

Mindful Eating

By Fra Anil Sakya

With deep faith and all our lives' force we light up the incense of our heart. As a lost child being united with his parents, we experience an immense happiness to be with the community to celebrate this occasion. We solemnly pray:

May the Light of Wisdom within us and around us grow brighter each day to help us to recognize our errors and begin anew.

May the Nectar of Compassion within us and around us flow endlessly each day to cool down the burning of the roots of our afflictions, and to wash away all of our suffering from our illusions.

Mankind is blessed with advanced technology, yet the earth is filled with cries for help. It is either from the violent acts of man against man that lives are lost day and night, bloodshed saturates the earth, rancor spreads all over, and people are living in animosity, or from the anger of Mother Nature.

Mother Nature, who, without warning, causes natural disasters to swallow up lives. Cities and villages were destroyed; lives vanished without the sound of a cry for help. The deceased are in the wandering realm, the survivors live in despair. Witness such tragedy, the plight of the victims, who in this human race can hold back their tears? We pray:

May those who are hungry be fed, and those who are sick be cured. May a smile radiate the face of the innocent child, and may the elders not have to shed tears for their children.

We wholeheartedly pray for the people across the globe who died from recent Covid-19.

We pray that all those who are suffering from misfortunes, be given a life of peace and happiness, and that we may be free from all disasters, either natural or man-made. May we be blessed with a peaceful world and serene beings.

As an invocation I would like to request you,

First, to reflect on our own work and the effort of those who brought us this food.

Second, let us be aware of the quality of our deeds as we receive this meal.

Third, what is most essential is the practice of mindfulness, which helps us to transcend greed, anger and delusion.

Fourth, we appreciate this food which sustains the good health of our body and mind, and

Fifth, in order to continue our practice for all beings we accept this offering. And let us all contemplate for today's meal calmly and reflectively:

“Wisely reflecting on this food I
use it not to distract my mind Not
to gratify desire,
Not to make my form impressive Or
to make it beautiful,
Simply to be sustained and nourished
And to maintain what health I have To
help fulfill the Spiritual Life;
With this attitude in mind,
‘I will allay hunger without overeating
So that I may continue to live blamelessly and at ease.’”

The first morsel is to cut all delusions.
The second morsel is to maintain our clear mind.
The third morsel is to save all sentient beings.
May we awaken together with all beings.

Peace be upon us!