
Joy!

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by Deacon Juan Sandoval**

Joy is defined as a feeling of great pleasure and happiness. What is it that brings this feeling to us? Joy can come to us in so many ways. Joy is an emotion that we have from the anticipation or the expectation of something great or wonderful. I believe each of us have some commonalities that bring us joy, but I think that the differences each of us experience, perhaps even with the same event, is what makes this such a wonderful emotion.

So in my time here at this glorious Cathedral, I continue to often find new feelings of joy. One of the pleasures I have is the joy that many parishioners and visitors to the Cathedral experience in common in their love of Christ, our Savior.

“Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory” (1 Peter 1:8).

Jesus, after more than 2000 years, continues to fill us with this wonderful emotion. When people walk in the holy space we call the Cathedral, they often stop to take in the beauty of the temple, but others stop to gasp—Oh my! Many stop to pray, to admire the stained glass windows, to stop and thank God for God’s presence among us daily.

I marvel at many of our parishioners, who are so spirit-filled and joyful in the work they do to and for others. They do this within the church and within the community, spreading joy wherever they might be. I receive great joy in chatting with many parishioners and their joys which many times is also their stewardship within and out of this church. I frequently engage in conversations about children or grandchildren and what their most recent accomplishments have been. I hear about new births, weddings, or vacations and each of these also are sources of joy and grace. When I see their faces light up, well, it just warms my core in feeling this emotion of joy. The big smile, the sparkling eyes, the warmth, the love and intensity is undeniable.

My favorite joy, working with the children of LaAmistad during the school year, is such a fulfilling and marvelous time. There’s a buzz every time they come into the Cathedral (sometimes a palpable buzz that must be quieted!). “La Amistad,” says one of the teachers; “Friendship!” reply the children. They quiet down and get prepared to enter the classroom each Monday for a session of Godly Play. The smiling little faces, the angelic and the mischievous, all bring joy to the greeter at the door and the instructor in the room. On Wednesday, they enter again, only this time is for chapel in St. Mary’s. They come in and settle in as Ms. Lisa assists them. Then Ms. Maggie plays the first song and the children begin to sing, often at the top of their voices, “Father Abraham.”

Each time, the joy these little people bring to all the adults (I know because they have told me) is just too awesome. What a gift God has given us in these children and this work we do with them. Work it is not; JOY it is. May we all continue to find joy in many aspects in what we do here in this blessed community and in the world.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

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