



## *Reflection from Fr. Garry Richmeier*

I just got back from some vacation time. Since I don't take time to get away too often, I'm often amazed to realize afterward how much I needed it. I think it has something to do with being in a different physical/psychological/emotional space from which to view the surrounding world. From this different perspective, I tend to see things differently. It's not the same-old, same-old. This change of perspective can be refreshing and life-giving. It is part of why vacations can be good, fun, and needed.

Vacations are not the only way to reap the benefits of seeing things from a different perspective. We can choose to view people and things from different perspectives if we want. For example, instead of seeing myself as I usually do, I can sometimes imagine how someone else sees me -- seeing myself from their perspective. Or instead of looking at a law or piece of legislation from the perspective of how it helps/hurts me, I can choose to look at it from the perspective of someone else whose circumstances may be very different than mine.

Part of today's plague of societal polarization is due to our refusal to look at things from different perspectives. Somehow we have forgotten the wisdom of the old adage of "walking a mile in another's shoes." This requires a certain humility and openness, a willingness to put aside my own "stuff" (perspective) long enough to experience a different view of the world. Jesus did this often. He was able to see the world from the perspective of others, like the woman caught in adultery or Zaccheus the tax collector. This brought life in the form of forgiveness and change of heart.

Not everyone can take a vacation whenever they want a change of perspective. But the ability to change our perspective is always available to us.

*~ Peace,  
Fr. Garry*