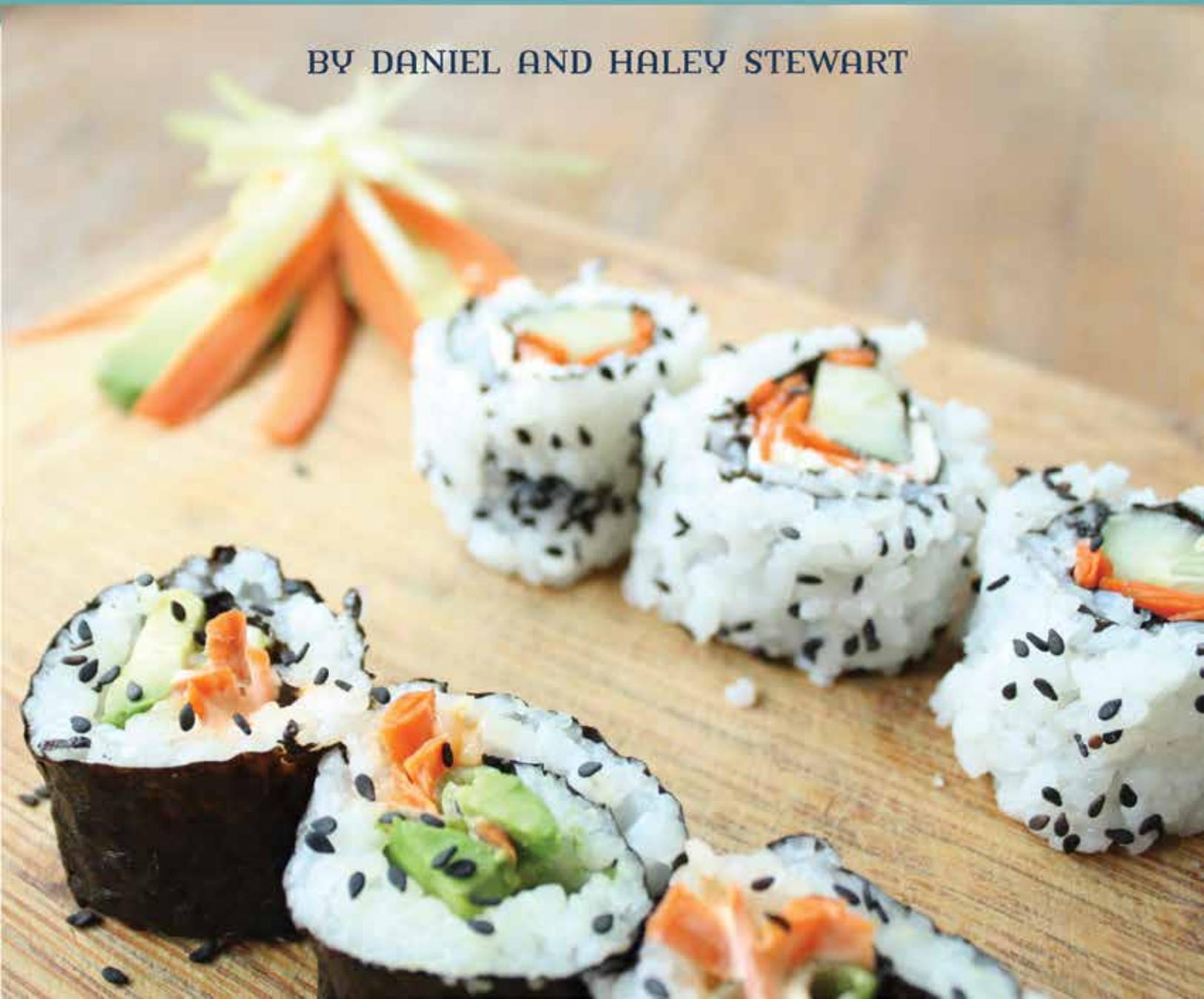




More Feasts!

Celebrating Saints and Seasons
with Simple Real Food Recipes

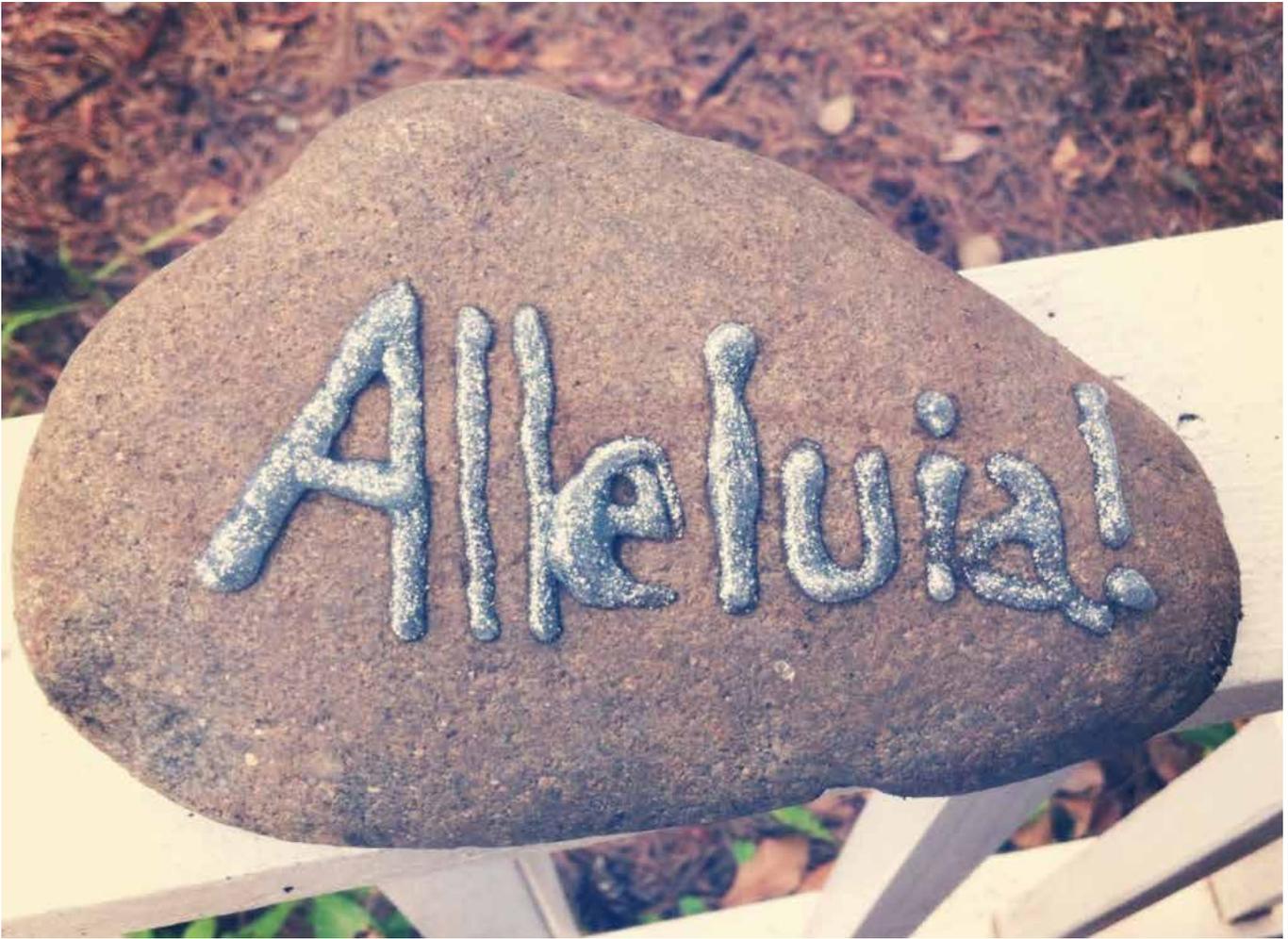
BY DANIEL AND HALEY STEWART



More Feasts!

