

# Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

# 179 – April 1st, 2016

## Two Kinds of Joy

Joy is a characteristic of a Christian, or at least it should be apparent. I believe it is important, especially today, with its serious economic and social crises, its insecurities and concerns. This situation today invites us not only to a simpler and more austere style of life, to more heroic hope and confidence in the Virgin Mary, but it also invites to a more marked Marian and Christian joy. We, the spoiled children of the Virgin Mary, cannot live in pessimism or frustrating discouragement. We have to lift our head, believe in the victory of God and cultivate joy. The Christian cannot live on the margin of joy.

Let us look at the lite-Christian. He has neither happiness nor joy, although materially, he has almost everything. What he has, first of all, is wellbeing, the modern formula for happiness because he thinks it is better to have than to be. And secondly, he has pleasure, but without joy. And the supreme form of pleasure is sex, quick satisfaction without problems and without love.

Opposite this twisted image of human happiness, Father Kentenich, Founder of the Schoenstatt Movement, says that the human being cannot exist in the long run without joy, without happiness. *“He who does not cultivate joy, spoils his character to the core.”* And the monks of the 4<sup>th</sup> century thus described the consequences of sadness: *“Whoever is sad is possessed by the devil.”*

**The essence of joy.** What is joy? Father Kentenich often gave a philosophical definition: *“Joy is the resting of our appetite in the possession of or the certain hope of something good.”* It can be about a sensitive good, a spiritual good, or a supernatural good, divine.

**Two kinds of joy.** We cannot have, at each moment, the same overwhelming joy. Father Kentenich distinguishes two kinds of joy: the joy of a festivity or a Sunday, and everyday joy.

**The joy of Sunday** is when the soul is pierced by joy, when the heart rests fully in God.

**Everyday joy** is a silent and tranquil knowing one is sheltered in the Will of God, also when storms attack the heart.

Father Kentenich invites us to look at the life of the Virgin Mary under the aspect of that permanent joy in the light of the Rosary. The joyful and glorious mysteries contain the joy of a festivity. The sorrowful mysteries are everyday joys. How can we understand this latter statement? We should see everything, also suffering, as a gift of love from Father God. We are to also be joyful when nature is filled with sufferings. Without a doubt, it is most difficult, but also what is most fruitful.

Before canonizing someone, their virtues are examined. And also examined is their level of heroism in joy: Has he had a joyful nature? Has he been a happy saint or a sad saint?

The joyful Christian has to be joyful and radiate his joy to all who surround him. His life's motto must be: *“Nothing will take away my joy.”* We should create or maintain a kingdom of joy in our families, in our apostolic confines. Father Kentenich warns us with clarity: *“in the long run, in a community will reign, either the atmosphere of joy or the atmosphere of the swamp. Something in between is not possible.”*

**Therefore, let us ask ourselves:** Are we joyful optimists who also see the good side of things? Or are we more pessimists, walking like cows always with their heads down?

Or do we constantly depend on our moods: joyful and happy today, and tomorrow depressed and in a bad mood?

Am I the main character of authentic joy and happiness in my family, my apostolate and in all confines where I am and move?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give your testimony, write to: [cantu\\_carlos@hotmail.com](mailto:cantu_carlos@hotmail.com)  
Translation: Carlos Cantú, Schoenstatt Family Federation, La Feria, Texas USA