

## GLIMPSE

### The "Glory"

Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J.

The other day a friend of mine generously flew me in his little four-passenger plane out to South Dakota to visit our Jesuit mission on the Pine Ridge Reservation. It was a sunny day going out and on the way back we were flying above some white fluffy clouds. The pilot positioned the plane in such a way that the sun shone from above and the plane's shadow was reflected on the bed of the cloud. He showed us the shadow and pointed out that all around the plane's shadow was a rainbow which he told us is referred to as "the glory". The first thing I thought of was, "Wow that is a great beginning for a homily." Well I don't have a homily this weekend so I am writing a Glimpse instead.

It seems to me that we generally fly, walk, and sit beneath our personal clouds caused by our being dominated by disappointments. If there is any "glory" it is that we are not worse. Our physical shadows are a result of the sun or some other light shining upon us and our bodies resist the light passing through. It is as natural for us to resist God as it is to resist light's passing through. I guess there are not any shadows when totally in the dark.

Clouds of course have different and always-changing forms. They prevent the sun's shining through. We humans also have various ways to resist life, relationships, peace and universally, God. We have our patterns for resisting, but usually one particular pattern characterizes the way we relate with anything or anyone. Here's the kicker. The way we resist anything new, or the way we resist asking for help or dealing with our mistakes is predictably how we relate with God. In a small sense, God as Person, is just another person and the way we relate is simply the way we relate. A shy person does not turn shyness on and off. He/she approaches dogs, desserts and doors, usually in a cautious manner. Seeing and accepting our basic pattern of protection is so helpful to our being available to God's relationship with us. That is what it is after all, self-protection and self-care.

Now for the "glory!" God reverences those resistances, those patterns. God never says, "You shouldn't have that one or any at all! You should be cloudless!" In chapter 5, verse 45 of Matthew's Gospel, we read that God shines on the just and unjust alike. Both these groups do resist, the just rejoice and the unjust just don't

care one way or the other. God relates to us exactly according to our patterns of resistance, defense. God surrounds our shadows with the rainbow of a love which is brighter, because of the very darkness it highlights. We create the shadow, God constantly creates the relationships with us which we call Mercy. Our happiness and peace depend on our making friends with the shadows. They are always with us and they provide the meeting place where the *Glory* of the Lord shines brightest. Pretense prevents intimacy. It is only a glimpse, stay on the sunny side.