Celebrating Saints and Seasons with Simple Real Food Recipes

by Daniel and Haley Stewart
of Carrots for Michaelmas



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About the Authors

Daniel and Haley are Catholic converts who married young (nine years ago) and still really like each other. They've been blessed with three amazing kids under the age of six who bring joy and chaos to their lives. (Daniel and Haley haven't had a full night's sleep since 2009.) Daniel works full-time away from home and maintains their occasionally fruitful garden and always ornery flock of chickens. He enjoys running ultra marathons, knows way too much about Star Wars, is a contributing writer for Catholic Exchange, and blogs at Daniel Bearman: Acts of Idiot Praise. Haley spends her days homeschooling, chasing babies, drinking coffee, and reading Jane Austen. She is writer, speaker, podcaster, and blogs at her personal site Carrots for Michaelmas.

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Introduction

When we published our first book in 2013, *Feast! Real Food, Reflections, and Simple Living for the Christian Year* we really didn't know what to expect. We had never attempted anything like it before and committing to the weeks and months of creating the book was really a step of faith. We hoped it would find its way into the hands of a few families who, like us, wanted to bring the practice of their faith into their home and their life around the table but didn't know where to begin.

When we launched it, the response blew us away. Cradle Catholics who wanted to deepen their faith, fellow converts who were beginning to embrace the traditions of the Church, and Protestant brothers and sisters who had discovered the richness of the liturgical year all told us, "This is exactly the book I've been looking for!"

Nurturing life around the table and observing the Christian Year has brought such joy to our home. When readers send us emails or tag us on social media photos of the feasts they've prepared at their own tables, our hearts leap. What a wonderful community God has made out of this little labor of love!

Days after *Feast!* launched, we started getting questions about when more recipes would be published. For the past few months, we've been researching, testing recipes, and learning more about the holy men and women that these feasts honor.

If you're looking for an in-depth explanation of the liturgical seasons and reflections on the Christian Year, you will want to consult the original book *Feast! More Feasts!*, follows up and adds to what we started there. We hope you enjoy these new recipes and reflections!

With all our love,

Daniel and Haley Stewart

A Few Notes

Notes on the Recipes and Real Food

We cook for a family of five, so all the recipes should serve five and you will likely have some leftovers, too.

These recipes are inspired by a real food diet. All are gluten-free or have gluten-free options. Feel free to adapt these recipes to what best suits your family!

For most of Christian history, eating healthy and ethically-produced food that doesn't harm the environment was a lot easier to do than it is now. Almost all food was "seasonal" and "organic" while most livestock was treated humanely, especially in comparison to modern factory farms. This is not meant to discredit all modern agriculture, grocery stores, and nutrition science. However, we have lost much in our divorce from the source of our food. The important point is that what we eat and how we treat creation is not incidental to our celebration of our faith.

We should ask ourselves, were the men and women who grew this food afforded dignity and a living wage? Were the animals given the care due to them as unique creatures of God? Was the land treated with harmful farming practices? It may not always be possible to grow or purchase the perfect ingredients for our meals, but we still must be aware of these questions.

Notes for Other Christian Traditions

While we observe the Christian Year to grow in our Catholic faith, the liturgical year can be celebrated by all Christians. You don't have to be Catholic to enter in to the liturgical seasons and learn about holy men and women of the Faith. In fact, it seems that in recent years, many Protestant Christians are rediscovering the rhythms of the Christian calendar and observing seasons like Advent and Lent. This is a wonderful and exciting way that the splintered Church can join together and celebrate our faith, despite theological differences.

Notes on the Saints

While our fellow Catholics won't bat an eye at honoring the saints, this can be a unsettling concept for our Protestant brothers and sisters. One of the greatest misunderstandings between Christian traditions is the veneration of the saints, especially regarding prayer. As Catholic Christians we pray to the saints, but perhaps this practice is better described as praying with the saints or asking for their prayers. Just as we would ask a holy friend to pray for us, we ask the saints, our friends in heaven, for this same gift. Our relationship with these "friends of God" does not divert our attention from Jesus but instead directs our hearts to Him.

The saints are holy men and women who have become truly like Christ. They show us how to live, intercede for us, and cheer us on to glory as the great cloud of witnesses described in the book of Hebrews. What a great reason to have a feast!

The General Roman Calendar, which lists the different feast days throughout the year, actually holds only a fraction of the thousands of saints formally recognized by the Church. Each day brings an opportunity to learn about amazing men and women of God who took seriously Christ's command to leave everything and follow him.

Praising their Virtues

All Saints are similar in that they have become like Christ. Yet, they are all so different in the way they reflect the Glory of God for us. The calendar of saints is filled with warrior kings and pacifist monks, popes and farmers, rich benefactors and poor hermits, illiterate peasants and the most brilliant scholars who've ever lived. All saints are virtuous, but their virtue shows forth in a myriad of ways. In some, we see great courage, in others humility, in others profound charity. As we learn about the saint, we recognize these virtues and seek to imitate them in our own lives.

Celebrating the Church Universal

In this book, we've included saints from all over the world. This isn't a shallow attempt at a diversity quota but a true representation of the Universal Church. Christ is victorious and he makes saints everywhere he sends his Gospel. When we celebrate the feast of a saint from a place far away from us, we celebrate the global reality of our faith. We remember our brothers and sisters who are separated from us by geography, language, and culture and yet are united with us in Christ.

Petitioning for the Persecuted Church

Here in America, it can be easy to forget that persecution of Christians is common in many parts of the world. Christians are not only discriminated against legally but are arrested, beaten, and exiled. Their homes and churches are burned and holy sites are desecrated. Many Christians are even killed for their faith, becoming martyrs for the name of Jesus. We should pray whenever we can for our persecuted brothers and sisters, that God would give them strength and protection. We should also thank God for their profound faithfulness and powerful witness.

When we celebrate the feast of a saint who was martyred, we remember those who are still dying for their faith. Additionally, when we celebrate a saint from a place where Christians are now being persecuted, we pray specifically for those people.

