

JOY within the CHURCH!

One of the world's great comedians over the last 100 years is the American Groucho Marx (1900-1977). One of his more memorable quotes is *"I was once married before a Judge, but I now wish there would have been a jury so as to inform him not to proceed!"*

This is a true story recalled by a Catholic priest who upon seeing Groucho come out of an elevator spontaneously approached and said; *"I want to thank you for all of the joy you have given so many people for so long."* The reply was *"Father I thank you for all of the joy that people in your position have taken away from so many people!"* I'm sure that sharp comment would have stung!

The point that we need to remember is that *joy* is a gift of the Holy Spirit so there is something terribly remiss if people consistently never experience this quality within a Church. Joy is a quality that comes from within someone and a Christ like priest needs to consistently be joyful in what he says and does. Without a doubt Jesus of Nazareth was consistently an instrument of *joy* in what he said to and with others. I am sure this is what made him so different to the other religious leaders of his time who consistently took themselves and their message too seriously. Jesus in modern terms has left behind a *template of joy* for us to follow! *Fr Martin R Maunsell*