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2015

Savoring

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Roche, Fr. Randy, "Savoring" (2015). *Spiritual Essays*. 402.

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Savoring

If we come upon an exceptionally tasty food, whether in a home or at a restaurant, we might eat it a little more slowly than usual, so as to more fully appreciate the flavors of that particular dish. After we have eaten, we might recall how good it was, perhaps describe our pleasant experience to others, and experience gratitude for it. But we soon forget, and move on.

Christmas Day is now past, with so much that happened in so short a period of time that we might not have savored many of our experiences with people and events, or with our thoughts and feelings in relation to them all. We cannot hold on to Christmas any more than we can keep enjoying a favorite food for hours on end. However, our capacity to relish the meaning of our experiences far exceeds our memories of physical sensations of taste. Christmas is not over for us until we decide that we are satisfied. We might choose to take time for treasuring particular experiences, some that were anticipated, some that surprised us, but all of them still available to us in reflective present moments.

One of the beautiful aspects of spiritual savoring is that we are not limited by the calendar or the clock, but are free to reflect on selected experiences whenever we wish. A meal ends, and after a while most memory recedes of whatever we tasted. But whatever has happened at a Christmas meal or in a brief moment of providing food for a homeless person, we can ponder the incidents at any time and more than once, enjoying more deeply the meaning and value that we thereby receive.

In addition to savoring some aspects of Christmas that have taken place, we are free and welcome to join with those who continue the celebration by engaging with some of the significant events that are directly connected with the birth of Christ. We have available to us the commemorations of the Three Wise Men, the presentation of the child Jesus in the temple, the attempt on Jesus' life by King Herod and subsequent family escape to Egypt, to name a few. We have the option of continuing to engage personally with the full Christmas story of God's love for us that is continually revealed in all the events accompanying the human birth of our Creator. We can re-visit this great mystery of love at any time, and appreciate the taste of it perhaps more fully and with deeper appreciation than when we were busily occupied with people and actively engaged in the events of Christmas Day.

We might naturally think of a person on his or her birthday or other significant anniversary, but we are not limited to those annual occasions. We might spontaneously recall some particular saying or action, some shared event or other encounter with a friend, and actually deepen our regard for

him or her as we delight in one or other memory. Considering the birthday of Christ, we have the faith-capacity to cherish at different times, and in a variety of contexts, a particular aspect of God being God and at the same time being one of us: savoring.

Randy