Introducing Children to the Saints

Children learn through their senses and celebrating feast days through food and activity is a wonderful way to introduce children to the saints of the Faith. Here are some practical ideas for sharing the saints with children:

- Get children in the kitchen, helping to prepare the meal with you.
- Discuss how the meal reminds us of the saint or the region where he lived and served.
- Pull out maps and globes and learn about where the saint was born or where she ministered.
- Discuss the way Christians live in those areas today and pray for the persecuted Church.
- Read about the saint's life and note the great virtues he or she displayed.
- Discuss with your children how they can do little things to increase those virtues in your family to display God's love to those around you.

The Christian Year starts with the season of Advent—beginning on the Sunday closest to November 30th, St. Andrew's Day. Let's jump in!

Why Advent Should Terrify You: Advent Reflection by Haley

Every year since I was a little girl, my mother and I have gone to a sing-along of Handel's incredible masterpiece, the Messiah, during Advent. We bundle up, grab our music scores, find a seat with our fellow altos, and sing our hearts out. If you've never really listened to the Messiah you simply must.

It begins with the words of the biblical prophets foretelling the coming of Our Lord. Then it draws from St. Luke's Gospel and shares the joy of the Nativity. It masterfully weaves Scripture together to carry the listener to Calvary and on to the Resurrection. It's beautiful. And if you can sit through a performance with dry eyes, you're not paying enough attention.

Each year I notice something that's never struck me before and last year, it was the words of the prophets. These were the words that surprised me:

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come.
(Haggai 2: 6-7)

Well that sounds.....scary. The desire of all nations is, of course, Jesus. But what is this about shaking the heavens and the earth? That image didn't seem to fit in with the room full of sing-alongers wearing Christmas sweaters and looking forward to snacking on cookies and punch after the performance.

I don't enjoy being shaken up. I like to be in control. I like predictability. I like security. But that's not what the Incarnation offers us! God himself wasn't born of a woman to share in our humanity so that I could be comfortable. He came to shake us up. Shake us out of our apathy. Shake us out of our false security. Shake us out of our sin.

And it gets worse! As the music of the Messiah continues, a soloist stands up to sing the words of Malachi 3:2:

*But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth?
For He is like a refiner's fire.*

It's gone from scary to terrifying! When He comes, no one can stand before him. Advent, "the coming," is not just a heart-warming event for Christmas cards—instead, we're asked who can abide the day of His coming? For He is like a refiner's fire, the heat that purifies precious metals, removing all that's flawed. If He is the refiner's fire, then we are the metal being purified. And that sounds more than uncomfortable, it sounds excruciating.

We've made a huge mistake. We've made the Incarnation safe and comfortable. We like it warm and fuzzy with soft lambs bleating as they rest on clean hay. And, yes, it is beautiful and joyful and splendid. But we've sanitized it and we've forgotten how terrifying it is that God shares our humanity and comes like a earthquake, like a fire. To shake us up, and to purify us.

So how do we move from abject terror at the idea of the Incarnation to the Joy of Christmas? I think it has to do with letting go of the sin we cling to. We have to submit. We have to lay down our false security, our desire for control, and let Him shake us up. We have to offer our hearts to Him so that He can consume all our sin with the fire of his immeasurable love until we are stripped of all impurity. And it won't happen in just one Advent season. We're looking at a lifetime.

And who can stand when he appeareth?

As I meditated on this verse, I considered the image of Our Lady at the Annunciation, kneeling and saying "*be it unto me according to thy word.*" Who can stand? We certainly cannot. But we can kneel like Mary, giving our own "fiat" and offering our hearts to be shaken up and our sin to be burned away.

The first Sunday of Advent is called Stir Up Sunday as the opening collect of the Mass is "Stir up Thy might, we beg Thee, and come." Are we ready to say that prayer? May we be prepared to desire His coming, be shaken, and be consumed by the fire of his love. May He stir up our hearts this Advent and mold us into what he desires us to be.

December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe by Haley



About the Saint

In December of 1531, St. Juan Diego saw an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In his vision she looked like a beautiful Aztec princess. She told him to inform the bishop that she desired a church to be built. To convince the bishop that Juan Diego had indeed seen Our Lady, she gave him roses, a surprising sight in winter, to carry in his cloak as a sign. When the roses tumbled down from his cloak, a breathtaking image of Our Lady was miraculously imprinted on the cloak. Our Lady under the title of the Virgin of Guadalupe is patroness of the Americas and the unborn.

Carnitas

The week after our third baby arrived, my friend Jeni brought over these carnitas. There should have been enough for leftovers but we ate them all. That night I dreamed that we had more and was bitterly disappointed the next morning when I woke up to the dreadful reality of no more carnitas. They're just that good. Jeni agreed to share her recipe with me so I could share it with you!

Ingredients

(We use a slow cooker to cook the meat)

2 TBSP and 3 TBSP olive oil
 1/4 cup butter, melted
 3-4 lbs fatty bone in pork shoulder
 1 orange, juiced
 1-2 jalapeno, seeded and diced to taste
 2 large sweet onions, diced
 1 TBSP ground cinnamon
 1/2 TBSP ground cloves
 1/2 TBSP Old Bay
 3 TBSP dried oregano
 1 TBSP
 salt and black pepper to taste
 3 TBSP garlic powder
 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
 2-3 fresh limes, sliced
 corn tortillas
 optional: guacamole, sour cream, salsa

Part 1

1. Add 2 TBSP olive oil to the slow cooker and then add pork shoulder.
2. Season liberally with with dried spices. Salt and pepper (heavily).
3. Add juice of orange, diced onion, and diced pepper.
4. Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours until falling apart.
5. Remove bones and pull meat into chunks (don't worry about including the juice or all the onions). At this stage you can put cooled meat in fridge or in freezer bag for later or move on to Part 2.

Part 2

1. On a large cookie sheet or similar, add melted butter and 3 TBSP olive oil to pan.
2. Put diced onion on one side of pan, spread out meat flat on the rest of pan.
3. Cover with foil, poke some holes, and bake in the oven for 20-30 mins on 350F.
4. Remove foil, toss onions and meat together and add sliced limes on top.
5. Broil 5 minutes, watching carefully.
6. Salt and pepper meat again, squeeze excessively liberal amounts of lime juice, add chopped cilantro.
7. Serve in warmed corn tortillas and (optional) add guacamole, sour cream, and salsa.

Season of Christmastide

Simple Christmas Garlands by Haley



About the Season

Christmastide is the season beginning on Christmas Day and ending on the Feast of Epiphany. In order to celebrate this joyful time, I try to get past my lack of crafting skills to do a few fun projects with the kids. This is one of our favorites.

