

FEBRUARY 23

Sometimes beginning to see through the eyes of another starts with recognizing that you have enough. Seeing your own circumstances in a new light, you learn to inhabit a posture of gratitude.

In my experience, the tradition of giving up for Lent has always come from a place of comfortable middle-class plenitude. I give up dessert because I enjoy too much of it. I give up eating out because I can so readily and easily do it. I give up meat because I eat it with such regularity. But I've never restricted my use of water. Rarely have I stopped to consider the overwhelming privilege of turning on the tap with the constant expectation that water will flow from it. I've never considered the possibility that the water won't come when I want it.

This is a privilege, a privilege of geography, wealth, education, class, and history. Fulfilled expectations are my privilege.

It is also a privilege that I am not often challenged to consider that my fulfilled expectations might mean that someone else's expectations are dashed. Because of privilege I don't consider that leaving the water running while brushing my teeth or caring for a manicured lawn means that those precious liquid resources are not being used elsewhere.

If access to water is a human right, then it is my human responsibility to develop a mindfulness and thoughtfulness toward how I use this water. The water of life in Christ is not mine and mine alone but is a gift and a grace freely given to the

world. So too is the water of life not mine and mine alone to use carelessly and gratuitously.

It is my Christian responsibility to develop an awareness for the impact my behavior has on others.

Perhaps this Lent will be less a time of self-deprivation and more a time of prayerfully and thoughtfully developing an awareness of how I use the precious resources around me.

—ALLISON DUVAL