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Ice Cream

Fr. Randy Roche

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Ice Cream

Many of us do not eat as much ice cream as we did when we were younger. Some prefer alternatives: sorbet, frozen yogurt, shave ice, or the most recent kind of frozen dessert that is available. Some reasons for not taking ice cream include caution about calories, allergies to dairy products, or concerns about cholesterol. Ice cream has not changed that much over the years, though new brands with higher prices are continually presented to us. But we have changed, not just in our choice of desserts, but in our tastes, our habits, our values, and our concerns – they are not all the same as they were some years previously.

Have we changed for the better? We might miss some of the enjoyable, satisfying experiences we had earlier, including spiritual consolations. But would we really want to go back to a previous time in life, becoming a child again so that we could eat and take delight in large quantities of ice cream, or returning to a time when we first discovered the deep joy of encountering God, or Spirit, or Love?

We change, and God relates with us as we are, not as we were, and not even as we think we should be. God invites us to come closer and deeper in a relationship of love. Our experiences with prayer and reflection are not the same as they were when we were younger, nor are our customs with eating desserts. Unless we have wandered down a path we know to be wrong for us, we are, at this time in our lives, exactly where we need to be. We have changed, and much of our change has been inspired and guided by God who loves us.

As we grow in confidence that we are loved as we are, we freely relinquish false self-images about our powers and accomplishments, quietly recognize the many areas of life that we do not control, and peacefully acknowledge some of the hidden weaknesses whereby appetites still push us around. We meet God humbly but sincerely in a relationship that is not between equals, but is heart to heart. God loves us as God does, and we return love as we are – sometimes with great facility, and other times wondering how we can continue. We constantly change and grow in love, while much else in life seems to drop away as no longer as important to us as it once was.

A taste of ice cream might or might not be one of our pleasures now, for any number of reasons. But there are no reasons for turning down the pleasure of God's company. Ice cream is made for people to enjoy or not. We are created to love and to be loved. While everything about

us changes, the purpose of our existence – love – remains the ultimate reality for which we are invited to make all changes that are ours to choose, to admit, and to accept.

Ice cream might still be an option.