

AUGUST CONTEMPLATION

JOY AND A SENSE OF HUMOR

*The Gospel and the Holy Spirit evoke words and gestures
that enflame hearts and help them to open up to God and to others.*

Pope Francis to Families of the Most Precious Blood, 30 June 2018

Opening Hymn

Eucharistic Exposition

Leader:

May this time of prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament be a precious opportunity to grow in awareness of the incomparable treasure which Christ has entrusted to his Church. May it encourage a more lively and fervent celebration of the Eucharist, leading to a Christian life transformed by love. May all of us rediscover the gift of the Eucharist as light and strength for our daily lives in the world in the exercise of our respective professions. We pray in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

Silent Reflection

Let us keep silent within ourselves that our hearts and ears may be open.

Prayer Before Reading Scripture

Leader: *Let us pray.*

All: Jesus Christ, our Master, You are the Way and the Truth and the life. Grant that we may learn the sublime knowledge of Your charity in the Spirit of St. Paul the Apostle and of the Catholic Church. Send Your Holy Spirit to teach us and remind us of what You have preached. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture Reading: *(1 Thes 2:6b-13)*

As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *(Psalm 98:1-3)*

Response: *Sing a new song to the Lord. He has done wonderful things.*

Sing a new song to the Lord.

He has done wonderful things. **R/.**

By the power of his right hand and his holy arm
he has saved his people. **R/.**

The Lord has made known his power to save.
He has shown the nations that he does what is right. **R/.**

He has shown his faithful love
to the people of Israel. **R/.**

People from one end of the earth to the other
have seen that our God has saved us. **R.**

Glory be to the Father...

Reflection:* *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 122, 125

Far from being timid, morose, acerbic or melancholy, or 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.”[THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 70, a. 3.] Having received the beautiful gift of God’s word, we embrace it “in much affliction, with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit” (*1 Thess* 1:6). If we allow the Lord to draw us out of our shell and change our lives, then we can do as Saint Paul tells us: “Rejoice in the Lord always; I say it again, rejoice!” (*Phil* 4:4).¹

Hard times may come, when the cross casts its shadow, yet nothing can destroy the supernatural joy that “adapts and changes, but always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved.”[*Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), 6: AAS 105 (2013), 1221.] That joy brings deep security, serene hope and a spiritual fulfillment that the world cannot understand or appreciate.²

¹ JOY AND A SENSE OF HUMOR, 122.

² *Ibid.*, 125.

Silent Reflection

Prayer for the Family

God and Father of us all, in Jesus, your Son and our Savior, you have made us your sons and daughters in the family of the Church. May your grace and love help our families in every part of the world be united to one another in fidelity to the Gospel. May the example of the Holy Family, with the aid of your Holy Spirit, guide all families, especially those most troubled, to be homes of communion and prayer and to always seek your truth and live in your love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

* This year the *Reflections* will be taken from *Gaudete et Exsultate*, the Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis that presents a spirituality of holiness in everyday life clearly based on Catholic Tradition.

“We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves.” *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 14

Intentions

Let us pray together the Daily Offering with the intention of the Holy Father and our personal intentions:

All:

Eternal Father, we offer you in union with Mary, Mother of the Redeemer of humankind, the Blood Jesus shed with love in his passion and every day is offered on the altar. In union with the Victim offered for the salvation of the world, we offer today's actions in expiation for our sins, for the conversion of sinners, for the souls in purgatory, for the needs of the holy Church, and especially:

For the Holy Father's intention: That families, through their life of prayer and love, become ever more clearly "schools of true human growth," we pray. *R/.*

Our response will be: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

For parents who seek to raise their children in the faith of Jesus Christ, grant that their love may bear fruit, we pray. *R/.*

Lord, You have promised to be with your Church always, may the Holy Spirit inspire many more vocations to the priesthood and religious life, we pray. *R/.*

For those who've asked the help of our prayers, for those who have no one to pray for them, and for the intentions we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray. *R/.*

Our Father...

Silent Reflection

Closing Prayer

Leader: *Let us pray:*

All: Lord Jesus, in the Eucharist You make your dwelling among us and become our traveling companion; sustain our Christian communities so that they may be ever more open to listening and accepting your Word. May they draw from the Eucharist a renewed commitment to spreading in society, by the proclamation of your Gospel, the signs and deeds of an attentive and active charity. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Benediction and Reposition

Closing Hymn