



Today's Lesson  
**Living in Process:  
Choosing the Gift of Joy**  
Power Point notes available at:  
[www.unityofbakersfield.org](http://www.unityofbakersfield.org)

**Living in Process: Choosing the Gift of Joy**



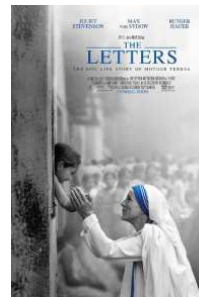
Today is the fourth and final Sunday of Advent. Today we are celebrating the activity of "Joy" in our lives as we travel the holiday road to Christmas.

**Living in Process: Choosing the Gift of Joy**

Our thought for today:



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While Mother Teresa became love incarnate to countless souls through her work, she brought joy to many others:

**Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls.**

Mother Teresa

QuoteOfTheDay.com

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Charles Fillmore had this to say about the activity of joy in our lives:

Joy and gladness are strength-giving, especially if the mind is fixed on the things of Spirit. So affirm: "The joy of the Lord is my strength."

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When asked by her teacher what joy meant to her, Mary responded, "*Joy is the feeling of grinning on the inside.*"

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Who of us here can relate to that type of joy- a joy that leaves us grinning on the inside?



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Someone once said, “A gift given in love will no doubt bring joy to both the receiver as well as that the giver. As an old Proverb states: Gifts make their way through stone walls.”

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Phillip White, Unity minister and retired editor for Unity Magazine relates this story of gifting:

One day in early December many years ago, snow was beginning to fly outside the biology lab at the Maryland University. At student desks stood microscopes, those tubular windows into the mysteries of life beyond the naked eye.

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Out of the corner of my own naked eye, the falling flakes momentarily distracted me from my last project of the fall term—as study of cell division. As I adjusted the microscope, the spectacle of living cells dividing suddenly came into my view. One was becoming two. Life was happening before my eyes.

Here was the power of giving in all its elegant simplicity.

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A dividing cell willingly gives the gift of part of itself so that a new cell may live and grow. Its gift is its very life, and it lives to make that gift. Such gifting goes on in our bodies all the time.

Parents who have raised children understand this truth at a deep, even unconscious level.

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Without gifts—with the unearned nurturing, support, encouragement, faith, and care, indeed, the very life of a parent or parental figure, a child cannot live.

Somehow I get the sense that our Divine Parent is trying to tell us something: Gifts are everywhere, and nothing of significance exists without them and through these gifts we experience joy.

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Someone once declared that there are people in this world who have the gift of joy everywhere they go and leave it behind them when they move on.

Phillip White was one of those people. After I had read his article I got to thinking about how I ended up where I am in life right now and how the gift of joy provided me with some insights:

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1. When we choose the gift of joy in our lives we discover that there is no individual achievement without gifts from others.
2. When we choose the gift of joy we find that there is no education without those who share their gift of teaching.
3. Choosing joy brings us into communion with God through the gifts of receptivity and silence.

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#### **When we choose the gift of joy we find:**

Joy is realized once we understand that we can take back our lives, to reclaim what we thought was lost, to restore balance to an out of control life.

Joy helps us to rejuvenate and recharge ourselves, bringing healing to the wounds we carry inside us.

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Choosing Joy brings us into a fuller manifestation and demonstration of the wonderful persons that each of us are.

Choosing the gift of joy for yourself can be summed up in this well know quote:

What you are is God's gift to you, what you do with yourself is your gift to God.

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God's gift to India was Mother Teresa, who in turn spent much of her lifetime sharing herself with others.

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Mother Teresa, who is soon to become Saint Teresa, found out for herself, that by practicing humility in one's life we can find the gift of joy when we realize:

- To speak as little as possible of one's self.
- To mind one's own business.
- Not to want to manage other people's affairs.
- To accept contradictions and correction cheerfully.
- To pass over the mistakes of others.

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- To accept insults and injuries.
- To accept being slighted, forgotten and disliked.
- To be kind and gentle even under provocation.
- Never to stand on one's dignity.
- God gives us things to share, never to keep.
- Joy is a sign of generosity. When you are full of joy, you move faster and you want to go about doing good to everyone.

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**Thought for the week:**

The gift of joy can be felt and realized in our daily activities when we allow ourselves to give the gifts of forgiveness, compassion, encouragement, and unconditional love.