

Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

51 – January 15, 2009

Joyful or Depressed, Crestfallen Like Cows?

Joy is something which belongs to youth and to youthful hearts (young in spirit). Therefore, it is characteristic of the Christians, or, at least should be. The Christian must be joyful and must radiate his/her joy to those around him/her. We must create or maintain a realm of joy in our families, in our groups, in our apostolic circles.

When was the last time we laughed heartily?.....not that courteous smile to be pleasant in society or that forced applause even though the joke was not funny, but rather, that sincere, healthy, spontaneous laugh which comes from within. It does not mean that one has to always laugh, but one must manifest always the fruit of the Spirit which is joy and follows love.

What faces do others see in us? Having a long face does not express honor for God whom we profess to serve and glorify in loving. “Either change faces or change gurus,” said the master to his disciple who considered it bad publicity for his school to have sad disciples at his side. A famous American judge did not become a pastor because the clergymen he knew, by their appearance and conduct, appeared to be funeral home employees. “And do not make God’s Holy Spirit sad,” says St. Paul (Eph 4:30). It is very possible that the Spirit may not feel at home behind serious faces and bitter expressions. If we bear God within, it should be noticeable on our face.

It is not about forcing a smile or pretending to be joyful as it is done in the modern business of selling and convincing: market smiles, rented faces to gain clients. Among so many pretended smiles, it is not strange that we lose the feeling of authentic joy.....free, spontaneous. The world must recover the ability to be joyful within and without.

Perhaps some things must change. If until now my brother or my sister put my nerves on edge and needed to avoid me, in the future it should be different. Or, if I have become touchy with my parents, I should change my attitude with them.

Perhaps until now we seemed like a bottle of champagne whose cork easily shoots into the sky.

We should make an effort to be joyful and abounding in happiness as it pertains to a young person. We should become small eagles who do not rest.....who always anew want to reach the sun.....who are always happy.....and who also remain joyful when God sends crosses and suffering.

We should give to others all the love and affection we can.....also kisses, embraces, caresses. **In the family and in marriage** we cannot and should not renounce these noble and sensitive joys. In this area, it is not permitted to make sacrifices: coldness is not allowed. If we do not make our families a realm of happiness, the children will escape and seek other joys which may not be so healthy. If the children find all the joys they need in their own families, they immediately feel good there.

There is a law hidden behind that. In the long run, in a community, there will either be an atmosphere of joy or a swamp atmosphere. Something in the middle is not possible. I think we are all aware of the great importance of joy so that there will be a good spirit in our groups.....in our families.....and in our hearts.

Questions for reflection

1. Do we constantly depend on our moods: happy today, tomorrow in bad humor?
2. Are we happy persons, optimists who also see the good side of things?
3. Are we pessimists, going around like cows, crestfallen?
4. How do we react to the blows and problems of life.....to suffering and the cross?

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Translation: Carlos Cantú Family Federation La Feria. Texas USA 010909