

REJOICE & BE GLAD - REFLECTION GUIDE

CHAPTER FOUR: SIGNS OF HOLINESS IN TODAY'S WORLD

Re-read these excerpts from chapter four 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.

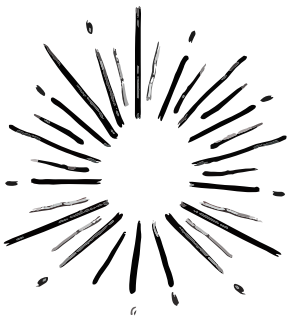
Read "Inner strength, as the work of grace, prevents us from becoming carried away by the violence that is so much a part of life today, because grace defuses vanity and makes possible meekness of heart. The saints do not waste energy complaining about the failings of others; they can hold their tongue before the faults of their brothers and sisters, and avoid the verbal violence that demeans and mistreats others. Saints hesitate to treat others harshly; they consider others better than themselves (cf. Phil 2:3)." (116)



Reflect When do you witness complaints, judgements or mistreatment of others? Are you ever tempted to participate? How might you react more like the saints?

Read "Holiness is also parrhesía: it is boldness, an impulse to evangelize and to leave a mark in this world. To allow us to do this, Jesus himself comes and tells us once more, serenely yet firmly: "Do not be afraid" (Mk 6:50). "I am with you always, to the end of the world" (Mt 28:20). These words enable us to go forth and serve with the same courage that the Holy Spirit stirred up in the Apostles, impelling them to proclaim Jesus Christ. Boldness, enthusiasm, the freedom to speak out, apostolic fervour... the freedom of a life open to God and to others." (129)

Reflect Do you live your faith in a bold way? How? Who models that for you? Have you ever thought of boldness as a Christian virtue?



Read "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 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. A community that cherishes the little details of love, whose members care for one another and create an open and evangelizing environment, is a place where the risen Lord is present, sanctifying it in accordance with the Father's plan." (143, 145)

Reflect What are the details of your daily life God is asking you to be more attentive to? Are these details attended to with love? Do they make your community more "open and evangelizing"?

Read "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? 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." (151)

Reflect When in your day do you find quiet time? How might you find more quiet to spend with in prayer with Jesus who is Holiness?