

1. Cardinal Ratzinger (1999)

- A. *"in-depth research was urgently needed to establish what being a prophet means"*
- B. *"the prophet is someone who tells the truth on the strength of his contact with God; the truth for today which also, naturally, sheds light on the future." "Even if, at a moment in time, the prophet must proclaim the Word of God as if it were a sharp sword, he is not necessarily criticizing organized worship and institutions. His mandate is to counter the misunderstanding and abuse of the Word and the institution by rendering God's vital claim ever present;"*
- C. *Patristic tradition calls Mary the prophetess. The Marian line represents in the Church the prophetic dimension. Women hold a special position in prophetic aspect of the Church, calling it to evangelical unity, humility, courage and evangelization.*
- D. *While one proceeds with the mind only, **nothing new will ever happen.** Increasingly more definite systems may well be construed, increasingly subtle questions raised but the true and proper way from which great theology may again flow is not generated by the rational side of theological work but by a charismatic and prophetic thrust. And it is in this sense, I believe, that prophecy and theology go hand in glove. Theology, as theological science in the strict sense, is not prophetic but may only truly become living theology under the thrust and illumination of a prophetic impulse."*
- E. *"The prophets are the ones who bring out Christianity's dimension of hope. They are the channels of access to what must still come to pass and, therefore, allowing us to go beyond time to attain what is essential and definitive. This eschatological character, this thrust to go beyond time, is certainly part of the prophetic spirituality."*
- F. *Purely apophatic and contemplative mysticism is not higher than the prophetic, missionary mysticism (what is charismatic and what is mystical)*
- G. *"The prophetic impact cannot come about without reciprocal suffering. The prophet is called in a specific way to the imitation of suffering: to be ready to suffer and share the cross with Christ is his real yardstick. He does not try to be self-imposing. His message is verified and made fruitful in the cross."*
- H. *Why is the Church so hard on its prophetic figures? "A very critical attitude is therefore necessary to waive any risk of sensationalism, fantasizing and superstition. The mystical is manifest in suffering in obedience and in capacity for endurance. Thus this voice lingers as time goes on. As far as the Church is concerned **it must be careful** not to 'kill the prophets' if it is to avoid rebuke."*

2. *"The prophet's mind is instructed by God in two ways: in one way by an express revelation, in another way by a most mysterious instinct 'to which the human mind is subjected without knowing it" - St. Augustine*

All spiritual writers admit that this special inspiration, which resembles the breeze that comes up at the right moment, is ordinarily latent and almost imperceptible at first, and that, if it is not resisted, it generally becomes stronger and more urgent. (...) The inspiration, at first latent and obscure, becomes more manifest, luminous, and compelling if one is faithful. - Garrigou - Lagrange

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3. Establish ourselves in silence.

4. There are certainly many degrees of docility to the Holy Ghost, from our first response to the attraction of our vocation up to the last moment when we give up our souls to God. - G-L

5. *"An interior man will make more impression on hearts by a single word that is animated by the spirit of God than another by an entire discourse costing him much work and in which he exhausted all the power of his reasoning."* - G-L

6. Charismatic Graces

Charismatic graces are given chiefly for the good of others,

- to **instruct them in revelation** (by the word of knowledge, by the word of wisdom):
- to **confirm that revelation** (by miracles, prophecies, discernment of spirits, etc.)

7. Prophetic Revelation

A. Prophecy has degrees.

On the lower level the prophet (Caiphas, for example) may not know that he is prophesying

On the higher level, in perfect prophecy, the prophet needs:

- first the supernatural proposition of a truth so far hidden (You need to have a revelation about something not known);
- secondly a supernatural knowledge that that proposition is divine in its origin, (you have to have an insight assurance that this is not coming from you)
- thirdly an infused light by which he judges infallibly regarding the truth itself and its divine origin. (boldness and instantaneous discernment)

B. In giving the prophet this revelation, God may use as intermediary

- the prophet's **external sense power**, - sights (open vision), hearing (audible voice of God), smell, touch (prayer for me during YWAM and I felt a hug), taste
- or his **internal sense power** (your soul has senses)
- or his **intellect** (you suddenly think about something or you have a knowing)

C. As to his physical state, the prophet can be either

- awake (your senses and intellect are operating properly)
- ecstasy (your body is overtaken by a supernatural activity of the HS, your soul is operating in its senses)
- in dream (your body and soul are inactive, ie not under you will)

D. Different modes of particular and distinct supernatural knowledge:

- visions

Graces gratis datae to instruct one's neighbor concerning divine things.	1. Graces that give full knowledge of divine things	- faith or special certitude as to principles. - word of wisdom , on the principal conclusions known through the first cause. - word of knowledge , on the examples and effects which manifest the causes
	2. Graces that confirm divine revelation	-by works: gift of healing, gift of miracles. -by knowledge: discerning of spirits, prophecy.
	3. Graces that aid in preaching the word of God	- gift of tongues; - gift of interpretation of speeches.

