

“Easter Blessing”

By: Fr. John Catoir

I wish you a Happy Easter, and I send you this blessing with my love and prayers.

May the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints - and whatsoever good you do or suffering you endure - cleanse you of all your sins - bring you an increase of grace, and prepare you for the joys of eternal life with Our Heavenly Father-Amen.

The solemn feast of Easter is about joy. You once were lost, and now you are found. It reminds me of the sounds I heard when I was running Eva's Village, the drug and alcoholic rehab center in Paterson.

This quote from a recovering addict can explain what I mean.

"When I first came to the program I was stunned by the constant sound of laughter. Outsiders are shocked when we burst into laughter over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We are in recovery, and we're helping others to recover. What greater cause could there be for rejoicing?"

How true! Getting your life back is a great reason for having a celebration. The same man added this pearl of wisdom, "I realize today that cheerfulness and merriment are a necessary part of a healthy life."

Easter is the beginning of our new life. The Penitential Season of Lent had its place, but now we focus on the future. "He is risen- The Lord Jesus has risen from the dead."

Imagine what that means for you. You've been given a personal promise from Jesus Christ that you too will rise and enter paradise, your true and eternal home.

God's children do not fret about their worthiness. No one is worthy. Have a blind faith in the promises of Christ, and enjoy your precious life here and now.

May you come to appreciate the value of a good sense of humor. As you plow through the drudgery of life; do it with good cheer. Think of the big picture and rejoice. Laughter is the background music of a life of faith. It bolsters us in times of stress. Think beyond yourself.

Isn't it a bit irreverent to take yourself too seriously? Those who think that God expects perfection from us are simply misinformed. All He asks is that we make a sensible effort to be good. Good is good enough. No one is perfect. No one can ever achieve perfection. So settle down; free yourself of needless worry.

Pope Francis wants us to see the Church as a field hospital in a combat zone. Do what you can; do your part. The Supreme Law is threefold: cling to God, think of others, and don't put yourself down.

Keep a keen sense of humor in the process. Be grateful that your Savior Jesus Christ is preparing a place for you in heaven right now as you read these words.

God bless you, and may The Lord be your strength and your joy.

(Note to Editors: Fr. Catoir's Easter article may be used free of charge.) Easter 2017