**Celebration**

**For the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce**

**and in all your undertakings, and you shall surely celebrate.**

***(Deuteronomy 16:15)***

**You shall celebrate with all the bounty**

**that the Lord your God has given to you.**

**(*Deuteronomy 26:11)***

**This is the day which the Lord has made;**

**we will rejoice and be glad in it.**

***(Psalm 118:24)***

**They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness.**

***(Psalm 145:7)***

**"Let us eat and celebrate;**

**for this son of mine was dead and is alive again;**

**he was lost and is found!"**

**And they began to celebrate.**

***(St. Luke 15:23-24)***

**All the right moves: A wife took her husband to her high school reunion. A guy was out on the dance floor break dancing, moon walking, doing back flips -- the works. "See that guy?" the wife asked her husband. "Twenty-five years ago he proposed to me, and I turned him down." "Looks like he's still celebrating!" her husband replied. *(Mary A. Berger, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**My sister and I were visiting an art studio in Charleston, S.C., when the owner received an anniversary gift. “Which one is it?” I asked her. “Our fifty-third.” “That is impressive!” I exclaimed. “I hope you’re planning some special celebration.” She smiled and softly said, “When you have a nice man, it really doesn’t matter.” *(Agnes Hulsey, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Most of Australia yesterday began celebrating the bicentennial of the continent’s settlement by Europeans. Wreaths were thrown on the beach where British explorer Capt. James Cook landed in 1770, 18 years before British convict ships arrived to begin colonizing the continent. *(Rocky Mountain News, January 2, 1988)***

**There is no box made by God nor us but that the sides can be flattened out and the top blown off to make a dance floor on which to celebrate life. *(Kenneth Caraway)***

**Parisian dancers did not originate the “Can Can” in cabarets. French schoolgirls did. According to arts historians, it was their way to celebrate the end of exams. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The celebration of Christmas is an expression of God already and always at work within us, whether or not we are conscious of that work. As Meister Eckhart said: “God bears his Only-Begotten Son in you, whether you like it or not. Whether you are sleeping or waking, he does his part.” (James Gaither, in Unity magazine)**

**I imagined myself going back to the house and telling my wife, Deborah, that I had manifested such a measly pittance. And then I recalled, what my teacher Dr. Tom Costa had told me: "Celebrate your demonstration, no matter what it looks like!" At that moment, my mind began to change. I went back to the house and said, "Yahoo! Look what we just got!" And the next day the money began to flow. *(Dr. Kenn Gordon, in Science of Mind: Guide for Spiritual Living)***

**It’s not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences. *(Audre Lorde)***

**How do you celebrate the everyday moment? Learn from children, puppies and other experts. *(Dr. Harvey L. Rich)***

**Our wedding anniversary was coming up soon, so I suggested we go someplace expensive to celebrate this special occasion. We did. My husband took me to a gas station and we filled up the tank. *(Irene Kaufmann, in Country magazine)***

**Celebration is more than a happy feeling. Celebration is an experience. It is liking others, accepting others, laughing with others. *(Douglas R. Stuva, in Insight)***

**Whether the Badgers win or lose their football game at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, thousands of fans stay for The Fifth Quarter postgame show presented by the university’s marching band. Fans sing, dance and cheer in a tradition that began in 1977. *(American Profile magazine)***

**On November 5, 1605, the Gunpowder Plot was thwarted in London. Guy Fawkes and 11 followers attempted to kill King James I and the members of Parliament with 36 barrels of gunpowder. However, the scheme was discovered, and the conspirators were convicted and executed. The following year, Parliament established a national holiday that is celebrated with parades, fireworks, and the burning of Guy Fawkes effigies. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**You should always leave the party 10 minutes before you actually do. *(Gary Larson, cartoonist)***

**A husband took his wife dancing. They saw a man out on the floor living it up – break-dancing, moon-walking, the works. “See that guy?” the wife asked. “He proposed to me 25 years ago, but I turned him down.” The husband replied, “Looks like he’s still celebrating.” *(The American Legion Magazine)***

**When there is danger, a good leader takes the front line; but when there is celebration, a good leader stays in the back of the room. *(Nelson Mandela, in O magazine, 2001)***

**Mardi Gras's Alabama birthplace: New Orleans may throw the better-known Mardi Gras celebration, but Mobile, Alabama, beat the Big Easy to it, said Patricia Harris in The Boston Globe. Most experts agree that America's first Mardi Gras celebration occurred in 1703 at the French settlement that became Mobile. The tradition was revived after the Civil War by one Joe Cain, whose spirit is celebrated on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday with one of the biggest of the three-week-long season's 35 parades. (The black beads thrown from a float by Cain's Merry Widows are the season's most coveted, souvenirs.) Kids "ride as royalty" during the Floral Parade, and the Comic Cowboys "make fun of everything and everybody" when they command the streets. Every year, the very last float of Fat Tuesday itself is pulled by males and features figures of Death and Folly racing about and beating each other with inflated pig bladders painted gold. "Folly, by the way, always wins." *(The Week magazine, February 6, 2015)***

**Grandmother: “More than 60 people are coming to Aunt Marian's farewell, Elly. Those who aren't billeted with family are staying at the Riverside Inn. The service will be at the Botanical Gardens and the reception at the Masonic Hall. Music and flowers and refreshments are taken care of.” Daughter: “This doesn't sound like a memorial service -- it sounds more like a celebration!” Elly: “It is.” *(Lynn Johnston, in For Better Or For Worse comic strip)***

