

A Ministry of Joy.

By Father John Catoir JCD- 8/12/18

Jesus inspired me with His words, "I have told you all these things that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." I took those words and combined them with this quote from a 15th century mystic, Blessed Julian of Norwich, "The greatest honor you can give to Almighty God is to live joyfully because of the knowledge of His love."

In 1995, after I stepped down as Director of The Christophers, I started a new ministry of Joy, and named it after St. Jude. I remembered conducting a St. Jude Novena for many years when I was the pastor at Our Lady of Victories Parish in Paterson, NJ. We had a steady flow of devotees attending the Novena which we conducted five times a day on every Thursday. During that period, I witnessed so many miracles of healing, that I gained great confidence in the power of St. Jude's intercession. So, I decided to make him the patron saint of my new ministry. Then we created a new website: messengerofjoy.com to make available a blog which presents daily meditations on joy. Soon after I added a Radio ministry and began recording uplifting radio spots using the words of Jesus and the saints to spread the Gospel message of Joy. With the help of some generous friends we bought airtime and began broadcasting them nationally.

We did this for 17 years when a new electronic miracle came along called Social Media, which gave us access to a world-wide audience at no cost. We were already touching millions of lives world-wide, but I saw that we could reach millions more.

When the time was right, in 2013, I hired Patricia Martin, a social media expert from Dallas, Texas. Together we added a Facebook and Twitter account and opened a new web-page: JohnCatoir.com and loaded it with my videos, segments from The Christopher days, and my articles and Tweets. In our most recent Prayer Marathon, entitled "Joy to the World," we had 2.5 million participants.

The combined use of all our Social Media outlets has been spreading Christ's message of joy all over the world for many years. The Catholic Press Assn. recently named a new annual award, "The Father John Catoir Social Media and Evangelization Award." I thank God and the association, and St. Jude, the Patron saint of hopeless cases.

Let's all pray for the grace to live joyfully in the present moment, not in stewing over the past, or worrying about the future but staying in the present moment.

Here is a favorite prayer of mine to help you along the way: *Dear Holy Spirit, Soul of my soul, protect me, console me and tell what to do as I strive to live in the present moment. Let me know your will and give me the strength follow it.* St. Teresa of Avila used to repeat the following mantra to herself over and over: "Let nothing disturb you; let nothing cause you fear. God is always at your side protecting you. God is unchanging love.