You will need:

Cranberries (not dried or frozen)
Popcorn (already popped, not buttered)
Needle
Sturdy Thread

Thread your needle and tie a knot on the end of your thread. (Instead of making one long garland that can decorate the whole tree, we make three or four shorter ones. The shorter the garland the less likely it is to tangle.) Make a garland to hang on the Christmas tree by stringing popcorn and cranberries (alternating to make a pretty pattern). Young children will need supervision with the needle. I usually put one child in charge of passing me the cranberries and the other in charge of passing me the popcorn. Snacking on the popcorn and listening to Christmas carols is recommended.

A Note on Authenticity by Daniel

I often joke about how Americans adopted the Japanese delicacy of sushi only to then deep fry it and slather it with mayonnaise. There's certainly a major difference between the kind of delicate raw fish expertly prepared by Japanese sushi chefs who have undergone decades of demanding training and the discount grocery store sushi filled with cream cheese. With these two extremes in mind, it's easy to think that there is a single authentic kind of sushi and that all others are inferior and to be avoided. But this view is rather simplistic. And wrong.

The kind of "authentic" sushi prepared today in high end Tokyo restaurants is a relatively new phenomenon. Sushi actually has its origins in Southeast Asia, perhaps along the Mekong River, where raw fish was wrapped in rice and left to ferment. This process eventually found its way to Japan but was changed drastically over the centuries. A few areas still have something similar but, for the most part, the traditional technique has been abandoned. Now, high end sushi restaurants may certainly claim higher quality and better ingredients but they can't claim a centuries old authenticity.

The same is true of many foods we often associate with tradition and authenticity. Misunderstanding about the German "Beer Purity Law" has led some to believe that real beer must be made with only barley, water, and hops. Many assume that adding any other ingredient is some sort of new idea. But, in reality, for thousands of years people have been brewing beer with other grains, different bittering agents, and all kinds of other ingredients.

Another problem with the idea of culinary authenticity is the continuously changing food traditions of different cultures. For instance, we might be tempted to think of marinara sauce as the epitome of Italian cuisine. But tomatoes are a new world fruit that only became popular in Europe in the past couple centuries. Similarly, it's difficult to imagine Indian or Southeast Asian cuisine without chili peppers but these are also a late introduction. That doesn't mean these food traditions suffer from "inauthenticity." It just means that they continue to embrace new ingredients.

Furthermore, even simply recreating a cuisine as it is now proves almost impossible. Take your Italian grandmother's famous marinara sauce. Tomatoes grown on a farm in California will taste different from those grown on a hillside in Italy. From the soil chemistry to the weather, these differences will result in different flavors. The same is true of onions, garlic, basil, and every other ingredient in that sauce. Will these differences be enough to dramatically change the flavor of the sauce? Maybe not dramatically. But certainly enough to make your grandmother take notice.

Now, none of this is to say authenticity is a pointless culinary endeavor. I love trying to find more authentic ingredients for different cuisines by exploring Asian grocery stores or growing my own heirloom vegetables. Pursuing authenticity can open you up to new cooking methods, ingredients, and flavors and is part of the fun of cooking. But don't worry about a little mayonnaise on sushi and don't let fears about authenticity keep you from exploring new foods!

February 6: St. Paul Miki by Daniel

About the Saint

Born to a wealthy family, St. Paul Miki joined the Jesuits and became well known as an effective preacher. He was arrested by an anti-Catholic lord and was forced to march 600 miles to face trial in Nagasaki. He and his fellow prisoners sang “Te Deum” the entire journey. Paul Miki was crucified but preached one last sermon from the cross, forgiving his executioners and calling his countrymen to Christ.

Simple Sushi

We don't usually use actual raw fish in our sushi. Partly because we don't quite trust ourselves yet with the preparation. But there are some good sources of extremely fresh fish around here. If you have good suppliers and want to give it a go, why not? The other reason we don't use fish is because it's pricey. It's a lot cheaper for us to use vegetables and tofu.



Ingredients

Sushi Rice:

2 cups sushi rice
 2 cups water
 2 TBSP rice vinegar
 1 TBSP sugar
 pinch of sea salt

1. Rinse the rice in cool water and drain. Repeat 2 more times. Bring the rice and water to a boil. Reduce to simmer and cover. Cook for 15 minutes or until water is absorbed. Remove from heat but keep covered.
2. Mix vinegar, sugar, and salt. Pour this mixture into the rice once it has cooled. Stir the rice to mix everything evenly.

Must have ingredients:

1 package of nori sheets (dried seaweed)
 sushi rice
 soy sauce (soy sauce contains gluten, but you can find gluten-free soy sauce or liquid aminos)

And at least some of these for fillings:

cucumber
 avocado
 lettuce
 carrots
 green onions
 cilantro
 sesame seeds
 cream cheese
 spicy mayo (yeah, it's just mayo and sriracha)

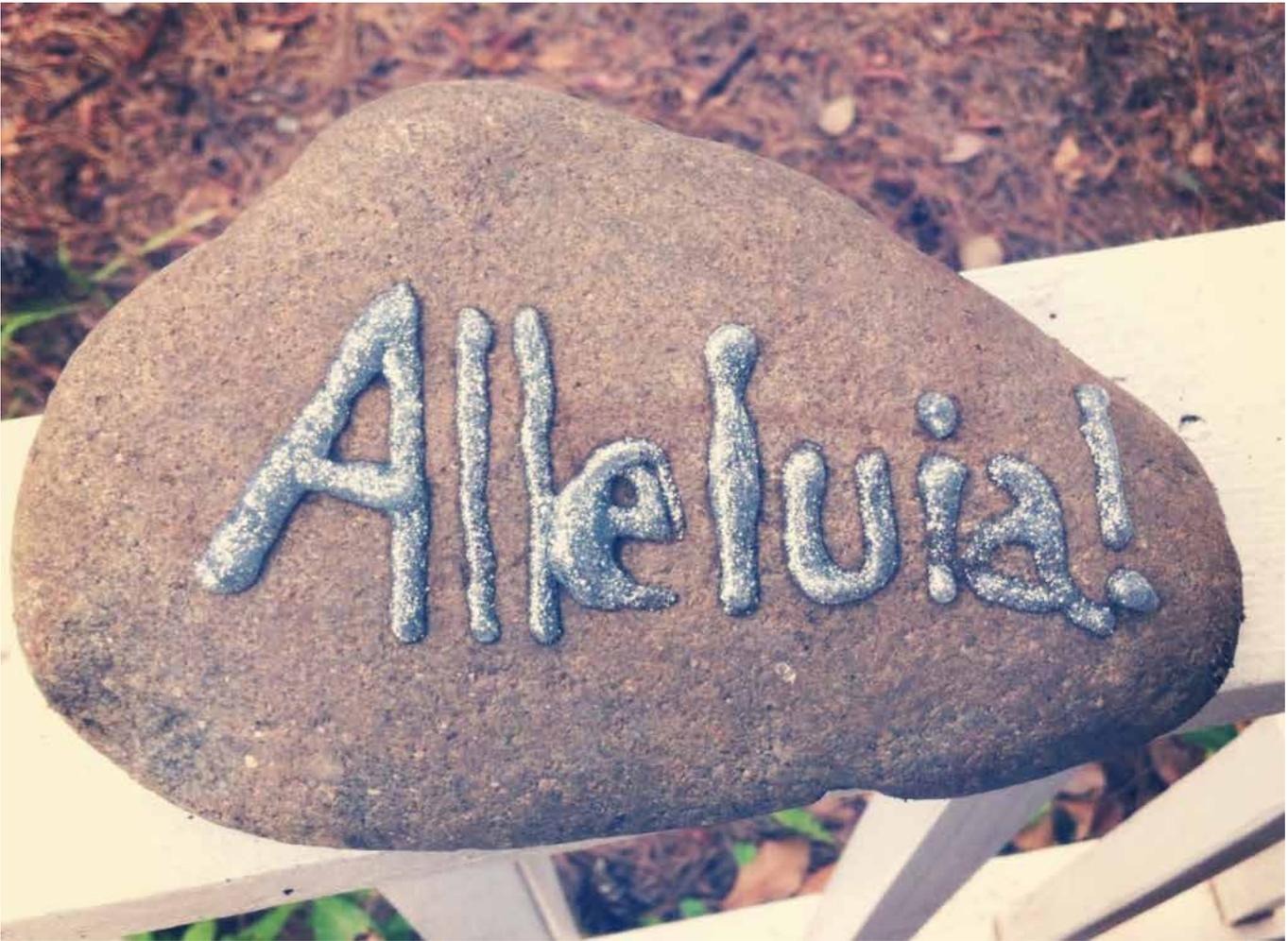
Recommended, but not essential:

