

# LIFE IS GOOD

I'll be 74 this month. I don't feel old. In fact it seems that I just graduated from college though my golden anniversary reunion from Mt. St. Joseph was two years ago. Wasn't it last week that I was a young reporter covering the Kennedy assassination, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War? The memories certainly are that vivid.

My children are now adults with children of their own. How did that happen? Wasn't I just dropping them off for the first day of kindergarten? How is it that my grandson Sam is now 10 years old? It all goes so fast. And we often get so busy that we miss the precious everyday moments that make up the years.

Friends my age remind each other that 70 is the new 50. But what difference does it make if we live longer but miss out on what's really important in life? We know that no one on her deathbed bemoans not spending enough time at work, collecting "things," or filling up her daily calendar, yet we often race around as if that's all that matters.

I had an embroidered sampler in my breakfast room that depicts a mom rocking a baby with the words "Cleaning and scrubbing can wait till tomorrow, for babies grow up we've learned to our sorrow. So quiet down cobwebs, dust go to sleep. I'm rocking my baby and babies don't keep." It now hangs in my daughter's home. Cradling my babies was one of greatest gifts I ever had. It made me slow down and be present to the amazing little person before me. For one who prided herself on how many things she was able to check off her "to do" list, it was quite a turnaround and a true grace. Nuzzling my grandsons as they snuggle in my arms now is best moment of my day.

One doesn't have to be a senior citizen to realize this—though some of us take longer than others to catch on. Age and the awareness that we are closer to the end than to the beginning of our earthly lives do give us perspective. And what a treasure it is when we who are more mature can share what we've learned with others.

My youngest sister gave family members a priceless gift this Christmas, the first major holiday since Mom had died. She collected family photos, Mom and Dad's autobiographies and things that they had written over the years and put them into a binder for each family.

The autobiographies were a special gift. And not surprisingly, they dealt not with accomplishments, but everyday memories of good times and bad grounded always in faith and love. My dad, who had been a sales manager at a car dealership working six days and three evenings each week, told me shortly after he retired that "I had it all wrong. It's not about doing things. Life's about relationships." He had nearly 30 more years to savor being with those he loved and further deepening those relationships.

So as I get older, I don't want to turn the clock backwards. I'm grateful for my life

including the bumps and bruises along the way. I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be. I'm surrounded by people I love. I'm more reflective now. I cherish the miracles of every day. I look for God's fingerprints on my life and God's face in those I meet. I'm privileged to be in ministry at this wonderfully diverse parish.

I'm getting older and life is good.

- Angela Anno, Pastoral Associate

Photo provided by Angela

