

Enhance your family prayer with
FAMILY ROSARY

How to be Happy for Other People

4 easy steps

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

Ah that little green monster we better know as envy. The very human instinct to knock someone down after they've shared wonderful news with you. The gnawing feeling you're inadequate in comparison to everyone around you.

It's not helpful or happy, so why do we do this? And more importantly, how do we stop it?

Read on to understand four steps to being truly happy for other people!

A LITTLE HISTORY

Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. began his ministry in 1942 with the goal of building **family unity** through daily prayer of the Rosary. Inspired by his own father who had a deep devotion to family prayer, praying the Rosary became the foundation for the life of Father Peyton (1909-92).

We at Family Rosary are ever so grateful Father Peyton's family instilled in him the importance of **family prayer**. Now it can be part of your family's tradition so you can fulfill the vision that "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together," the message created by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so many years ago.



FRIENDS, JESUS TEACHES US TO BELIEVE.
SEEK OUT AND LISTEN TO THE VOICES
THAT ENCOURAGE YOU TO LOOK AHEAD,
NOT THOSE THAT PULL YOU DOWN.

POPE FRANCIS

HOW TO BE HAPPY FOR OTHER PEOPLE

Envy is one of the most ugly things we can struggle with in our relationships with others—especially with those we call our friends.

Despite knowing we ought to be happy for our friends when they call us with good news about school/work/a relationship/etc., we may often find ourselves suddenly comparing how we are faring in those fields to the positive news that our friend just shared with us about their life. Before we know it, and often without even realizing what we are doing, we begin looking for all of the negatives in that other person in order to make ourselves feel better about our own lives. Rather than being happy for our friend, we choose to tear them down, even if only in our own minds.

Some of us may realize this terrible tendency within ourselves, and so we rightly attempt to correct it. But we often choose a method that, though better than tearing another person down, is still not ideal because it robs us of our own happiness. We choose to compare ourselves to that other person. We know it's silly to wish that other person harm, so instead, we conclude that the other person is awesome and we just have to live with the fact that we are not.

Neither of these options is healthy, and neither is what God wants for us. Since good things are inevitably going to happen to the people we know in life (yay!), I thought I'd put together a plan of action to help deal with envy and this terrible tendency of comparing ourselves to other people.

1. REASONABLY EXAMINE YOUR FEELINGS

So you're not happy for your friend? Acknowledge it. Acknowledge it to yourself and in your prayer to God, because it's pointless to pretend with yourself or with God. Be real about your feelings, but let them lead to this question:

Why aren't you happy for your friend's success? Chances are, there is no good reason for you to not be rejoicing in your friend's good fortune. Still, it's incredible how talented we are at coming up with even the tiniest of reasons as to why we aren't as happy as we should be for our friends. We recall past times when that person made a mistake and somehow allow that to lead us to the conclusion that they should not be allowed to have any successes ever again. Makes perfect sense, right? Of course not. But it's important to go over these reasons of why you're not happy so that you can see just how illogical they are. Which brings me to step two.

2. GO OVER ALL OF THE LOGICAL REASONS FOR WHY YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY

Even if your friend was just the random winner of some contest that had nothing to do with personal ability or skill, (i.e., they did nothing to deserve this positive news) that's still no good reason for you to wish this were not happening to them. So make a list, and write it down if you have to, of all the reasons why you should be happy for your friend. Here are some to get you started:

- It's rare that positive things happen by chance and without at least some small amount of effort. Your friend likely worked hard to achieve whatever positive thing is happening in their life. You should acknowledge that.
- You care about your friends. You don't want to see them unhappy, so you should logically rejoice to see them happy.
- You would expect your friends to be happy when something good happened to you. If they weren't, you'd wonder what kind of friends they were.
- Being unhappy for your friend will likely hurt your relationship with them.
- Even if you had a good reason (which you don't), being unhappy for or about your friend is not going to make you feel better about yourself.
- If all else fails: Jesus says so. (Mark 12:30-31)

3. REALIZE THAT ANOTHER PERSON'S HAPPINESS TAKES NOTHING FROM YOU

At its core, I think this tendency to comparison and to envy is rooted in fear. We're afraid that, if good things happen to our friends, there won't be enough good to go around for us. As a result, it's hard to be happy for our friends' good fortune because a small part of us fears that this means there is less left for us. But all we need to do is realize this one simple truth: **One person's happiness truly takes nothing from you.**

Remember that we live within time. Good things are going to happen to you, and they are going to happen to the people around you—but they may not always occur on the same day. It doesn't mean you're never going to be happy again. Cicero wrote that, "Friendship improves happiness and abates misery, by the doubling of our joy and the dividing of our grief." When your friend is happy, you should actually rejoice because you get to share in that happiness.

4. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Now that you know all of the reasons why you should be happy, and that you have no real reason not to be happy, it's time to practice genuine happiness. Don't be fake, but don't expect fuzzy feelings over night either. Realize that, after years of negativity, it will take practice to get used to being happy for other people.

So fight the urge to look for the negative by repeating to yourself the reasons why you should be happy for your friend. Ask them questions about the good thing they have shared with you and look for all of the reasons to rejoice with them. Put yourself in their shoes and realize that they probably told you because they want you to share in their happiness. And of course, pray, pray, pray for the grace to be genuinely happy for those around you.

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GOING DEEPER

Lord, help me to recognize all the ways you've blessed me. Crush the wall that's hardened around my heart and tear down the insecurities that force me into comparison with those I love the most. Fill me with your love and trust in your overwhelming goodness. Amen.

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

What is Lent all about? Do you have to give up everything good and/or fun? Why do Catholics do Lent? **Catholic Central**'s latest episode takes you through the history of Lent and how to get the most out of it this year.

MARY (LANE) PEARSON

You can read more of Mary's work at YoungandCatholic.net.

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

This e-book and all our resources represent a culmination of Father Peyton's passion for family unity through prayer. We hope our services will enhance your family's prayer life particularly remembering Father Peyton's famous words, "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together."

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