

## GLIMPSE

### Munch Munch

Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J.

I have decided to not eat anything today until this Glimpse is finished. No, it is not shortly after midnight. I am hungry and so this might be shorter than usual. I would advise the reader to experience a little not-eating before going on.

I was once privileged to witness a baby being born. Amazing and I had tears even though I knew not the mother or her husband who also was in tears. What brought a smile to my dampened cheeks was how immediately this newly-born marvel knew where to go and what to do for its first meal. The first human experience after being rejected from its mother was to be included at the soft counter of nourishing affection. The mother would soon find out that the child will be experiencing hunger at all hours of day and especially in the nights during the following weeks and months. From our very beginning, hunger is our partner.

(a few chocolate cookies)

My mother and probably yours as well, handed out warnings about not eating anything before dinner, because it would spoil my appetite. She was spoiling the appetite I had for something right then! Being hungry is healthy and the body needs energy. I have two tee-shirts. One proclaims across my broad chest that life is too short; eat dessert first. The other celebrates that I never met a carbohydrate I didn't like. Yes, the sad reality is that our hungers can confuse our minds about what to do with our hungers. The head seems a long way from the messaging-center of the stomach and so we make apparently good choices which can lead us to bad results.

(perhaps some, just a little, caramel corn)

Physical hunger can give us a sense of abandonment as well as a sense that we deserve! "I would enjoy" leads to "I would like" and then to "I want" and winds up in, "I need"! We have the term "comfort food". The comfort comes from not being alone, left behind. "I have my chips" and "my crackers and cheese" and

though they disappear, they abide as life-long friends. Physical hunger is such a reminder that, in fact, we are single, alone, unique and empty, even when we feel full. This awareness is central to our human happiness and our proper reception and enjoyment of being nourished.

(maybe a beef sandwich now)

We deserve longings and emptinesses. These reveal to us a most basic truth, which we often do not want to hear about. Everything and anything is temporary and incompleting. Hunger, of all kinds, speaks to us of how we, by nature, abhor a vacuum. After a Christmas dinner, we say gratefully, "I won't eat for a week"! Being full physically is a temporary reality; being empty is a human blessedness. We long for the soft counter of God and God says gently, "Try not to spoil your appetite." Gratitude is for what a thing, a food; a drink is and for what it is not. Nothing and no one person or group of persons can resolve all of our hungers and forever.

(an ice cream cone, hmmm)

So I have served you a full plate and I hope it has blessed your wishing there were more ideas to make hunger and longing and needing, all go away. The simple truth is that we cannot ever have it all. We can never not need. We will always want more. True wisdom and happiness comes from being hungry yet satisfied with what is placed before us. It is only a glimpse, so keep on eating.