bamboo sushi mat

1. While the sushi rice cools, prepare your fillings.
2. Lay out one nori sheet on a bamboo sushi mat. The nori has a rough side and a smooth side. The rough side should be facing up. Sushi mats aren't absolutely necessary but they do make rolling easier. They're also very inexpensive and make you look like you know what you're doing.
3. Wet your hands (it helps to just have a cup of water sitting handy) and take one handful of cooled sushi rice. Place the rice in the middle of the nori sheet and spread to the sides. If the rice is sticking too much to your fingers, wet them in the water again. Cover all of the nori except for about one inch at the top. The rice should be about a quarter of an inch thick.
4. Lay your fillings out on the rice. Don't add too much, it's easy to overfill.
5. Starting at the bottom, slowly roll the sushi up towards the top. This is where the sushi mat really comes in handy. Once the sushi is rolled up, the top of the nori sheet without rice should wrap around and form a seal. Cut the roll with a very sharp knife (very sharp!) into eight pieces. Serve with soy sauce.

This is the basic futomaki roll, a kind of makizushi which has the nori on the outside. Most American sushi restaurants serve uramaki, or “inside-out rolls.” These have the rice on the outside. These are a little bit trickier to make but also a lot of fun. Just spread the rice out like normal and then flip over! The rice SHOULD stick to the nori. Then, add your fillings and roll up. Sushi can be intimidating the first time you make it but it really isn’t that difficult. I recommend watching videos online so you can get the basic idea first!

A Simple Lenten Activity: Bury the Alleluia by Haley



During the season of Lent, the Alleluia is not said or sung before the Gospel reading. To help children notice this change in the liturgy, you can bury an object that says “Alleluia” and then recover it on Easter when the Alleluia returns to the Mass liturgy.

What You’ll Need:

- A rock or piece of wood
- Paint or glitter glue
- A shovel for digging

Just write or paint the word “Alleluia” to your object. Then have the children bury it in the ground. (If you don’t have a patch of dirt to dig in, you can hide the Alleluia and bring it out to display on Easter.) If you do bury the Alleluia be sure to mark the spot so you don’t lose it forever (not that I would know anything about that.)

March 19th: St. Joseph by Haley



About the Saint

St. Joseph doesn't need much introduction. Devoted and most chaste husband to the Blessed Virgin Mary and earthly father to Our Lord Jesus, St. Joseph protected and cared for the Holy Family faithfully until his death. He is the patron saint of the universal Church and of families. Because it is believed that both Jesus and Mary were with him when he passed on to eternal life, he is also the patron saint of a happy death because all Christians long for the presence of Jesus and of Our Lady leading us to heaven at the hour of our death.

Simple St. Joseph's Day Altars

Making a St. Joseph's Day altar is a very popular tradition in Sicily and is also alive and well in New Orleans where Daniel grew up. The altars are traditionally three-tiered to represent the Holy Trinity. Flowers, candy, religious statues and icons, and food - often pastries and breads - are brought to the altar. My Catholic mom's playgroup set up a St. Joseph's altar simply by placing images of St. Joseph on our family altar (this is a table in our house where we set up our icons and rosaries and is where we usually pray as a family). We let the children bring the gifts to the altar in procession and they had a blast.

You can use your family altar, or set it up on a shelf or even your kitchen table!

Objects to Place on the St. Joseph's Altar:

Icons, statues, or other religious images of St. Joseph

Candles

Flowers

Food

Then enjoy feasting on the dishes that decorated the altar!

His Blood Be Upon Us: Holy Week Reflection by Haley

On Palm Sunday, I always shudder to say the responses in the Gospel reading. If you've never been to a Catholic Mass on Palm Sunday, the Passion in the 26th and 27th chapters of Matthew is read aloud and the congregation reads the part of the crowd calling for Jesus' crucifixion. **I shudder because by adding my voice to the shout "Crucify him!" I have to face the reality of my own sin.** My betrayal and denial of God in my heart each day. That "crucify him!" is my soul's cry when I choose my sin over God.

Non serviam. I will not serve, I chime in with Lucifer. And my sinful heart is what drives the nails into my Lord's palms. It's not that "they" wanted him dead 2,000 years ago that makes me shudder, it's that I would have shouted the same words had I been there. And even worse, **I still shout them when I deny Our Lord through my sin.**

Saying those horrible words on Palm Sunday reminds me of all this and I can't do it without getting tears in my eyes.

But after the first shout for his execution, the passage gets even more horrible:

They all said,

"Let him be crucified!"

But he [Pilate] said,

"Why? What evil has he done?"

They only shouted the louder,

"Let him be crucified!"

When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all,

but that a riot was breaking out instead,

he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd,

saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood.

Look to it yourselves."

And the whole people said in reply,

"His blood be upon us and upon our children."

His blood be upon us and upon our children.

In other words, kill him. Let the blood guilt be on us and our families. We will be responsible for the crime and will carry the weight of the sin from generation to generation.

His blood be upon us and upon our children.

And here's where I broke down in Mass today. His blood be upon us and upon our children.

It's so gruesome, violent, horrible. The rage of humanity against its only Hope to be saved from itself. Condemning itself with the most horrific crime imaginable: the murder of God.

But God isn't like us. He beautifies the ugly. He redeems the lost. He loves the unlovable.

He heard our shouts for his blood and he answered our cries—just not the way we meant them. We wanted his blood and so he gave it to us in the most gruesome and beautiful act of history.

