Joyful or Depressed, Crestfallen Like Cows?

Joy is something which belongs to youth and to youthful hearts (young in spirit). Therefore, it is characteristic of the Christians, or, at least should be. The Christian must be joyful and must radiate his/her joy to those around him/her. We must create or maintain a realm of joy in our families, in our groups, in our apostolic circles.

When was the last time we laughed heartily?.....not that courteous smile to be pleasant in society or that forced applause even though the joke was not funny, but rather, that sincere, healthy, spontaneous laugh which comes from within. It does not mean that one has to always laugh, but one must manifest always the fruit of the Spirit which is joy and follows love.

What faces do others see in us? Having a long face does not express honor for God whom we profess to serve and glorify in loving. “Either change faces or change gurus,” said the master to his disciple who considered it bad publicity for his school to have sad disciples at his side. A famous American judge did not become a pastor because the clergymen he knew, by their appearance and conduct, appeared to be funeral home employees. “And do not make God’s Holy Spirit sad,” says St. Paul (Eph 4:30). It is very possible that the Spirit may not feel at home behind serious faces and bitter expressions. If we bear God within, it should be noticeable on our face.

It is not about forcing a smile or pretending to be joyful as it is done in the modern business of selling and convincing: market smiles, rented faces to gain clients. Among so many pretended smiles, it is not strange that we lose the feeling of authentic joy…..free, spontaneous. The world must recover the ability to be joyful within and without.

Perhaps some things must change. If until now my brother or my sister put my nerves on edge and needed to avoid me, in the future it should be different. Or, if I have become touchy with my parents, I should change my attitude with them.

Questions for reflection

1. Do we constantly depend on our moods: happy today, tomorrow in bad humor?
2. Are we happy persons, optimists who also see the good side of things?
3. Are we pessimists, going around like cows, crestfallen?
4. How do we react to the blows and problems of life…..to suffering and the cross?

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Translation: Carlos Cantú Family Federation La Feria, Texas USA 010909