***Gladness and generosity creates Good will***

* These two habits are infectious, encouraging positivity and exchange of others.
* These two Holy Habits express the generous nature and qualities of discipleship, yet they are hard to attain.
* Others will benefit from our discipleship if we adopt these two habits.

Jesus was always generous with his time, his language, his actions and his acceptance of others.

**Our task is to do likewise**

***Questions for consideration.***

* How do you express your generosity in your discipleship?
* If life is tough for you at the moment, what would bring a spark of gladness to you mind, body and soul; a massage, a phone call, a prayer?
* What do we do that puts a smile of people’s faces? eg Smile train, local projects.

Excerpts from

**Roberts Andrew** *Holy Habits*, Malcolm Down Publishing 2016

Developing Holy Habits

**8. Gladness and generosity**

**Sacrificial nature of Discipleship**

Sacrifice is at the heart of discipleship and suffering, and to a greater or less extent, it is inevitable on the adventure. Jesus was not slow in challenging Simon Peter and his companions to go beyond their experience and comfort zones, thereby helping them grow in confidence. Sometimes in our discipleship there will be those moments when we are called to go beyond our comfort zones and discover Gods resources in new ways, and there will be times when we need to encourage others to take steps of faith on the adventure of discipleship. However living sacrificially, in obedience to the call of Jesus, may also involve suffering because of our association with the one we follow. This could be in the form of snide comments, being excluded from conversation or activities, or to stand alongside the people whom the rest of society would exclude.

**The Nurture of Discipleship**

As we practice the art of discipleship, so the fruits of holiness and Christ like character emerge and blossom, along with resilience, strength and faith to keep going. We need to learn to live rhythmically if we are to nurture 10 Holy Habits.

**Holy Habits**

If we are to commit ourselves and to encourage our church community to live rhythmically and develop discipleship, then we need guidelines; we need to develop tools to enable us to be ‘Christ like’ in character and focus. In other words, to develop and nurture ‘habits’ and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us on the adventure and excitement of discipleship.

***The Eighth Holy Habit is gladness and generosity.***

**Think about generous Nature of God from the Bible. Which is your favourite and why?**

**In your life can you recall moments of extreme Gladness? What did it feel like?**

**Pentecost Joy**

* The atmosphere in Jerusalem was **electric and euphoric** when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost.
* Sometimes this **divine euphoria** can be experienced in a quiet still small voice way, but on the day of Pentecost, it was noisy, colourful and dramatic.
* **Gladness for what God had done** throughout the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
* This gladness was in the home, in the street, in the temple, **in fact everywhere**.
* The **depth of that joy** can be seen in people’s faces, body language and how they welcome and treat others.

**This is called a Pentecost Joy**.

**The Church was born in Gladness**

**Gladness is to be practised**

Gladness is to be experienced and expressed in many ways.

* On the adventure of discipleship there are moments where **gladness is ecstatic**, in the wonder of creation, in the intimate sexual encounter of two people, singing in your mother tongue, or the dismantling of the Berlin wall
* There are another times when it seems **slow and plodding,** like a healing ministry, harvesting the crops, teaching teenagers a particular skill.
* **Gladness is deep, very deep** for it sustains, strengthens and transforms the darkest places.

**Gladness is a gift that we choose to accept,** and it is a transformatory gift for the individual, the church and the world.

**Gladness and generosity**

Extravagant generosity is linked to Gladness and the previous Holy habits. God’s generous nature can be seen daily.

* Through **Radical generosity** that makes people feel truly welcome.
* Through the ways we open our homes to people.
* Through our Language and encouragement.

**Forgiveness and reconciliation**

At the heart of the Gospel, is the life of immeasurable generous message and act of forgiveness and reconciliation.

* Northern Ireland
* South Africa
* Rwanda

Forgiveness is part of our calling to discipleship, for without forgiveness, there cannot be any gladness for the Gospel, and no generous love for us.