

The Joy of Jesus

By Father John Catoir - Jan. 20, 2019

The Joy of Jesus is a Divine mystery, but Joy itself is something everyone understands. The Holy Spirit of Joy is a supernatural reality that comes to us in ordinary ways. At the tabernacle of every Catholic Church we come together as one People, forming the Mystical Body of Christ. We realize that we live in union with Jesus, “In Him we live and breathe and have our being.”

The Catholic Church is the oldest, pan-national, organization in the world. Empires have come and gone, but the Church has survived the storms and trials of life. The reason it is still standing, despite so many abuses and scandal, is because Jesus Christ its founder is both true God and true man. The Divine love of Christ empowers Him to perform His saving mission. “I did not come to condemn, but to save the world.” Jesus returns good for evil, in the form of joy, forgiveness, and healing. His love is infinite and universal.

Miraculously, the Church survives generation after generation despite the many sins of His people. Renewing itself repeatedly the Church reveals a Divine Center rooted in God’s love. In my book, **Joy, The Spirit’s Gigantic Secret Behind the Church’s Survival**, (Alba House, N.Y., 2006), I explore the miracle of the Church’s miraculous self-purification. G.K Chesterton said, “Joy is the gigantic secret of Christianity.” Christ’s Love is the deciding factor in our survival. His Love and Joy are two sides of the same coin.

Examine the words of Jesus and see how joy, love and forgiveness have played such a vital role in the Church’s salvific mission. The ability to achieve renewal year after year is an astounding miracle. The Sacrament of confession is a basic part of this ongoing miracle in the lives of saints and sinners.

Pope John Paul II took repentance to an entirely new level when He asked God to forgive all the sins the Church has committed over the centuries. Because the Church is made up of weak human beings Pope John Paul II, at the Second Vatican Council decided to name the Church, “The Sinful People of God.” He deplored and repented the many sexual scandals that have plagued the Church, especially those involving the sexual abuses committed by priests, bishops, and cardinals. He begged for forgiveness for the Church’s mistreatment of Jews in past centuries, and repented the Church’s abusive treatment of heretics in the Spanish Inquisition. He also repented forty other distinct crimes that have offended God and shamed the Church.

Nevertheless, billions of people down through the ages have found Joy and solace in the Church, precisely because it has become for them a port in the storm of life. They have experienced great mercy from popes, bishops and priests in their routine sacramental ministry. Mercy increases and multiplies. Even many survivors of the sex-abuse scandals still love the Church.

The Doctrine of Original Sin traces man’s sinfulness to Adam and Eve, and their refusal to obey the will of God. The failure of humans to seek First the Kingdom of God has been a constant thorn in the side of Jesus. But His infinite Mercy has prevailed over sorrow. We are constantly blessed by Almighty God and His infinite mercy.

The sin of Adam Eve is often referred to as, “O Felix culpa,” Latin for “O happy fault, which brought about our salvation.”