

Honoring Time

by Jean Glaraton

The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough.

Rabindranath Tagore

Time is a precious gift. For some of us, its mere passage makes this evident. For others, an abrupt, tragic, or unanticipated event demands we take note. Whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, our time on this earth is finite. Yet once we do, we can begin to live more intentionally, more aware of each experience as an opportunity for personal growth.

When Facebook recently told me I'd been "friends" with someone for 8 years, I had to chuckle. In reality, this dear friend and I mark 20 years of friendship next month, and the question of "Where did the time go?" doesn't enter my mind. She and I both know exactly where it went. Time now walks in full-grown bodies. Time went to the laughter. The tears. The mentoring and volunteering. The jobs. The health challenges—our own and those of our parents, grandparents, and children. The faith leaders whose wisdom inspired and challenged us. The sacramental celebrations. The years of serving as leaders in our church. The Mom's Night Out events during which we nourished our souls and nurtured our friendships. The people who came and went. The losses. The grief. The first day of school. The last day of school. The teachers. The graduations. And that's just the start!

To mark a relationship by decades is pure gift in that it comes with so much shared life experience and history—far more than any social media outlet could begin to measure. And too much to diminish by questioning where the time went. Perhaps the commonly uttered phrases referencing the passage of time—"That went fast!" "Time flies!" "The days go slow, but the years go fast"—can be an invitation to reflection and the realization that we know just where the time went: to living!

Even when we are too busy to notice the passage of time—especially then—it's important to pause, reflect, and ponder. In doing so, we are both honoring that passage of time and able to live more fully in each moment. We can look for the spiritual in the everyday. And we can value time as the precious gift it is.

If you were to list your life experiences of the past decade, what would be on it?

How do you honor and reflect on the passage of time in your life?

In what ways do you seek personal growth in each experience?

Loving God, thank you for the precious gift of time. Deepen our understanding of how to recognize and embrace this gift. Help us live each moment more fully. Open our hearts and minds to Your loving presence as we reflect on the passage of time in our lives. May we continually acknowledge the blessings and grace in each day. In Your name, we pray. Amen.