

Glorious Joy

In summertime, joy is a little easier to keep in your grasp. The smiles and laughs are quicker to appear. Contentment feels more possible. Maybe joy is fed by sunshine. Or maybe I'm mistaking an abundance of vitamin D for something more. Either way, the arrival of summer has me thinking about joy.

I see it on my three-year-old son's face as he's shooting water pistols at his buddies with wild abandon. I hear it in my two-year-old daughter's laughter when her daddy tosses her in the air. It is impossible, I swear, not to absorb some of their joy in those times. Have you been around someone like that?

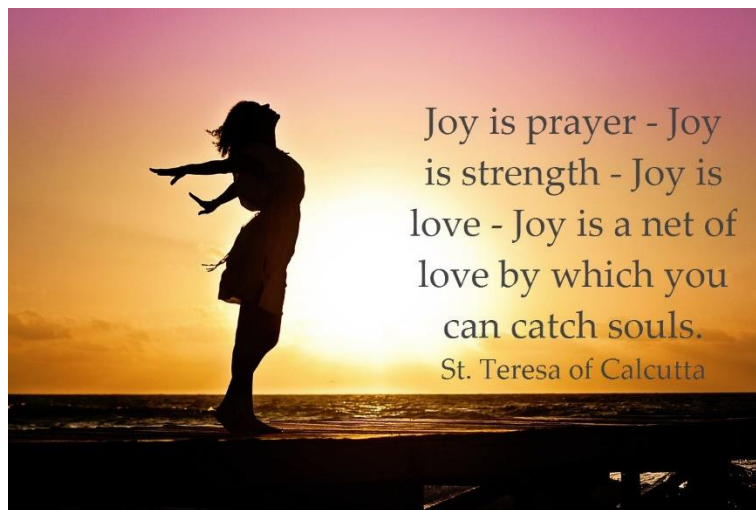
There's one person from whom you should be guaranteed to absorb joy: the Christian.

"My heart leaps for joy and with my song I praise him." Psalm 28:7

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." John 15:11

"Although you have not seen him, you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy." 1 Peter 1:8

Oh, the Christian life can be one of turmoil, sacrifice, and work. It demands much of us; there's no denying that. Yet, Jesus clearly meant for us to be people of joy! The Holy Spirit is ready and willing to give you that joy. Pray for it. Open your heart up to it. Look for it in the life around you. Leave behind the things that obstruct it.



Joy, in its most authentic meaning, is rooted in Christ alone. The joy provided by life with Jesus is not conditional; it doesn't depend on pleasant circumstances or easy living. True joy is sustained by faith in the God who loves you and offers salvation to you; true joy is anchored by the hope we have of eternal life. That is the joy that is a fundamental characteristic of so many saints. That is the joy Jesus desired for his disciples – the

disciples listening to his teachings in the Gospel era and the disciples in every generation since then. As one of those disciples, if you ever wonder how you can better shine the light of Christ in this world, take a look at whether or not you spread joy.

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