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- revelations;
- interior words

E. Visions:

- sensible - when a sensible image appears or you hear an audible voice
- imaginary - when God, in order to express His thought to us, coordinates certain images that pre-exist in our imagination, or imprints new ones on it.

We have three signs, however, by which to discern whether they are of divine origin:

- when they cannot be produced or dismissed at will, but come suddenly and last short time;
- when they leave the soul in great peace;
- when they produce fruits of virtue, a great humility and perseverance in good. No perfect imaginary vision occurs without an intellectual vision, which makes the soul see and penetrate its meaning:

Sometimes this imaginary intellectual vision is accompanied by ecstasy (one or more senses are turned off). When the vision starts in ecstasy, it is called rapture.

- intellectual vision - manifestation of an object to the intellect without any actual dependence on sensible images.

G. Supernatural words:

Heard audibly

Heard in intellect (Still small voice) they appear suddenly.

- *Successive intellectual words* - they come from our spirit which is enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and with such facility and new views that the understanding cannot imagine that they spring from its own depths. You get out while in prayer
- *Formal intellectual words* are so called because the soul knows formally that they are uttered by another, without any contribution on its part. . you suddenly 'hear something'
- *Substantial intellectual words* are formal locutions which effect immediately what they announce. God says: be good! And you are suddenly transformed.

H. Divine touches: very lofty and sweet intellectual penetration of God. They affect the will deeply and the intellect; **This contemplation (received in faith) is the end to which we should lead the soul; all other knowledge should be directed toward this, beginning with the first; and the soul should progress by detaching itself from all of them. - John of the Cross**

We go from general to particular: from charisms to sanctifying gifts (from the exterior to the interior)

So how does the gift of prophecy start?

I. Divine revelations manifest supernaturally a hidden truth by means of a vision, a word, prophetic instinct;

- public if they have been made by the prophets, Christ, or the apostles, and are **proposed to all by the Church**, which preserves them in Scripture and tradition.
- private when they are directed only to the **particular benefit of certain persons**.

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- revelations properly so called **reveal secrets about God or His works**; these should be always treated suspiciously and discerned
 - revelations improperly so called **give a greater understanding of supernatural truths already known by faith.**
- J. In other words, **sanctifying grace (with charity and the seven gifts connected with it) is far superior to the charisms, and even to prophecy, the highest of all. This statement puts clearly before us the whole scope of St. Paul's teaching on the eminence of charity.**
8. The Lord commands us to set our "hearts on spiritual gifts – above all, the gift of prophecy" (1 Cor 14:1). We may or may not have the gift of prophecy but we are obligated to seek it eagerly. Prophecy is part of the foundation of the Church (Eph 2:20). He or she "who prophesies builds up the Church" (1 Cor 14:4). A prophet speaks to the Church for its upbuilding, encouragement, and consolation (1 Cor 14:3). Prophecy is one of the ministries that equips the saints to build up the body of Christ (Eph 4:11-12). "Without prophecy the people become demoralized" (Prv 29:18). "Indeed, the Lord God does nothing without revealing His plan to His servants, the prophets" (Am 3:7). Without a prophet, we don't know what to do (1 Mc 4:46). Without prophecy, we remain dead, dry bones (Ez 37:4). If we despise prophecy, we stifle the Spirit (1 Thes 5:19-20). "Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets!" (Nm 11:29)
9. Prophecy:
ENCOURAGE - confirmation in times of new beginnings
EXHORT - challenge, in times of processing life and struggles
COMFORT - console, in times of brokenness
10. So the question #1 is: How are you developing your skill of hearing God?
- How is your prayer life?
 - How is your immersion in the Word?
 - How is your spiritual growth? Where are you? Do you know the basics of spiritual journeys from Tradition?
 - What are your main sins, obstacles, fears and how you deal with it?
 - Who is your mentor, elder, friend, cohort with whom you learn, you are accountable to and you develop?
 - How are you practicing what you are learning? What practical steps do you use to develop your revelatory gifts?
11. GIFT - ability
CALL - identity
ANOINTING - purpose
CHARISM - mission