

RADIANT WITH JOY IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD



“Our Help Is In The Name Of The Lord”
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One of the basic rules for the discernment of spirits could be formulated as follows: Where joylessness rules and humor dies, we may be certain that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, is not present. Furthermore, joy is a sign of grace. One who is serene from the bottom of his heart, one who has suffered without losing joy, is not far from the God of the Gospel, from the Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of eternal joy.

Benedict XVI

God Wants Us To Be Joyful

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be always in my mouth. My soul will glory in the Lord; let the poor hear and be glad. Magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he answered me, delivered me from all my fears. Look to him and be radiant, and your faces may not blush for shame. This poor one cried out and the Lord heard, and from all his distress he saved him. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he saves them. Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the stalwart one who takes refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his holy ones; nothing is lacking to those who fear him. The rich grow poor and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Psalms 34:1-11

What is Joy?

The Greek word for 'joy' is chara, derived from the word charis, which is the Greek word for 'grace.' This is significant to note, for chara is produced by the charis of God. This means 'joy' is not a human-based happiness that comes and goes but, rather, true 'joy' is divine in its origin. It is a Spirit-given expression that flourishes best in hard times. For example, in 1 Thessalonians 1:6,[10] the Thessalonians were under great stress due to persecution; yet in the midst of it all, they continued to experience great joy. The Greek strongly implies that their supernatural joy was due to the Holy Spirit working in them. Paul even called it the "joy of the Holy Spirit"

Joy & Hope

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." "The Holy Spirit . . . he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.

(CCC #1817)

Ezra read clearly from the book of the law of God, interpreting it so that all could understand what was read. Then Nehemiah, that is, the governor, and Ezra the priest-scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all the people: "Today is holy to the LORD your God. Do not lament, do not weep!"—for all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the law. He continued: "Go, eat rich foods and drink sweet drinks, and allot portions to those who had nothing prepared; for today is holy to our LORD. Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the LORD is your strength!" And the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Silence! Today is holy, do not be saddened." Then all the people began to eat and drink, to distribute portions, and to celebrate with great joy, for they understood the words that had been explained to them.

Nehemiah 8:8–12

NABRE

Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CCC #675

A PROMISE YOU CAN COUNT ON!

When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the pain because of her joy that a child has been born into the world. So you also are now in anguish. But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you. On that day you will not question me about anything. Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. Until now you have not asked anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

John 16:21-25

PROPHETIC WORDS

To put this more positively: the future of the Church, once again as always, will be reshaped by saints, by men, that is, whose minds probe deeper than the slogans of the day, who see more than others see, because their lives embrace a wider reality. Unselfishness, which makes men free, is attained only through the patience of small daily acts of self-denial. By this daily passion, which alone reveals to a man in how many ways he is enslaved by his own ego, by this daily passion and by it alone, a man's eyes are slowly opened. He sees only to the extent that he has lived and suffered. If today we are scarcely able any longer to become aware of God, that is because we find it so easy to evade ourselves, to flee from the depths of our being by means of the narcotic of some pleasure or other. Thus our own interior depths remain closed to us. If it is true that a man can see only with his heart, then how blind we all are!

We have no need of a Church that celebrates the cult of action in political prayers. It is utterly superfluous. Therefore, it will destroy itself. What will remain is the Church of Jesus Christ, the Church that believes in the God who has become man and promises us life beyond death. The kind of priest who is no more than a social worker can be replaced by the psychotherapist and other specialists; but the priest who is no specialist, who does not stand on the sidelines, watching the game, giving official advice, but in the name of God places himself at the disposal of men, who is beside them in their sorrows, in their joys, in their hope and in their fear, such a priest will certainly be needed in the future.

Faith & The Future

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The process will be long and wearisome as was the road from the false progressivism of the eve of the French Revolution—when a bishop might be thought smart if he made fun of dogmas and even insinuated that the existence of God was by no means certain⁹—to the renewal of the nineteenth century. But when the trial of this sifting is past, a great power will flow from a more spiritualized and simplified Church. Men in a totally planned world will find themselves unspeakably lonely. If they have completely lost sight of God, they will feel the whole horror of their poverty. Then they will discover the little flock of believers as something wholly new. They will discover it as a hope that is meant for them, an answer for which they have always been searching in secret.

Faith & The Future

pp.115-116

More Radiant with Joy!

- Work your salvation with care and concern.
- Seek interior healing for past trauma. So many people are oppressed by the devil (Acts 10:38)
- Avoid self-reliance (Proverbs 3:5)
- Understand the importance of community and fellowship. (Avoid isolation. Proper use of social media, AI, etc.)

More Radiant with Joy!

- Look to the Saints! They are our cloud of witnesses. (St. Teresa of Calcutta is our saint for the day.)
- Don't neglect the Mass. Fr. Reelhil's recent address.
- Surround yourself with good resources...Pints with Aquinas, Lila Rose, Fr. Chris Alar, Fr. Jim Northrop "Grace in the Midst of Chaos on YouTube"
- Questions?