
PRODUCTIVE ANNIVERSARIES! (1)



The summer season is always prolific in anniversaries and celebrations: parish celebrations, festivals, and exhibitions are all part of the summer schedule. A celebration of life, of vitality, and of fellowship. And no arms are twisted, to celebrate! This is all to the honour of the guests, because what would happen to celebrations, if families and the entire population refrained from joining in? Today I would like to pay tribute not only to those honoured, but also to the organisers of these celebrations who work so hard and often in the shadows, to ensure their success.

SOURCE OF SPECIAL GRACES

Whether it be the silver or golden anniversaries of parents and grandparents, or of a parish priest or religious brother or sister, all derive benefit from the very special graces attendant to such events. The Church itself, through the witness of the many feasts in the liturgical calendar, states emphatically that through His saints God, through His people's faith, restores their energy and shows His love; their example stimulates us, and their fraternal prayer supports us in our work of building up the Kingdom. The same thing happens when we celebrate holy pastors: we admire God's loving concern for His Church, their example stimulates us, their teaching forms us, and their prayer is a precious aid to us. As we prepare our celebrations, let us be challenged by the Church's example, as it is a "celebration specialist". With the Church we are well taught at how to be "celebrators".

SILVER, GOLD, AND DIAMOND

I once again extend my heartiest congratulations to all who are celebrating an anniversary of commitment, whether in marriage, religious life, or the priesthood. I join their families and friends to express the diocesan Church's deep gratitude for their witness of life and for the many services rendered. As soon as I hear about a particular jubilee I hasten to send a short message to those concerned, along with a very special blessing. I do the same for those who are having their eightieth, ninetieth or one hundredth birthday! In this connection I join Sister Léanne Cyr, F.M.A., who celebrated her ninetieth birthday and seventieth anniversary of religious life, and Brother Germain Cantin, F.M.S., who is celebrating fifty years of religious life. And once again my greetings are tendered to Monsignor Eymard Desjardins and Father Alfred Ouellet on the occasion of their fifty years of priestly ordination.

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