

25th April 2021

Leftovers

**“O grant me, Heaven, a middle state,
Neither too humble nor too great;
More than enough for nature’s ends,
With something left to treat my friends.”**

David Malloch, Imitation of Horace

I enjoy cooking. It’s mostly “recipe-based”, for I’m not good at experimenting. But even though I’m just cooking for two, fairly regularly I overdo it, and that means there are leftovers – not much, I have to say, but enough that has to be thought about and dealt with properly.

A friend tells me there are no calories in a chocolate biscuit if you break it in half, for, in the snapping of it, all the calories escape. The same friend has another theory – there are no calories in leftovers. No matter what it is, if you put it in the fridge in a bowl or plastic container, when you get round to eating it the food is completely calorie free. Incredible! For that reason – *and* because I don’t like waste – I enjoy leftovers. To be honest, some of my food tastes better on the second day – as a cold snack or a re-heated lunch.

But I have other leftovers I don’t deal with so well. I have leftover time, not that much, but some spare capacity when I’ve done all the other things I need to do. Does that go to waste, or might it be better used? I have leftover money too, not a great deal, but I know some of it is frittered away on ... well, nothing of importance. Might that be better used? I also have leftover passions, when I think I’m done with concerns for justice, and peace, and equity. Might they be going to waste when more people are needed who can face the world’s ills with concern and commitment?

The 18th century Scottish poet, David Malloch, was largely content with his lot. Seeking a “middle state”, all he wanted was enough for his needs. But ... he also needed leftovers. He sought “something left to treat my friends”, something to give away for the benefit of others.

If we have enough, or even *more* than enough, for our own needs, give thought to the leftovers, for there are many out there who are or could be our friends, who deserve a share of what we have.

A prayer for today

Generous God, you give me so much ... so much that it sometimes feels like too much. Oh! I see! That’s for sharing! Goodness, I never thought of that. Amen

An original reflection by @ Tom Gordon Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>