

HAPPY, HAPPY, BIRTHDAY...

February is the shortest month of the year, but in our family it's the month with the most birthdays—eight in all, ranging from some of the family elders to my two grandsons, Sam who will be 7 and Simon, the youngest, who will turn 1 this year.

In the bleak, cold days of winter, it's good to have something to celebrate. I think that God must feel that way, too, since we get an extra day once every four years, when my aunt who's in her 80's can legitimately claim to be still in her 20's.

One of my favorite quotes is the one that says “God danced the day you were born.” I think that's got to be true. After all, each one of us is flesh of God's imaginings. Viewed from this perspective our life, our very existence is concrete proof of God's great love. Imagine God fashioning you, your face, your eyes, your talents, your quirkiness, your longings and desires and then choosing parents for you and a place and time to be born. God does that, you know. Scripture tells us so:

“Truly you have formed my innermost being; you knit me in my mother's womb. I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works.”
(Psalm 139: 13-14)

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; before you were born, I dedicated you”
(Jeremiah 1:5)

“But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace...”
(Galatians 1:15)

“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.”
(Luke 1:31)

And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him— for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—“ (Isaiah 49:5)

“Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called me from the womb from the body of my mother he named my name.” (Isaiah 49:1)

These are but a few of the Scriptures that echo this theme both in the old and new testaments. It seems that God wants to make sure we get it. Amazing, isn't it? The God of all creation, the God who became human like us, dreamed of each one of us and brought us into being delights in and celebrates our existence.

If that isn't a reason for a party, I don't know what is! So let the good times roll!

If you don't have any February birthdays in your family, why not consider setting aside a day just to celebrate God's gift of life to you? Bring out the cake, the decorations, the party hats, the balloons. Sing and dance—and be sure to invite God!

- Angela Anno, Pastoral Associate

