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 **Reflecting and Praying with our Values for Ministry:**

**Joy**



*Doing one’s ministry with joy; seeking the source of joy and remaining focused in mission in the midst of challenges;*

Suggested Video/music [4:06 min] [Singing in the Rain](https://youtu.be/bkEvy-9yVyQ) <https://youtu.be/bkEvy-9yVyQ>

**Born for Joy**

… I know people who retain their joy no matter how dismal and difficult their situation. Their lives contain more than average adversity but they manage to somehow retain a genuine joy. It’s not that they deny their hardships. Rather, they do not let these misfortunes conquer their ability to appreciate life. Within them a deep river of gladness flows on and on. Nothing stops or drains its movement. I think the secret to this lies in what Mary Oliver writes in her poem “Mindful.”

Every day/I see or I hear/something/that more or less/kills me/with delight,/that leaves me/like a needle/in the haystack of light./ It is what I was born for – /to look, to listen,/to lose myself/inside this soft world -/to instruct myself/over and over/in joy.

We learn from this excerpt of Oliver’s poem that joy doesn’t hang around without a little effort to keep it there. People with genuine joy deliberately find something, however small, that draws forth gratitude, pleasure, wonder, and love within each day.

Joy is not something to be forced. It is not a fake, paste-on-a-smile sort of thing. Joy comes when one is ready for it to rise. I agree with Mary Oliver. We are born for this. It is a matter of whether or not we are willing to slow down our rapid pace and change old habits of non-awareness. Each day now when I wake in the morning I whisper to my deeper self:

“You were born for joy.” (And so are you).

Excerpted from: <https://www.joycerupp.com/born-for-joy/> ©  Joyce Rupp

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**Remember…**

Have you ever felt naturally drawn to a joyful person? Why do you think their joy attracted you?

… a time when you felt deep joy? What was the reason for your joy? How do you think you can remain joyful in the midst of adversity? What do you need? From whom?

**From the SSND Foundations …**

O God, I desire to serve you with constant joy and total trust because you are my joy and help (Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, Letter 2)

Genuine joys, soul joys, have their source only in God. They never deceive and they last eternally.

— Mother Caroline Friess

**… and Tradition:**

"The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything."
— Julian of Norwich

“…those who enjoy life most are those who leave security on the shore and become excited by the mission of communicating life to others.”

— Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, #10

"The beating heart of the universe is joy."
— Martin Buber

"To find joy in another's joy, that is the secret of happiness."
— George Bernanos

**Reflection:**

Which of the above quotes resonates with you most? Which one challenges you most? Why?

**Activity:**

Examination of conscience at the end of the (work)day (a form of reflection and prayer from St. Ignatius of Loyola):

Where today was I joyful, where not?

If you would paint or take your own picture of “Joy”, what would it look like?

**Closing Prayer:**

You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord. Psalm 16:9