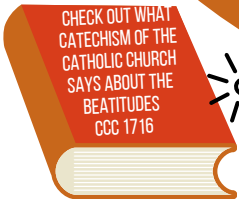




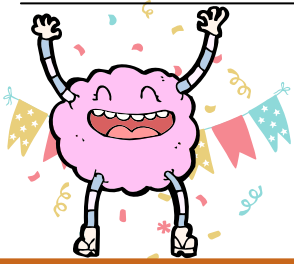
“Joy lives not in the things that surround us, but lives only in the soul.”
St Thérèse of Lisieux



CHOOSE JOY!

“JOY IS THE GIGANTIC SECRET OF THE CHRISTIAN.” GK CHESTERON

WHAT KIND OF THINGS PUT YOU IN AN INSTANT BAD MOOD?



DESCRIBE A DAY THAT WOULD MAKE YOU COMPLETELY HAPPY!

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ "WHY JOY IS MORE CHRISTIAN THAN HAPPINESS" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



What do we all long for, according to Fr Mike at the beginning of this video?

Fr Mike describes happiness as "experiential": what levels of happiness does he mention e.g. pleasure

What is the difficulty in thinking that we'll be happy when we get what we want?

Happiness is circumstantial: what does this mean?

We long for happiness, but what are we made for?

The UC Berkley Study found that we need to learn how to be happy: we don't understand happiness. **Our idea of happiness is very self-focussed. What does this mean?**

Our idea of happiness is false: we can falsely think if we are not experiencing a heightened sense of _____ that we are not happy.

What word appears frequently in Scripture?



The Christian understanding of joy means that in any _____ or _____ we can have joy!

JOY CAN BE DEFINED AS AN ABIDING AND PERVERSIVE SENSE OF WELLBEING.



This means that even in the middle of a crisis, or sorrow, or sadness or uncertainty we can still have joy, for **one reason**. What / Who is that reason? _____

CHOOSE JOY

MATTHEW 5:1-12

LUKE 6:17, 20-26

Until Christ came, people believed either in chance or in the gods. The gods were fickle and uncaring. What did Jesus reveal about the heart of who God is?

I can choose joy in any circumstance or situation, regardless of what happens to me because God knows my _____, He loves _____ and He's _____.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR JOY IS NOT DEPENDENT ON YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES?

IN THE MIDST OF GREAT PAIN, SORROW, UNCERTAINTY,
I AM NOT AFRAID BECAUSE I'M NOT ALONE, GOD IS HERE WITH ME.

We can choose HIS Joy if
we cannot find our own!



READ: LUKE 6:17, 20-26



Luke 6:17, 20-26 tells the familiar story of the Sermon on the Mount, (or in Luke's Gospel, the Plain), or part of it anyway, the part we refer to as the Beatitudes. If Jesus was running a modern day marketing campaign for the Church, people would think He was crazy! Happy are the meek, the persecuted, those who mourn, those who hunger. Really? That just doesn't make sense, or at least not by the world's standards. Jesus knows our happiness cannot be based on the circumstances we find ourselves in, or our achievements or power or wealth: all these things are fickle and fleeting. True joy is based on the sure knowledge that we are created and loved by God, and no matter what life may throw at us, from bad weather, difficult exams, strained friendships, match losses, breakups, sickness and even death, we know that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. United with Him, with our eyes fixed firmly on Him, we can choose joy in any circumstance. Our ultimate goal can't be earthly happiness: our ultimate goal is heaven, and any losses or inconveniences or suffering we may have to go through on our way there will pale into insignificance against the glory and never-ending joy of Heaven!

MISSION!

TAKE NOTE THIS WEEK OF HOW OFTEN YOU ARE TEMPTED TO COMPLAIN. DO YOU FIND YOURSELF COMPLAINING ABOUT THINGS THAT AREN'T EVEN THAT IMPORTANT? HAS IT BECOME A HABIT? TRY FOR A WHOLE DAY NOT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT ANYTHING. INSTEAD SAY A SILENT PRAYER OFFERING UP THE INCONVENIENCE, OR ASKING GOD TO BLESS THOSE WHO ANNOY YOU! SAY SOMETHING POSITIVE AND AFFIRMING INSTEAD!



PRAYER TIME!

Thank You, Jesus for always being with me. Grant me the grace and strength to daily choose You and the joy You promise me. Sorrows and difficulties will come my way, trials are inevitable, but send Your Holy Spirit to remind me I need never be afraid because You are always with me. You know my name and You love me. Because of that, joy is always possible! Amen



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON CHOOSING JOY IN ALL THINGS

- The Beatitudes - Hillsong
- O Mercy - Stu G
- Be One - Natalie Grant
- Hosanna - Hillsong
- Blessed Be - Jason Gray

- Blessed are the Ones - Audrey Assad
- Blessed are the Humble - Graham Kendrick
- We are Blessed - All Sons & Daughters
- Trading my Sorrows - Israel Houghton
- Joy - Rend Collective

2:26 MINS



The Beatitudes -
ODB Films

2:06 MINS



What are the Beatitudes?
Tweeting with God

12:29 MINS



**HFM Testimony: Watch John's story of
how he was able to choose joy in his life!**