What we meant for evil, he used to redeem us. Of his own will, he let his blood be spilt by our sin and then he took his blood and in his violent mercy poured it out and washed us clean with it. God incarnate took humanity's selfish, twisted hate, and redeemed it with his love. Our cries for death are transformed into the way of life eternal.

His blood be upon us and upon our children.

The very same people shouting then and shouting now against God's grace, are the souls He freely and lovingly spilled his blood for. And by his grace, we can speak those words, not with hatred and spite, with with awe and praise. Let his violent mercy spill over us. His very blood, offered on the Cross for us, and held out for us each day in the Blessed Sacrament.

This is my blood, shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Thanks be to God.

Extended Feasting by Daniel

I read once that it's possible to make great risotto without using the traditional (and extremely slow) technique. This is, of course, ridiculous. Would it perhaps be possible for fast risotto to pass a blind taste test? Maybe. I don't know. But food is about more than just taste. Food is about process, ingredients, family, and community. This is especially true of foods like risotto that demand to be made slowly. One of my favorite ways to spend an evening is to open a bottle of wine with friends and slowly cook a big pot of risotto. The traditional cooking method doesn't require much skill. It just requires constant stirring and patience as you add broth a spoonful at a time to the pot. If you're by yourself in the kitchen, this might become tedious. But if you have company and you're drinking the wine you're cooking with, the process is relaxing. Add a prosciutto appetizer and a Frank Sinatra playlist and the evening can become a cure for all sorts of ailments. So, sure, there might be some shortcuts to risotto. But why in the world would you want to take it?

We began to enjoy this kind of extended feasting years ago when we lived with several housemates in Texas. We would start a hardwood fire sometime in the afternoon, stand around snacking while we prepared the coals over an hour or so, and then spend the evening grilling whatever people happened to bring; everything from bratwursts to summer squash to fresh pears to whole chickens. Sometimes we would bake bread and make ice cream. Other times we would wander around our garden waiting for things to cook. Above all, we enjoyed each other and the entire process of "feasting." And this is what it means to feast. Not to eat and drink in excess. But to appreciate all of the good things in our lives; food, family, friends, and --with the Christian year and calendar-- faith.

April 29: St. Catherine of Siena by Daniel

About the Saint

St. Catherine of Siena said, "If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world on fire!" A young Italian girl in the 14th century, St. Catherine was exactly what she was made to be: a woman who loved God with all her heart. Expected by her family to marry well, Catherine instead became a Dominican tertiary. She was a brilliant theologian and is now honored as a Doctor of the Church. Although she was never taught to read or write, she was highly influential and became the advisor of popes and political figures. Later in life she was suddenly and miraculously given the gift of literacy. Her insightful writings and correspondences helped resolve numerous conflicts both religious and political. Saint John Paul II named her one of the six patron saints of Europe.

Sun-dried Tomato Risotto

Risotto is a traditional food of Northern Italy. Usually served as the first or second of many courses, it's so filling that we often eat it as a main course (this recipe makes enough for a generous side dish but can easily be doubled. There are dozens of regional risotto varieties, some with mushrooms, others with red wine instead of white. There's even a risotto cooked with cuttlefish that turns black because of the ink-sacs. So, feel free to experiment with different vegetables, cheese, and wine.



Ingredients:

- 1 cup arborio rice (arborio is an Italian variety that is incredibly starchy, giving risotto that signature creamy texture)
- 4 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 medium sweet onion, diced
- 2 TBSP butter
- ¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes in oil, diced
- ½ cup grated pecorino romano or other hard Italian cheese

1. In a saucepan, saute the onion in butter over medium heat until softened. Heat up the broth in a separate saucepan.
2. Stir in the arborio rice into the saucepan with onion and butter (saving the broth for later). Toast the rice for a minute or two, stirring continuously. Add the wine and let the rice absorb it--this will happen in a minute or two.
3. Reduce the heat to low. Add broth to the rice ½ cup at a time and stir. Once the broth is absorbed (a few minutes), add another ½ cup. The risotto should be soft and creamy, not “al dente” in the center. I actually like to have more than 4 cups of broth ready just in case the rice absorbs more than I anticipate.
4. Wait until the rice is almost done, then add the sun-dried tomatoes.
5. Once the rice is fully cooked, remove from heat and allow it to cool for a few minutes. Add the cheese and stir. Serve warm!

July 14: St. Kateri Tekakwitha by Daniel

About the Saint

St. Kateri Tekakwitha was born to a Mohawk chief and an Algonquin mother in what is now New York state. When she was a child, her entire family was killed by smallpox. Kateri Tekakwitha, scarred and orphaned, went to live with relatives who treated her poorly. After the Mohawks lost a battle with French and Huron forces, Jesuit missionaries came to her village. Given the name Tekakwitha at birth, she took the name Kateri at her baptism after St. Catherine of Siena (Kateri is the Mohawk form of Catherine). St. Kateri consecrated her virginity and devoted her life to prayer and penances for herself and her people. She died in her early twenties on Holy Week in 1680.

For the feast of St. Kateri, we chose foods native to North America. Cranberries and wild rice are both present in the wild and were important food sources for Native Americans. Wild rice (unrelated to Asian rice) grows along the shores of lakes and rivers and was harvested by paddling canoes beneath the plants and beating the grains into the boats. Cranberries were gathered by Native Americans all over the northeast. The tart wild fruits were eaten raw, juiced, made into sauce, and used to dye clothes. The squash grown by Native Americans do not occur in the wild. There are several species of squash that were domesticated thousands of years ago and spread to all corners of the American continents.



Wild Rice with Cranberries

Ingredients:

1 cup wild rice
4 cups chicken broth (or turkey broth to get the North American flavor)
½ cup dried cranberries
½ cup

1. Rinse and drain the rice. Bring the broth and rice to a boil together in a large pot.
2. Reduce to simmer and cover. Wild rice takes a long time to cook, between 45 and 60 minutes. Also, I've seen significant variation in wild rice length and size so it's hard to give an estimate on cooking time. Keep an eye on it and taste every now and then. Add more liquid if necessary. Wild rice will naturally be a bit more "al dente" than Asian rice.
3. Once the rice is pretty close to done, toss in the cranberries. If there isn't any liquid left, you can add a splash more. Cook until the cranberries soften. If the rice is done and there's still liquid in the pot, just drain and serve.