**Dennis says to his friend while Mr. Wilson is sleeping in the hammock: "Mr. Wilson celebrates holidays the same way he celebrates every day.--" *(Hank Ketcham, in Dennis the Menace comic strip)***

**I was reading a book aloud in my class about Squanto and the first Thanksgiving. Near the end, I came to the part about the great feast where people gathered together, partied and celebrated for days. I paused to add, “And we all know the name of that special celebration . . .” One student called out, “Woodstock!” *(Christine Swanson, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Celebrating not war, but peace: The Canadian government keeps trying to get us all worked up about the War of 1812, said Peter Jones. During this bicentennial year, we’re supposed to re-enact battles and glory in our great victory over the United States. In truth, there was no Canada at the time: The war was fought by British soldiers and natives, and “rather than a stirring Canadian victory, it ended when the Americans largely lost interest.” What we ought to celebrate is not battlefield prowess, but peace. The real legacy of the war “is simply that there never was a repeat.” It produced a tacit agreement that the U.S. and Canada would benefit far more by trading with each other than by trying to conquer each other. If that sounds obvious, think again: “It took those sophisticated Europeans another 150 years and two of the bloodiest wars in history to figure it out.” The alliance between the two neighbors has allowed both to thrive, and at this point the idea of going to war is so ridiculous that it’s fodder for comedy. If you look around the world today, you will quickly realize “just how rare a thing” our mutual peace is. “And it is a thing very much worth celebrating. *(The Week magazine, August 24-31, 2012)***

**Celebrate what you’ve accomplished, but raise the bar a little higher each time you succeed. *(Mia Hamm, in Go for the Goal)***

**Facing far less stressful conditions that these, many of us agonize over what’s broken, rather than celebrate what’s working. *(C. W. Metcalf with Roma Felible, in Readers Digest)***

**A man who won a trip to Hawaii on CBS’s The Price Is Right celebrated so vigorously that he dislocated his shoulder and needed assistance to continue the show. The contestant, identified as Henry, pumped his fists in the air exuberantly after the win – then reappeared later in the program with his arm limp at his side, as host Drew Carey explained that his wife had to spin the wheel for him due to the injury. “He won a trip to Hawaii and the ER,” the show noted in an online post. *(The Week magazine July 7/July 14, 2023)***

**Lee Wilson, a 70-year-old farmer from Pratt, Kansas, gifted his wife, Renee, with more than 1.2 million sunflowers to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. The high school sweethearts had their first date at a roller-skating party when she was 16, and he knew his future wife would be the perfect match right away. To prepare for the surprise, Wilson secretly planted 80 acres of sunflowers in May with the help of his son. “It made me feel very special. It couldn’t have been a more perfect anniversary gift,” said Renee. (The Week magazine, August 18, 2023)**

**When did Times Square become a focal point? The annual ball drop there is quite literally a media creation. The seed was planted in 1904, when the New York Times moved its headquarters from downtown Manhattan to Broadway and 43rd Street in Midtown. Drawn by an ad in the paper, on December 31 hundreds of thousands of revelers packed the streets by the new Times building. At midnight explosives were set off atop the building, “a funeral pyre for the old which pierced the very heavens,” the paper wrote. The spectacle was repeated the following three years, until the city nixed the pyrotechnics. In 1908 they gave way to a 700-pound wood-and-iron ball lit by 100 bulbs, lowered from the building’s flagpole, to great shouting, horns, and cowbells. Save the war years of 1942 and 1943, a version of the ball – now an LED-lit, 12-foot sphere covered in Waterford crystal – has dropped every year since. It’s an event watched by an estimated billion people on TV, and attended by throngs that still mirror the description in the Times that first year, when “the crush was so great that progress was well-nigh impossible in any direction.” *(The Week magazine December 31, 2021 / January 7, 2022)***

**When the polio vaccine was declared safe and effective, the news was met with jubilant celebration. Church bells rang across the nation, and factories blewtheir whistles. "Polio routed!" newspaper headlines exclaimed. "A historic victory," "monumental ," "sensational," newscasters declared. People erupted with joy across the United States. Some danced in the streets; others wept. One might have expected the initial approval of the coronavirus vaccines to spark similar jubilation -- especially after a brutal pandemic year. But that didn't happen. Neither the reporting nor the public-health messaging has reflected the truly amazing reality of these vaccines." *(Zeynep Tufekci, in TheAtlantic.com)***

**A monk his entire adult life, Brother Andrew was responsible for training new scribes in the art of copying by hand – word for word – the holy writs. One day an eager new scribe, Brother Jonathan, asked if anyone had ever made a mistake. “Oh, no,” said Brother Andrew. “These words have always been correctly copied from generation to generation.” Skeptical, Brother Jonathan asked Brother Andrew how he knew. “My son,” said Brother Andrew as he shuffled off toward the monastery's library, “let me get you the first volume ever written and you will see that it is just as correct today as it was then.” Many hours passed. Finally Brother Jonathan decided he had better check on the elderly monk. At the library, he spotted Brother Andrew sitting alone in a candlelit corner, tears running down his wrinkled cheeks. “What's the matter?” Brother Jonathan asked. “I can't believe it,” Brother Andrew responded, his voice quivering with emotion. “The word is celebrate. Cel-e-BRATE! not celebate.” (Catherine E. Tiller, in Reader's Digest)**

**Have you ever asked God, “Why did You make me this way?” Sometimes the things we think are our worst faults, God will use to God’s glory. Be satisfied with yourself, and celebrate the unique way God made you. (Joyce Meyer)**

Let the child of your great potential be born. Happy birthday! The universe is celebrating you. Celebrate yourself! *(Dr. Eric Butterworth, Unity Minister)*

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