

City Of Joy- CHICAGO

By: Father John Catoir JCD, 11/5/15

Have you ever seen such jubilation as when The Chicago Cubs won the World Series, in the tenth inning, of the seventh game? For the first time in 108 years the Cubs finally broke thru and won. Bravo.

I remember being invited to Chicago by the Greater Chicago Broadcast Ministries, an ecumenical TV network. I was asked to give a talk on "Joy." Lydia Talbot, the executive producer, interviewed me on air after my presentation, and here is an excerpt.

Lydia Talbot: Father, your inspiring message of joy has reached millions of people through The Christophers whose motto is: "Better to light one candle than curse the darkness. How does that simple, empowering message change so many lives?

Fr. Catoir: It's a matter of focusing on the positive. The cup is half full not half empty. You know there's so much bad stuff out there in the world, we could spend a lot of time denouncing it, but it's more effective to affirm the good. It's really a matter of focus. How much energy does a person have? We have to use it well by staying focused on joy. Blessed Juliana of Norwich said it well, "The greatest honor you can give to Almighty God is to live joyfully because of the knowledge of his love.

LT: In your sermon you said, "The gift of joy blossoms from a compassionate heart." But aren't there many people who would say, "Where is the joy in the pain and suffering of the human condition? What do you say to them?

Fr. C.: Granted, there is no joy in suffering, but there is great joy in being another Christ, who brings healing and love to every situation. I can see why the martyrs burst into joyful song as they were rounded up to be devoured by lions in the Roman Colosseum. A higher Spirit enfolded them.

LT: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Happy are they who hunger and thirst for justice."

Fr. C: Exactly; there is joy in sacrifice. Ask any mother who suffered to bring a child into the world. I don't mean that the moment of suffering can be transposed into immediate joy, but when the focus is on the greater good being served, we can transcend the misery. We can unite our pain to Christ's suffering on the cross for the salvation of souls.

LT: Now in your retirement you seem to be busier than ever with your St. Jude Ministry. Tell us about that.

Fr.C: Well, it's primarily a radio ministry, but it has expanded to include the social media. I have sent out over 10,000 Tweets. My Tweet address is (#johncatoir). I'm also on Facebook, and I have two websites, 'messengerofjoy.com', and 'johncatoir.com'. In the radio ministry, I purchase national air time on Westwood One Network, and offer 30 second pre-recorded spots; e.g.: "Are you feeling sad, worn out, and spiritually dry? Don't be discouraged, you're a good person and the Lord loves you very much." I conclude them all with, "this is Father John Catoir, inviting you to visit my website, 'messengerofjoy' dot com. God bless you"

LT: And the response?

Fr. C: Well, it's amazing. I hear from Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. Many of whom are in need, but they heard someone say, "You're a good person, and the Lord loves you," and they want to say thanks.

T: Thank you Father Catoir for sharing your important message with us.