

POPE FRANCIS - APRIL 2018
GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE - REJOICE AND BE GLAD

QUOTES - DAILY SELECTION AND COMMENTS BY FR. GERRY

April 10th Tuesday - Paragraph 32

HOLINESS AND FREEDOM

What a special quote from Pope Francis.

*“Do not be afraid of holiness.
It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy.
On the contrary, you will become
what the Father had in mind when he created you,
and you will be faithful to your deepest self.
To depend on God sets us free from every form of enslavement
and leads us to recognize our great dignity.”*

Thank you, Pope Francis.

It is true. People can be afraid of being holy.

That fear can prevent us from being truly free.

Dear God, you inspire us to be free and holy.

Fr Gerry

April 11th Wednesday - Paragraph 34

AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN OUR WEAKNESS AND GOD’S GRACE

Pope Francis writes:

*“Do not be afraid to set your sights higher,
to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God.
Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit.
Holiness does not make you less human,
since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God’s grace.”*

As a parish family this week, we continue daily to focus on insights from the writing ‘Rejoice and Be Glad’ by Pope Francis.

Fr Gerry

April 12th Thursday - Paragraph 11

GOD CALLS EACH OF US IN OUR UNIQUENESS TO HOLINESS

Pope Francis in his writing ‘Rejoice and Be Glad’ directs us:

*“We should not grow discouraged before examples of holiness that appear unattainable.
There are some testimonies that may prove helpful and inspiring,
but that we are not meant to copy,
for that could even lead us astray from the one specific path
that the Lord has in mind for us.
The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path,
that they bring out the very best of themselves,
the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (cf. 1 Cor 12:7),
rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them.”*

*We are all called to be witnesses,
but there are many actual ways of bearing witness."*

Others inspire us, not to be replicas of themselves, but to be unique witnesses ourselves.

Where do you discern God is calling you in love?

Fr Gerry

April 13th Friday - Paragraph 12

GENIUS OF WOMAN

We continue with our daily quotes from Pope Francis.

*"the "genius of woman" is seen in feminine styles of holiness,
which are an essential means of reflecting God's holiness in this world.
Indeed, in times when women tended to be most ignored or overlooked,
the Holy Spirit raised up saints whose attractiveness produced
new spiritual vigour and important reforms in the Church.*

*We can mention Saint Hildegard of Bingen, Saint Bridget, Saint Catherine of Siena,
Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux.*

*But I think too of all those unknown or forgotten women who, each in her own way,
sustained and transformed families and communities by the power of their witness."*

Let us reflect on the 'genius of woman' today.

There are so many inspiring examples in our community with which to begin.

And many other women of holiness, leadership and courage.

Thank you.

Fr Gerry

April 14th Saturday - Paragraph 171

SILENT PRAYER

*"The Lord speaks to us in a variety of ways, at work,
through others and at every moment.*

*Yet we simply cannot do without the silence of prolonged prayer,
which enables us better to perceive God's language,*

*to interpret the real meaning of the inspirations we believe we have received,
to calm our anxieties and to see the whole of our existence afresh in his own light.*

*In this way, we allow the birth of a new synthesis that springs from a life inspired by the
Spirit."*

April 15th Sunday - Paragraph 144

POPE FRANCIS IN 'REJOICE & BE GLAD' HIGHLIGHTS LITTLE DETAILS OF LIFE

"Let us not forget that Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to details.

The little detail that wine was running out at a party.

The little detail that one sheep was missing.

The little detail of noticing the widow who offered her two small coins.

The little detail of having spare oil for the lamps, should the bridegroom delay.

The little detail of asking the disciples how many loaves of bread they had.

The little detail of having a fire burning and a fish cooking

as he waited for the disciples at daybreak."

What little details do we notice?
What little details do we pray about?
Pope Francis explains that it is the *little details of love*
that a community cherishes openly.
Fr Gerry

April 16th Monday - Paragraph 134

THE CHALLENGES BRING US BACK TO GOD OF TENDERNESS

Pope Francis reflects in 'Rejoice and Be Glad'

*"Like the prophet Jonah, we are constantly tempted to flee to a safe haven.
It can have many names: individualism, spiritualism, living in a little world, addiction,
intransigence, the rejection of new ideas and approaches, dogmatism, nostalgia,
pessimism, hiding behind rules and regulations.
We can resist leaving behind a familiar and easy way of doing things.
Yet the challenges involved can be like the storm, the whale,
the worm that dried the gourd plant, or the wind and sun that burned Jonah's head.
For us, as for him, they can serve to bring us back to the God of tenderness,
who invites us to set out ever anew on our journey."*

Let us reflect on our journey.

Do any images or words of the Pope's reflection strike a chord in us?

How do we face the temptation to flee?

How does God invite us now to set out anew?

Fr Gerry

April 17th Tuesday - Paragraph 135

SETTING OUT ANEW TO THE FRINGES OF LIFE

*"God is eternal newness. He impels us constantly to set out anew,
to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond.
He takes us to where humanity is most wounded, where men and women,
beneath the appearance of a shallow conformity,
continue to seek an answer to the question of life's meaning. "*

April 18th Wednesday - Paragraph 135

FINDING JESUS IN THE FRINGES OF SOCIETY

*"God is not afraid! He is fearless!
He is always greater than our plans and schemes.
Unafraid of the fringes, he himself became a fringe (cf. Phil 2:6-8; Jn 1:14).
So if we dare to go to the fringes, we will find him there;
indeed, he is already there.
Jesus is already there, in the hearts of our brothers and sisters,
in their wounded flesh,
in their troubles and in their profound desolation. He is already there."*

April 19th Thursday - Paragraph 137

FREEING OURSELVES FROM SEDUCTIVE COMPLACENCY

*“Complacency is seductive;
it tells us that there is no point in trying to change things,
that there is nothing we can do,
because this is the way things have always been
and yet we always manage to survive.
By force of habit we no longer stand up to evil.
We “let things be”, or as others have decided they ought to be.
Yet let us allow the Lord to rouse us from our torpor, to free us from our inertia.
Let us rethink our usual way of doing things;
let us open our eyes and ears, and above all our hearts,
so as not to be complacent about things as they are,
but unsettled by the living and effective word of the risen Lord.”*

April 20th Friday - Paragraph 151

THE POWER OF THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST

*“We need to remember that “contemplation of the face of Jesus, died and risen,
restores our humanity,
even when it has been broken by the troubles of this life or marred by sin.
We must not domesticate the power of the face of Christ”.[\[113\]](#)
So let me ask you:
Are there moments when you place yourself quietly in the Lord’s presence,
when you calmly spend time with him,
when you bask in his gaze? “*

April 21st Saturday - Paragraph 151

THE FIRE OF JESUS INFLAMING OUR HEARTS

*“Do you let his fire inflame your heart?
Unless you let him warm you more and more
with his love and tenderness,
you will not catch fire.
How will you then be able to set the hearts of others
on fire by your words and witness?
If, gazing on the face of Christ,
you feel unable to let yourself be healed and transformed,
then enter into the Lord’s heart, into his wounds,
for that is the abode of divine mercy.”*

GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE - REJOICE AND BE GLAD ONLINE