

*Each week for the summer, a parishioner will reflect on a section of Pope Francis' Call to Holiness: his new Apostolic Exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate (Rejoice and Be Glad), which you can read at <http://w2.vatican.va> "Boldness and Passion" (¶129-139)*

"Welcome the Lord's surprises."

These are not what we expect to hear from the Pope, the CEO of the world's oldest bureaucracy.

Pope Francis tells us to "live the Gospel with boldness, enthusiasm, the freedom to speak out." This is because the God whom we worship "is eternal newness". He explains that God "impels us constantly to set out anew, to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond. He takes us to where humanity is most wounded..."(135).

Pope Francis is rocking the boat. He wants to stir us out of complacency. He turns around the image of Jesus knocking on our door. "Sometimes I wonder, though, if perhaps Jesus is already inside us and knocking on the door for us to let him escape from our stale self-centeredness" (136). What is keeping us from living our faith more boldly, with more passion and compassion?

Often we are complacent when we look at the evils in ourselves and in our world. We think "there is nothing we can do, because this is the way things have always been... by force of habit we no longer stand up to evil." (137). Instead, Pope Francis prods our complacency: "let us allow the Lord to rouse us from our torpor, to free us from our inertia." He calls us to be "unsettled by the living and effective word of the risen Lord." Jesus and Pope Francis are with those on the fringes of society who call out: "no justice, no peace."

—Marvin Mich