

Gaudete et Exsultate

Chapter 4 - Signs of Holiness in Today's World

Opening Prayer:

God, today we ask you to hear our prayers. In a time when we are so connected to the world, set us apart. In a time of unrest and uncertainty, we ask for holiness. Search our hearts, renew our minds and help us to love like you love us. Make us holy. Use us to do your will on this earth. May we be set apart for you. May we be holy. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

WATCH:

PowerPoint presentation and reflection

Using the following quotes and the video clips of Pope Francis on humility and saints, please consider the following questions.

PERSEVERANCE, PATIENCE AND MEEKNESS

"The saints do not waste energy complaining about the failings of others; they can hold their tongue before the faults of their brothers and sisters and avoid the verbal violence that demeans and mistreats others. Saints hesitate to treat others harshly; they consider others better than themselves (cf. Phil 2:3)."

- Pope Francis (Gaudete Et Exsultate, 116)

- When do you witness complaints, judgments or mistreatment of others?
- Are you ever tempted to participate?
- How might you react more like the saints?

JOY AND A SENSE OF HUMOR

Far from...putting on a dreary face, the saints are joyful and full of good humor. Though completely realistic, they radiate a positive and hopeful spirit. The Christian life is "joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:17), for "the necessary result of the love of charity is joy; since every lover rejoices at being united to the beloved...the effect of charity is joy."

- Pope Francis (Gaudete Et Exsultate, 122)

- Where am I being challenged by Jesus to embrace joy?
- Where do I struggle to live joyfully?
- Where do I find joy easily in my life?

BOLDNESS AND PASSION

“Holiness is also parrhesia: it is boldness, an impulse to evangelize and to leave a mark in this world.”

- Pope Francis (Gaudete Et Exsultate, 129)

- Do you live your faith in a bold way? How?
- Who models that for you?

IN COMMUNITY

“Let us not forget that Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to details. The little detail that wine was running out at a party. The little detail that one sheep was missing. The little detail of noticing the widow who offered her two small coins. The little detail of having spare oil for the lamps, should the bridegroom delay. The little detail of asking the disciples how many loaves of bread they had. The little detail of having a fire burning and a fish cooking as he waited for the disciples at daybreak.”

- Pope Francis (Gaudete Et Exsultate, 144)

- Do you see God “in the details”? If so, where?
- How can I be more attentive to God's presence in the details?

IN CONSTANT PRAYER

“Let me ask you: Are there moments when you place yourself quietly in the Lord's presence, when you calmly spend time with him, when you bask in his gaze? Do you let his fire inflame your heart? Unless you let him warm you more and more with his love and tenderness, you will not catch fire. How will you then be able to set the hearts of others on fire by your words and witness? If, gazing on the face of Christ, you feel unable to let yourself be healed and transformed, then enter into the Lord's heart, into his wounds, for that is the abode of divine mercy.”

- Pope Francis (Gaudete Et Exsultate, 151)

- When in your day do you find quiet time?
- How might you find more quiet time to spend with in prayer with Jesus?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Oh, Lord my God.
You called me from the sleep of nothingness
merely because in your tremendous love
you want to make good and beautiful beings.
You have called me by my name in my mother's womb.
You have given me breath and light and movement
and walked with me every moment of my existence.
I am amazed, Lord God of the universe,
that you attend to me and, more, cherish me.
Create in me the faithfulness that moves you,
and I will trust you and yearn for you all my days. Amen.
—Joseph Tetlow, SJ