

GLIMPSE

Partly Cloudy

Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J.

In some grade long ago, the teacher presented us, me, with the term "whole number". So shortly after I got my mind around such a funny term, she hit me with "broken numbers". I could imagine the number eight as having two little circles, the one delicately balanced upon the other. Now what would an eight look like with only one little circles looking for its partner? Then came the word, "fractions" which sounded like "fractures" and I could imagine a five without its little horizontal cap and or its half bicycle tire missing. Whole numbers were hard enough, especially when lining them up together, combining them to form really super-whole biggies.

The Latin word, "Integer" means "whole, fresh or uninjured". Fractions are how the whole gets broken into littler ones. Numbers can be broken into really tiny things that hardly exist. I prefer round, uninjured things myself. Numbers that go beyond the amount of my fingers and toes can injure my whole brain.

Generally, we do not deal well with the incomplete, the broken, and the unwhole. While painting a fence or room or even a picture, someone coming along might tell us that it looks real good. Our natural response would be, "Yes, I guess so, but wait until it is finished, then you'll see something really good." We have in mind what it is going to look like before we begin; we know the whole, the final and fine product. We do not deal well with the slow realization of what and how things of our industry might turn out being.

In our northern part of this country, we say that there are two seasons, winter and road-repair. Our streets and highways get so fractured by snow and ice and cold that reconstruction is all around our speeding lives. The road to personal re-integration is always under construction. Our human wholeness is the awareness that holiness is how we hold our unfinished, fragments together without being negative about our progress. God, the Creator, is constantly and continuously laboring upon us and with us to bring us back into being personally and communally

whole. Because we do not live in the delusion of being "all together", we live in the Grace of being grateful, imagine this, grateful for the fractures, the partial, the almost, of our persons and lives and so we know exactly where God's Reconstruction is always taking place. The integrated person grows in loving her/his partliness. God never says to us, "Get it together!" In prayer we hear God saying, "I'm working on it!" Holiness is living toward wholeness with patient and more patience. It is only a glimpse and incomplete.