Roast Squash with Sage

Ingredients:

2 acorn squash
handful of sage, chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil
sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 400. Cut squash in half top to bottom and remove seeds. Slice longways into inch wide slices.
2. Toss squash in oil and spread on a baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and sage.
3. Bake for 30 minutes or until tender

August 14: St. Maximilian Kolbe by Daniel

Maximilian Kolbe was born in Zduńska Wola, Poland in 1894. As a boy, Kolbe had a dream in which the Virgin Mary offered him the choice between a white crown and a red crown, one representing purity and the other martyrdom. He chose both. This dream would prove prophetic. Kolbe joined the Conventual Friars and later was ordained a priest. Saint Maximilian served as a missionary in China, Japan, and India, only returning to Poland after becoming ill. When his homeland was invaded by the Nazis, Kolbe was living in a monastery. He and his brothers provided shelter for Jews and published religious material, including anti-Nazi writings. Soon, the monastery was raided and Kolbe and many others were sent to Prison. Shortly after, Saint Maximilian was transferred to Auschwitz and given the number 16670. He continued to work as a priest in the concentration camp and received brutal treatment. After several prisoners escaped, the Nazis announced they would retaliate by killing 10 prisoners. When one of those chosen cried out because of his wife and children, Kolbe stepped forward to take his place. Saint Maximilian led his fellow prisoners in prayer and song. After all the others succumbed to starvation and dehydration, Maximilian survived. The Nazis gave him a lethal injection and he died on August 14, 1941. Maximilian Kolbe showed tremendous courage in the face of evil and death and remains a compelling model of charity amidst oppression and tyranny.

Kopytka – Polish Potato Dumplings

There are a lot of different kinds of Polish dumplings. I decided on kopytka (Polish for “little hooves”) because the main ingredient is potatoes, not wheat flour. So, we just substituted gluten-free flour for the little bit of wheat flour in this recipe. If your family doesn’t suffer from food allergies, just use regular all-purpose flour.



Ingredients:

5 potatoes, peeled and cut into large pieces
 1 ½ cup all purpose (gluten-free) flour
 1 egg
 salt

1. Boil the potatoes in salted water. Drain and cool.
2. Throw the potatoes into a bowl with the egg, about 1 cup of the flour, and ½ teaspoon of salt. Mash and mix until everything is blended and smooth.
3. Flour a cutting board or work surface (I started with just the counter but ended up using a small board so it would be easier to transfer the dumplings to the pan). Take a handful of the dough and roll it into a long cylinder about 1 inch in diameter.
4. Use a sharp knife to cut the cylinder into pieces on a 45 degree angle. You should end up with pointed ovals, kind of like hooves (hence the name).
5. Traditional recipes for kopytka will call for the dumplings to be boiled. We tried this and they turned out...ok. But then Haley suggested we fry some. That's when things really started looking up. I fried some in butter and others in bacon grease. Both kinds turned out excellent. Just fry for a couple minutes on each side. Serve with bacon and onion topping or just with sour cream. Or both. Because why not?

Topping:

4 strips of bacon
 1 onion, sliced thinly
 Handful of sage, sliced thinly

1. Fry the bacon and remove from pan. Leave the grease.
2. Fry the onion in the bacon grease until tender.
3. Toss the sage in and cook for a few more minutes. Crumble the bacon into the pan and stir. Pour over the kopytka.

August 28th: St. Augustine

North African Lamb with Figs and Pears

Because of his place as a pillar of Western thought and his foundational role in European philosophy, it can be easy to forget that St. Augustine was African. Hippo, the city of which he was bishop, is now known as Souk Ahras and is part of the country of Algeria. North African cuisine is diverse and flavorful, making use of the wide variety of herbs and spices available near the Mediterranean. Lamb and figs are both popular in all of these countries so we decided to take that as an inspiration for this meal. Pears, of course, play a central role in St. Augustine's understanding of sin so we thought we'd throw those in too. Algeria and other North African countries were once the breadbasket of the Roman Empire and couscous, a kind of semolina pasta, is widely eaten today. Since half of our family is allergic to wheat, we served this with quinoa.



Ingredients:

- 4 thick cut lamb chops
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 pear, diced
- 2 cups figs, halved
- 1 cup red wine (Algerian wine isn't widely available but the climate in the wine growing region is similar to Southern Spain)
- 2 small garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp cardamom
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes
- salt and pepper
- olive oil

1. Mix the garlic, coriander, cumin, cardamom, cinnamon, red pepper, turmeric, salt, and pepper. Rub $\frac{1}{2}$ of this mixture on the meat. Save the other half.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet and sear both sides of the lamb. Remove the meat and set aside.
3. Saute the onion in the skillet, adding more olive oil if necessary. After a few minutes, add the pear, figs, and the remainder of the spices. Saute for 3 more minutes and then add the wine. Stir everything thoroughly and let the wine reduce slightly.
4. Place the lamb on top of the fruit and onions. Cover and reduce heat to low. Cook until the lamb is done. Plate the lamb first and then pour the fruit mixture on top. Serve with couscous or quinoa.

September 20: St. Andrew Kim Taegon

About the Saint

St. Andrew Kim Taegon was born in 1821 in Korea which was at the time Confucian, isolationist, and vehemently anti-Christian. His parents converted to Catholicism and his father was subsequently killed for his faith. Kim was baptized at 15 and later traveled all the way to Macau to attend seminary. As a priest, he returned to Korea and began to preach the gospel. At the age of 25, St. Andrew Kim was imprisoned, tortured, and finally beheaded.



Bulgogi Wraps

Bulgogi literally means “fire meat” in Korean. Traditionally grilled, cooking over an open flame allows the meat to take on a smoky flavor as the drippings fall to the coals below. Pan-cooking is a fine substitute though.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound skirt steak or tenderloin (the cut needs to be thick)
- ¼ cup soy sauce (use gluten-free soy sauce or liquid aminos to make the recipe gluten-free)
- 2 TBSP brown sugar
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 2 TBSP sesame oil
- 2 TBSP sesame seeds, divided
- leaf lettuce for wraps

1. Slice the beef as thin as you can. Some folks suggest placing the meat in a freezer for a half hour or until it's hard enough to make slicing easier. Either way, make sure your knife is really, really sharp. Marinate all the ingredients (except lettuce) for at least an hour, overnight is fine. Save some of the sesame seeds and green onions for garnish.
2. The best way to cook bulgogi is over a fire. But I don't usually like to get the grill going for one thing, especially if that one thing cooks quickly. So I cook this on the stove over high heat. If you sliced the beef thin enough, it should only take a couple minutes. Stir to make sure every side has been cooked and remove from heat. Sprinkle the leftover sesame seeds and diced onions on top.
3. You can serve this plain with rice or with leaf lettuce to make little wraps. We also included sliced apples, cilantro, and a dipping sauce of soy sauce and sesame oil.
4. Don't forget the kim chi!



October 4: St. Francis of Assisi

For a saint distinguished by his love for poverty and peace, St. Francis of Assisi, had a surprising start. In 1181 he was born into great wealth and grew up to become a soldier. But after experiencing visions, he eventually deserted the masters of wealth and war to serve God, holding nothing back from his wholehearted devotion. His love for God's creatures included not only the people he served, but even the birds and beasts. Legends arose about this unusual holy man preaching to flocks of birds and in images of the saint, he is often shown holding birds.

Pinecone Bird Feeders

As the weather turns chilly in October, it's the perfect time to make bird feeders to honor St. Francis. They require few materials and are simple enough even for toddlers to make!

