Welcome to the first in a new set of Holy Habits weekly prompts.  What’s new about it?  First, Martyn is taking a break after producing 9 weeks of prayer prompts.  Daphne and John will be doing this series.  Second, we have a new Habit – Gladness and Generosity.

This doesn’t mean that we’ve finished with prayer. Definitely not.  It is vital that we continue with our Habit of prayer, as the foundation on which we can build the other Habits.

So what’s all this about Gladness and Generosity?  To go back to the Bible, we read that the early Christians had ‘glad and generous hearts’.  This Habit is not so much about what we do, but how we do it.  It’s about the mood, the atmosphere, which we generate, and which can build up each one of us individually, and build the church so that it impacts positively on the community.

Let’s begin right where we are.  **The first challenge - take a moment (or several moments) each day this week to be aware of something that brightens your day (makes you glad**).   It could be sunshine, warm weather, the beauty of nature, (yes, even in November), cats and dogs, young children, nice food, warm homes on dark evenings, friends, family.  These things will be different for each one of us.  It would be lovely to hear of the things you have noticed.

**Second, take stock of ways in which you are already generous**.  It’s not just about money, but about the way you use your talents, the time you give to other people, the hospitality you offer.   How are you already generous?

We have an amazing example of generosity to start us off.  Our harvest offering for Christian Aid has amounted to £953.60, far more than any other offering for a charity.  The EU will quadruple this sum, and there is gift aid to come, so that the total is nearly £5000, enough to make a real change in the lives of poor people overseas.  What has prompted this generosity?  Taking advantage of the EU’s generosity while we can is part of this, but surely there is much more – God is already at work among us.

So let’s remember that all we have is a gift from God.  His generosity starts it all.  Our part is not to earn his blessings, they come free, but to respond.

Finally, ‘Remember, remember the fifth of November, gunpowder, treason and plot…’  Let’s be glad that compared to many countries we have a stable system of government, that violent revolution has not occurred in our time, and pray for these blessings to continue.  And remember those for whom bonfire parties are exciting, and pray that children, adults and the fire service will have an enjoyable and safe evening.

*Produced by Daphne and John Wilkins on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne and John).  If you don’t want to receive these prompts just let us know.  You can find more information about Holy Habits on the Sheffield Methodist Circuit website.*