



Reflection from Fr. Garry Richmeier

We've all probably heard something like "She's looking at life through rose colored glasses." It means the person sees everything as rosy and positive, and may ignore the down side of life. In a similar way, all of us start to create our own unique color of "glasses" soon after we are born. We develop certain ways of seeing the world as a result of the teaching of our parents, the culture we come from, the religion we are born into, the many life experiences we accumulate, etc. Everything we observe and experience takes on the tint of whatever color of lenses we have acquired. A simple example of this is whether a person is an optimist (sees things in a positive light) or a pessimist (sees things in a negative light). We cannot "not" have our personal set of lenses through which we view the world.

This is not a problem unless we are unaware that we are wearing tinted glasses. It's like looking through red colored glasses at a white sheet of paper. The paper looks red, and we assume we are seeing accurately. Another person wearing green colored glasses may assume the paper is green. Neither person is seeing the paper objectively, but they may still get into an argument/fight about the color of the paper.

In order to have a more accurate view of the world, and to avoid many disagreements, we need to first of all be humble enough to admit that our view is necessarily tinted by our life experiences. Then we need to learn how our experiences generally skew our perceptions and attitudes (learn what color glasses we're looking through). This can happen by interaction with others, listening to their views, and adjusting our judgments accordingly. Each of us has a unique view of the world, but none of us has a completely accurate view of the world. That is why we must take into account each person's view if we want the full picture.

Peace,
Fr. Garry