

REJOICE & BE GLAD - REFLECTION GUIDE

CHAPTER THREE: IN THE LIGHT OF THE MASTER, PART ONE

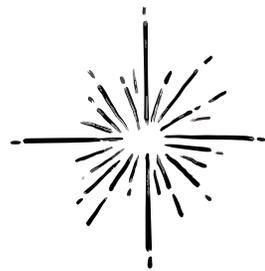
Re-read these excerpts from chapter three of *Gaudete Et Exultate* (Rejoice and Be Glad), Pope Francis' exhortation 'On the Call to Holiness in Today's World' and reflect on the following questions.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"

Read "Wealth ensures nothing. Indeed, once we think we are rich, we can become so self-satisfied that we leave no room for God's word, for the love of our brothers and sisters, or for the enjoyment of the most important things in life. In this way, we miss out on the greatest treasure of all. That is why Jesus calls blessed those who are poor in spirit, those who have a poor heart, for there the Lord can enter with his perennial newness." (68)

Reflect What material goods do you have the strongest attachment to? Do they get in the way of your relationship with God, our friends or family?

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth"



Read "Christ says: "Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Mt 11:29). If we are constantly upset and impatient with others, we will end up drained and weary. But if we regard the faults and limitations of others with tenderness and meekness, without an air of superiority, we can actually help them and stop wasting our energy on useless complaining. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux tells us that "perfect charity consists in putting up with others' mistakes, and not being scandalized by their faults"". (72)

Reflect Can you think of a time when you have been wrong, made a mistake or been humiliated? How might you treat others with the same humility and patience you desired for yourself in that situation?

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted"

Read "A person who sees things as they truly are and sympathizes with pain and sorrow is capable of touching life's depths and finding authentic happiness. He or she is consoled, not by the world but by Jesus. Such persons are unafraid to share in the suffering of others; they do not flee from painful situations. They discover the meaning of life by coming to the aid of those who suffer, understanding their anguish and bringing relief. They sense that the other is flesh of our flesh, and are not afraid to draw near, even to touch their wounds. They feel compassion for others in such a way that all distance vanishes. (76)

Reflect Is there a person in your life who is grieving or experiencing suffering of some kind? How might you "draw near" to them in practical ways?

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled"

Read "True justice comes about in people's lives when they themselves are just in their decisions; it is expressed in their pursuit of justice for the poor and the weak. While it is true that the word "justice" can be a synonym for faithfulness to God's will in every aspect of our life, if we give the word too general a meaning, we forget that it is shown especially in justice towards those who are most vulnerable." (79)

Reflect How may God be calling you to use your blessings and gifts for the benefit of those who are weak, vulnerable or oppressed? In what areas of life do you feel called to act for justice?