

February 7, 2023

February 14 is the feast of **St. Valentine** and is also called **Saint Valentine's Day**. It originated as a **Christian feast day** honoring one or two early **Christian martyrs** named **Saint Valentine**. Through later **folk traditions**, it has become a significant cultural, religious, and **commercial** celebration of **romance** and **love** in many regions of the world. Though the memorial of **Saint Valentine** is ancient, **nothing** is known of Saint Valentine **except** that he was buried on the Via Flaminia on February 14."



This **feast day** is a good introduction for my topic this week: "**lightheartedness**", being **happy-go-lucky, cheerfully optimistic, hopeful, and easy-going**. Do **any** of these qualities define **you**? Do they **define** any of your **friends**? Having lighthearted friends is really a blessings.

One way to develop **lightheartedness** is by **taking time each day to sit calmly, clear our thoughts and focus on things that bring us joy**.

Some time ago, I read in a book that we are called to **follow Jesus**, "to **skip** after Him the best we can." To me, that's **light heartedness** and expresses a **playful** relationship with our God. (However, as we get older, we are happy if we can just follow him by **walking** after him, even with a **cane** or **walker**!)

Being lighthearted and **playful** can improve our mood and others as well as help us relax and let go. Taking time to **play** relaxes us and is a form of **stress relief**, and fights depression.

Other ways to develop lightheartedness:

- Training yourself to **smile and laugh** even if those reactions don't come naturally to you.
- Learning to **let go of your control** over the small things.
- **Bringing positive energy** into your interactions with other people, which creates a positive feedback loop.

Take time to play!