fortitude/courage, we overcome our fear and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus Christ. A person with courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God, even if it means accepting rejection, verbal abuse, or physical harm. The gift of courage allows people the firmness of mind that is required both in doing good and in enduring evil;
* [knowledge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge): with the gift of knowledge, we understand the meaning of God. The gift of knowledge is more than an accumulation of facts;
* [piety](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piety) (reverence): with the gift of reverence, sometimes called piety, we have a deep sense of respect for God and the Church. A person with reverence recognizes our total reliance on God and comes before God with humility, trust, and love. Piety is the gift whereby, at the Holy Spirit's instigation, we pay worship and duty to God as our Father, Aquinas writes;
* [fear of the Lord](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear_of_God) ([wonder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wonder_%28emotion%29) and [awe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Awe)): with the gift of fear of the Lord we are aware of the glory and majesty of God. A person with wonder and awe knows that God is the perfection of all we desire: perfect knowledge, perfect goodness, perfect power, and perfect love. This gift is described by Aquinas as a fear of separating oneself from God. He describes the gift as a "filial fear," like a child's fear of offending his father, rather than a "servile fear," that is, a fear of punishment. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ([Psalms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psalms) [111:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms+111%3A10&version=KJ21) || [Proverbs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Proverbs) [1:7;9:10](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Prov+1%3A7%3B9%3A10&version=KJ21)) because it puts our mindset in correct location with respect to God: we are the finite, dependent creatures, and He is the infinite, all-powerful Creator.

**THE EIGHT BEATITUDES OF JESUS**

***"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure of heart,
for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."***

**9 Fruits of the Spirit**

But the fruit of the Spirit is

* + - 1. love
			2. joy
			3. peace
			4. forbearance (patience)
			5. kindness
			6. goodness
			7. faithfulness
			8. gentleness
			9. self control. Against such things there is no law.

—[Galatians 5:22-23](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+5%3A22-23&version=NIV)

**10 Commandments**

**1. Have no other gods.
2. Have no idols.
3. Honor God's name.
4. Honor the Sabbath day.
5. Honor your parents.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not perjure yourself.
10. Do not covet. (want things, Envy)**

**11 Disciples of Jesus**

We find the names of the 12 apostles in Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:14-19, and Luke 6:13-16:

*And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: Simon, whom he named* ***Peter****, and* ***Andrew*** *his brother, and* ***James*** *and* ***John****, and* ***Philip****, and* ***Bartholomew****, and* ***Matthew****, and* ***Thomas****, and* ***James the son of Alphaeus****, and* ***Simon*** *who was called the Zealot, and* ***Judas*** *the son of James, and* ***Judas Iscariot****, who became a traitor.* [*(ESV)*](http://christianity.about.com/od/faqhelpdesk/p/English-Standard-Version.htm)

[Jesus Christ](http://christianity.about.com/od/newtestamentpeople/p/jesuschrist.htm) selected 12 men from among his early followers to become his closest disciples. After an intensive discipleship course and following his [resurrection](http://christianity.about.com/od/biblestorysummaries/p/theresurrection.htm) from the dead, the Lord fully [commissioned](http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/f/greatcommission.htm) the apostles (Matthew 28:16-2, Mark 16:15) to advance God's kingdom and carry the gospel message to the world.

**Apostle’s Creed**

1. I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:
2. And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary:
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell:
5. The third day he rose again from the dead:
6. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty:
7. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:
8. I believe in the Holy Ghost:
9. I believe in the holy catholic church: the communion of saints:
10. The forgiveness of sins:
11. The resurrection of the body:
12. And the life everlasting. Amen.