You will need:

Pinecones
Peanut Butter
Birdseed, spread on a tray (or table)
Twine, yarn, or thick thread

Directions:

Cut a length of twine (approx. 1 ft. long). Tie the twine tightly around one of the pinecones and make a knot. You will have enough twine left to hang it up for the birds. Spread a generous amount of peanut butter on the pinecone. Then roll it in the birdseed on the tray. Hang up your bird feeder on a tree or a hook on the porch. You're done! And the birds will be happy!

(My children typically need some assistance tying the twine and hanging up the finished bird feeders. But they love collecting the pinecones and going to town with the peanut butter and birdseed. I just assume everyone will need a bath afterwards to solve the inevitable stickiness issue resulting from setting children loose with a jar of peanut butter .)



October 15: St. Teresa of Ávila by Daniel

Saint Teresa of Ávila was a 16th century mystic and Carmelite nun. She is perhaps most famous for the spiritual ecstasies she experienced. St. Teresa died in 1582 and was canonized several decades later. She was declared a Doctor of the Church for her spiritual writings.

Yemas de Santa Teresa

Dozens of saints have pastries and desserts associated with their names from Covezun Di San Giuseppe to St. Margaret's Lebkuchen to St. Stephen's Beigli. Almost all of these desserts are wheat flour based which is problematic for our family since several of our kids are allergic. Some recipes are forgiving with substitutes but this is rarely true with pastries. So, we were excited to try yemas de Santa Teresa which contain no flour. The ingredients are simple; egg yolks, sugar, and water.

Ingredients:

- ⅓ cup water
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 6 egg yolks, lightly beaten
- ½ cup powdered sugar (maybe less, it's for coating at the end)

1. Heat the water and granulated sugar in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer and keep stirring as the sugar dissolves and the liquid thickens. As the mixture becomes slightly syrupy, stir constantly. This may take about 10 minutes. Remove the saucepan from the burner.
2. Slowly stir the egg yolks into the syrup. Turn the heat back on to the lowest possible setting. Stir as the mixture begins to solidify and pull away from the sides of the pan. This should take about 5 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool in a bowl in the fridge.
3. Sprinkle powdered sugar onto a cutting board or smooth surface. Pull off small pieces (half the size of a golf ball) of the mixture and roll into little balls in the powdered sugar. Cool on a plate in the fridge. Serve on the plate or in small paper wrappers. The result is soft, chewy, and delicious.

November 2nd: All Souls by Haley

The History of Soul Cakes

As a kind of early version of Trick-or-Treating, folks would go door-to-door during the season of Halloween (Oct. 31-Nov 2) and ask for Soul Cakes in exchange for saying prayers for the dead. I love this season of Halloween and how it puts death in context. We remember our dead, we say prayers for the souls in Purgatory, we celebrate the lives of the saints, and we remember that Christ has ultimately conquered death. Death's power was broken by the power of the Cross. Especially in our culture that seeks to avoid the topic of death, I think observing Halloween is really important.

So, make some Soul Cakes and celebrate!

The recipe is gluten-free, but if you're not allergic like my kids, just use regular baking mix instead of the gluten-free.

Gluten-Free Soul Cakes

Ingredients:

coconut oil or butter to grease muffin tin
 3/4 cup butter, softened
 2/3 cup sugar
 3 egg yolks
 1 3/4 cup gluten-free baking mix (or regular baking mix)
 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
 1/2 cup milk
 1/2 cup dried cranberries (plus some to decorate top)

Preheat oven to 375F. Grease muffin tin (I used coconut oil). Cream the softened butter with the sugar. Mix in egg yolks. Add GF baking mix, pumpkin pie spice, milk, and dried cranberries. Fill muffin tins 2/3 of the way up with mixture. Add raisins on top in the shape of a cross. Bake for 15 minutes (longer if your muffin tin is for larger muffins, mine is for smallish ones). Check to see if your Soul Cakes are done by seeing if a knife comes out clean.

To remove them from the muffin tin without crumbling, let them cool completely. Then loosen the edges of the Soul Cakes (I used a bowl scraper) and carefully remove. Gluten-free baked goods are often crumbly, so I had the best success in flipping over the muffin tin and letting the Soul Cakes fall out that way.

It's an easy recipe that children can help with (especially fun to add the cranberries on top!). Enjoy!

November 24: St. Andrew Dung-Lac by Daniel

About the Saint

Christianity was first brought to Vietnam in the 17th century by Jesuit missionaries. Never accepted by the authorities, Vietnamese Catholics suffered persecution yet their numbers continued to grow, in part due to Spanish and French missionaries. The most severe persecutions occurred during the 1800s as thousands of Catholics were executed, including children. The Church recognizes 117 Vietnamese martyrs. One of these is St. Andrew Dung-Lac. Born in 1795, Dung-Lac became a priest and was beheaded in 1839 under the reign of Emperor Mihn Mang.

Vietnamese Summer Rolls

I'm not sure where the name "summer rolls" comes from. In Vietnamese, these rolls have a number of names including the most descriptive *Bánh tráng cuốn*, "rice paper rolls." They're simply rice paper wrapped around various ingredients, often pork, shrimp, onions, or lettuce. The roll itself is not fried or cooked and is simply served cool (as opposed to spring rolls which ARE fried). Because you can prepare these right at the table and the only prep work is slicing up a few veggies, these are a great option for busy nights. We also usually let our kids fill their own rolls. If they end up with lots of apple slices and not so much lettuce, that's fine. The rolls also tend to change drastically depending on what we have growing at the time. In spring and summer, we might have basil instead of mint and cucumber or squash instead of lettuce. Experiment and see what you like best.

Ingredients for the summer rolls pictured:

Rice paper
 1 pound chicken tenders or breast,
 cooked and roughly chopped
 ½ head leaf lettuce, chopped
 1 apple, sliced fine
 3 carrots, sliced fine or grated
 3 mint sprigs
 3 green onions diced

Other potential fillings:

shrimp
 fried tofu
 shredded pork
 cucumber
 lettuce
 kiwi
 noodles
 cilantro
 pickled radish
 onions

1. Dip the rice paper in water for about three seconds. When the paper comes out of the water, it won't feel soft yet. That's ok. It will continue to soften out of the water. Place your fillings in the middle. Fold over one end, then the two sides, then roll it all the way.
2. Dip in your favorite sauce! We often have peanut sauce, hoisin, soy and sesame, or sriracha.



Continuing the Feast

When we asked readers to share their favorite saints they would like to see included in this book, the response was overwhelming. These saints, their virtues, cultures, and traditions represent the vibrancy of the Church and her work throughout the world and history. Some of the recipes here come from the rich history of feasting the saints. Others are simply rooted in culture from places the Church has grown. We hope this book encourages you to not only honor these saints and appreciate these recipes but to continue to explore the canon of saints and the richness of the people and cuisines that make up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.