



Invest time each week to expand your vocabulary and deepen your faith.

10 March 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Joy ^{ˈjɔɪ}

A fruit or mark of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the faithful. While pleasure comes through the senses and happiness from human interaction, Christian **joy** is experienced in loving God and neighbor.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-joy>

CONTEXT

Joy is a net of love by which we catch souls.

—*Saint Teresa of Calcutta*

Joy, with peace, is the sister of charity. Serve the Lord with laughter.

—*Saint Pio of Pietrelcina*

The gospel is a proclamation of **joy**. Ideologies don't make people smile, but the gospel is a smile. It makes you smile because it touches your soul with the Good News.

—*Pope Francis*

WHY IT MATTERS

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen once divided the world into those who have found God and those who are still hungering, thirsting, and seeking. Religious practices in themselves may or may not bring a person to genuine holiness. But the life that exhibits true **joy** proves to be radiant with the life of God.

From *Gaudium et spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: "The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and of civilization, the center of the human race, the **joy** of every heart and the answer to all its yearnings."

RELATED WORDS

Rejoice | Alleluia | Fruits of the Spirit

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Will my faith make me happy?

The biblical idea of happiness is linked to *beatitude* (Latin for "bliss"). Jesus offers beatitudes in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's gospel. Often the primary word of each beatitude is translated as *blessed*. A more literal rendering might be the cry, "Happy you!" who are just, pure of heart, merciful, a peacemaker, and so on. God is the source of happiness, therefore doing as God does brings bliss.

So, the short answer to the question is, yes, living according to God's will makes you happy. It's the only thing, in fact, that does; or as Saint Thomas Aquinas declared, "God alone satisfies." Saint Paul lists **joy** as one of nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. Saint Francis de Sales went so far as to warn against giving in to excessive sadness as it's a counter-witness to the **joy** that comes in the life of faith.

—*Alice Camille, from Questions Catholics Ask <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-happy>*

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, LAETARE SUNDAY (MARCH 10)

Rejoice and be glad

Most of us aren't crazy about being told to "cheer up." Yet today is called Laetare ("rejoice") Sunday because even though it's Lent, the church urges us to cheer up in the words of Isaiah 66:10: "Rejoice with Jerusalem all you who love her." We may feel affection for the memory of biblical Jerusalem or concern for the current sorrows of the city. But it's the heavenly city, where justice and peace reign, that gives us reason to rejoice.

READINGS: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23; Ephesians 2:4-10; John 3:14-21 (32 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/031024-YearB.cfm>). "Whoever lives the truth comes to the light."

FAITH IN ACTION

Remember our **joy** and hope lies in the land where Christ rules.