

Dear Students

By Father John Catoir JCD-5/31/18

With your permission, I'd like to talk to you about the importance of choosing your friends wisely. You know that life can be difficult. That's why it's so important to find someone you can trust; someone who will bring joy into your life, and not sorrow.

Jesus offered some good advice on this topic. For instance, he taught us to be loving and forgiving. He knew that when you have a brooding, unforgiving heart it can make life miserable. Jesus came that our joy may be full, so naturally he taught us how to attain it. His central message is that we follow the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them to do unto you."

This can be applied to many topics; e.g., do not do to a baby in the womb, what you would not want anyone to do to you. Apply the same rule to political correctness: do not be intolerant of someone who holds a sincere opinion that differs from yours. Just as you would want others to listen to your point of view, so you ought to be willing to listen to theirs, without booing.

However, if you insist on being intolerant, you will find yourself in a state of constant annoyance and anger. Jesus said, "I have come that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." Choose joy as you discern your friends. Those who protest more than they applaud tend to be perpetually joyless and angry. Some are even prone to violence.

The mood of the mob will always create peer pressure, which, if you allow it, will inevitably suppress your freedom. Being manipulated by others is a sure way to lose your self-respect and introduce you to a

life of misery. Jesus taught us to “Return good for evil,” which is something most of us find extremely difficult. But recently, I found the ideal to be very helpful. When I heard of the vicious killings by MS13 gang members, my revulsion was so strong that if it were not for the words of Jesus, my anger would have run away with me. Who wants to live in a total state of rage?

Jesus said, “Be not anxious.” Fear is the enemy of joy. The Lord doesn’t want us worrying all the time about the future. He wants us to trust the future to Divine Providence and the past to God’s mercy. By doing that, you can eliminate needless guilt and anxiety, two traits that destroy the soul’s joy.

When Jesus Ascended into heaven, he sent us his Holy Spirit to be our Comforter and Counselor. The Lord gave us the very source of his own strength and joy. For those who have faith as tiny as a mustard seed, this means that it is possible live in a spirit of joyful gratitude most of the time. Take courage remove yourself from the joyless choir of complainers and all their noise.

For those who have no faith, the thinking of Jesus is scorned as pious drivel, but their scorn for the truth is an abomination. Think positively. Put your trust in God. Live a wonderful, joyous life. Be happy, full of optimism and hope.

“All this and heaven too”, is my personal motto; it’s a theme worth celebrating.