

- 1 400 years ago, **Christmas mince pies** were made of chopped meat, rather than fruit. The crust on top was formed from a piece of pastry in the shape of a baby. The mince pie was rectangular in shape, representing the Christ-Child in the Manger.
- 2 Nowadays mince pies are made with mixed fruit of currants, sultanas, and the peel of lemons and oranges. At Christmas-time, nuts and dates are often bought, along with some less-common fruits such as mandarins, clementines, nectarines and satsumas - all varieties of orange.
- 3 720,000 tons of oranges were destroyed in Europe in 1993. They were fit for human consumption, as were the apples - nearly a million tons of them - also destroyed that year by the European Union. Nearly three million tons of perfectly good fruit and vegetables were destroyed that year - mostly by being buried in the ground and allowed to rot.
- 4 This was done according to the agricultural policy of the European Union, paying farmers to destroy some of their crops rather than have "*too much food*" on the market, causing prices to drop. This policy cost British taxpayers £57 million in 1993.
- 5 *Let us pray:*

**God our loving Father,  
 our governments  
 spend money in our name  
 to subsidise farmers to "set aside"  
 good agricultural land  
 so that less food is produced.  
 Some potatoes and other good crops  
 are sprayed with dyes  
 to make them unfit  
 for human consumption,  
 and it is policy  
 to destroy good harvests  
 of fruit and vegetables.**

**Yet our brothers and sisters  
 go hungry and die  
 across the world.  
 Lead us to grow  
 in valuing the dignity  
 of all people,  
 as well as in respect  
 for the fruit of the earth  
 and the work of human hands.  
 Inspire us to be of influence  
 in our own part of the world  
 so that injustices -wherever they exist-  
 may be challenged,  
 and all people learn to grow together  
 as caring and responsible  
 brothers and sisters.  
 Amen.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in  
*'Praying Each Day of the Year'*,  
a 3-volume book  
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine  
to research this topic further.

This material is part of  
the prayer and education website  
of the De La Salle Brothers  
in Great Britain:  
[www.prayingeachday.org](http://www.prayingeachday.org)