

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>

### **Our Mission in Christ (paragraphs 19-34)**

In the song on the Beatitudes we hear the words "rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom of God." In his Apostolic Exhortation of the same name Pope Francis encourages us not to be afraid of holiness. Holiness, he says, "will not take away our energy, vitality, or joy. Instead it will assist us in becoming what God had in mind when He created us and will help us recognize our great dignity." So, what are some causes of our fear of holiness?

Causes include: Not utilizing the Spirit to assist us in all our decision making. Forgetting that our personal mission is part of the kingdom Christ brought to earth and not a separate entity. Failing to identify with His will, which involves a personal commitment to work with Him in building His kingdom of love, justice, and universal peace. Ignoring the fact that "Life does not have a mission but *is* a mission." Accepting the challenge that everything we do has an evangelical meaning and identifies with Christ. Doing things out of anxiety, pride, or the need to impress others does not lead to holiness.

So, what actions *do* lead to holiness? A good starting point is spending quiet time with God. Finding that place and utilizing it might be painful but is fruitful and powerful. Allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us to a place of holiness which can integrate both solitude and service, so our every moment is a reflection of self-sacrificing in Christ's eyes.

Make a retreat or take a day to call your own. A good resource is Mercy Spirituality Center (585-473-6893). Or use on-line resources such as [pray-as-you-go.org](http://pray-as-you-go.org).

When you do find your own place of serenity you will rejoice and be glad for the kingdom of God will be yours.

—Ann K. Maloney