

## GLIMPSE

### Sending Forth

Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J.

In many cases, parting is a true sorrow and in other cases there is a sweetness. I noticed something recently about which I have smiled often. Leaving can be quite a lengthy sorrow, because of how much time it takes to rise from table or couch and finally be moving in one's car away from the delights of the evening. Much more significant conversation and planning and reminding are parts of the liturgy of hosting.

In a Psychology course we were advised to listen even more carefully to the words spoken near the end of a counseling session. A painful or self-revelational truth is often exposed right in time so there will not be enough time to unpackage them. We were instructed that the person sharing these intimate thoughts is not usually conscious of this process. In professional football this is called "The Two-Minute Drill". The last two minutes of the game can have more excitement than most of the rest of the previous fifty-eight minutes.

In saying "good-bye" at the door, or in the driveway or through the car windows, very important things can be shared that may have wanted to be spoken, but conversations take various turns and the times are not always right for certain sharings. Both the speaker and the spoken-to have experienced, through the evening, a form of intimacy which is hard to surrender. There are many, many "Thank yous" and words hoping to "do this again soon". It all goes back to the reality that the result of any intimacy is and has to be, fruitfulness.

There is true nourishment from a good conversation or celebration, or even from a wordless-walk with a friend. We do not ask of the other "What did you get out of that?" The truth is that we get a better self out of healthy encounters. It is not that we get good ideas, or jokes, or recipes, but there just is a something which gives the hosts and guests, the teller-of-jokes and the laughers, both quiet walkers, a sense of being okay, of being included, a spirit of desiring to include, give-life-to, relate with life a bit more deeply. We have almost a liturgical form of

departing, "Take good care of yourself", "Be good", "Have a good day", and "Be sure to come again". So parting is also, in a sense, a missioning, and an encouragement to live into the future something of what we just had here around the dinner table.

I doubt that any of us would leave the dinner or the social experience early, say immediately after dessert, unless there was an emergency of some kind. If we would do that quickly we would miss the post-dessert sweet-sending moments. We would miss the sharing of the delights of the evening and the possibilities for the future. We would just be gone not having taken the time to mission the others around the table or room.

Now I know that there are many Catholics who receive such inspiration from their intimate reception of communion that they just cannot stay in the church assembly and want to get out there and share their joy before the official ending. Now I am not judging of course. Is it worse to leave the liturgy of the Eucharist early or remain, but judging those faithful departed. I just feel a sorrow at their departing, because they did not participate in the "two-minute drill" of the missioning. The very word "mass" comes directly from the Latin word, "Misa" meaning "having been sent."

When I become Pope I am going to revise the liturgy so to include, not the priest or deacon dismissing, sending, but the assembly, the community would spend those final two minutes together sending each other to the living fruitfully the intimacy of the Eucharist. Perhaps the left side of the community would turn and in some verbal form, bless and send the right side. Then in turn the right side would bless and send the left. Maybe there could be some verbal exchange between believers standing or sitting next to each other. They just would share what and to whom are they being sent today or this week by being united in the Eucharistic body.

The last two minutes of the parting are moments of remembering and sending after dinners and parties, so relax, I am not running for Pope. These are the last words of this Glimpse-sharing. So I am going to do something else and you go too! It is within the last few minutes so perhaps the most important thing I am saying is, "It is only a glimpse".