



Reflection from Fr. Garry Richmeier

When I was little, my mom would sometimes bake a pie. Since I was the oldest boy, I was the first to pick which piece of the pie I wanted. It was pretty much impossible for mom to cut a pie into the exact same-size pieces, so there were usually a couple pieces which were bigger than the others. Naturally, I would take the biggest piece. This would often cause much resentment and discontent among my younger brothers, which my mother would have to deal with. But I clearly remember the day that the pie came out of the oven, and we boys were arguing over which piece we would each get, and I said I'd take the smaller piece to save an argument. My mom used it as a teaching moment, and told us all that that was an example of what it means to grow up.

Taking the biggest piece of the "pie" is the source of much of our suffering and many of our conflicts as adults. The huge gap between the rich and the poor in this country is an example. Developed countries use an inordinate amount of the world's resources while developing countries do without. Right now, Russian leaders want a bigger piece of the pie and are taking over Ukraine, causing much death and suffering.

Self-denial is a traditional practice during Lent for us. Fasting and abstinence are the two most familiar forms of this. Self-denial can be considered simply rules you should follow as a Catholic, but it can have a deeper meaning if we let it. It can be a way that we remind ourselves that what God has given is given to all of us. It can also be a way of consciously following the teaching "live simply so that others can simply live."

Lent is a good time to take stock of what we really need to live, and what we don't need. It's also a good time to remember how God has always provided, even when we thought we didn't have what we needed. Lent is a time of Spiritually "growing up" a little bit more.

~ Peace,

Fr. Garry