



Sometimes the most transcendent approach is to be very practical. In my experience when monks on various spiritual paths come together they talk about tomatoes not theology. Anyway, I think this weekend is one of those matter-of-fact times.

It was raining heavily yesterday afternoon as I watched children from the local grade school being driven home. Some were walking. There once was a school bus but that fell victim to budget problems. If statistics are correct twenty-percent of the children I saw could have gone to bed hungry last night. That may be even higher where I live because unpredicted cuts in agricultural jobs came right after the harvest. I have worked in Third-World situations but I have difficulty in comprehending a significant number of hungry children in California! Nevertheless, they are here.

This morning I read of two Wall Street financiers in a friendly billion dollar competition. As I understood it, one of them was attempting to make a corporate conglomerate crash and the other was attempting to make the price of the conglomerate's stock shares rise. Just a jolly good game? I don't think so.

Who is more likely headed into Issa's "heart of darkness" — the Wall Street game-players or the hungry children? I suspect, that like most octogenarians I don't see myself or even the broad circle of friends around me being able to do much about the games on Wall Street. But what about hungry children? This is the beginning of the Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend of Service. I seem to recall that on one of his several memorial statues there is Jesus' simple quote "For I was hungry and you gave me food." (*Matthew 25:35*) Perhaps there is a way we can each lend a hand so that fewer children go to bed hungry.

Here at Starcross, with the help of a couple of nearby NGOs we are going to start a modest food-pantry in the barn. It will be just a drop-in-the-bucket but it will be something helpful in a few lives.

Now, as to any honking game-players flying into the heart of darkness, if someone reading this knows how to keep the rest of us from being sucked along — go for it!

Brother Toby

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