

Offering #51 May 7, 2021 Keeping in touch through this pandemic. "Making May Meaningful" theme, for yourself and for others. Pause with "Ode to Mothers" and "Aha" Carrots, eggs and coffee. Zany County Gardener celebrates recipes with Asparagus: soup, crêpes, toasts! The end; breakfast strawberry breakfast crêpes .

In her article "Sanctuary - The Secret of a Peaceful Heart", Margaret Blair Johnstone emphasizes that sanctuary is, in fact a special strength. It gives more than refuge and release; it gives renewal. Essentially, sanctuary is a means of finding the power to face life on lifted wings. It is the power which enables us to "renew our strength.. mount up; with wings of eagles... run and not be weary."

Sanctuary may be no further away than your own backyard. Ever since Eden some have come "nearer to God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth" A student once pointed out that the decisive element in the discovery of the law of gravitation was not so much the falling apple in the garden. Newton was alone in the quiet of a garden when he saw this great truth. Other sanctuaries Johnstone suggests;

- Simply going into your room, shutting the door, lighting a candle.**
- Musical sanctuary in the middle of a busy day, listen to 20 minutes of your favourite music.**
- Immerse yourself in a hot bath or hot tub, hydrotherapy gets rid of tension and pain.**
- A busy mother, takes time every afternoon to rock in an old rocking chair away from everyone "to empty out her brain".**
- Take a minute to focus on a special picture or stained glass piece or wrap yourself in a favourite blanket or sweater and just relax for 20 minutes .**

Our children had an amazing teacher for kindergarten. When the days were full of busy personalities and activities I asked her how did she decompress? She would say, "I go to my happy place", May God Bless you my friend you found your sanctuary a long time ago.

With blessings and affection, Deacon Kate Ann

An Ode to Mother

“The days went on, and the weeks and the months and the years, and your mother grew older, but you her children were tall and strong, and walked with courage.”

And she said, “I have reached the end of my journey. And now I know the end is better than the beginning, for my children are able to walk alone, and their children after them.”

And the children said, “You will always walk with us.”

Mother, even when you have gone through the gates.' and the gates closed after her. They said: 'We cannot see her but she is with us still. A Mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living presence.”

**Your Mother is always with you...
She's the whisper of the leaves as you
walk down the street,
she's the smell of bleach in your
freshly laundered socks;
she's the cool hand on your brow
when you are not well.**

Your Mother lives inside your laughter-

**And she's crystallized in every teardrop.
She's your first home,
and she's the map you follow
with every step you take.**

**She's your first love and
and nothing on earth
can separate you.**

Not time, not space... not even death

“Aha” Moment - Carrots, Eggs and Coffee

A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her to do. She did not know how she was going to make it and she wanted to give up. She was tired of struggling and fighting. It seemed as one problem was solved a new one arose.

Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on the stove to boil. In the first she placed carrots. In the second she placed eggs and then last she placed ground coffee beans.

In about 20 minutes she turned off the burners. She placed the carrots in the bowl , the eggs in a bowl and the coffee in a bowl. Turning to her daughter she said, “what do you see?” her daughter replied, “carrots, eggs and coffee” Her mother pulled her closer and told her to feel the carrots. She did and noted the carrots were soft. Her mother then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shells she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally the mother asked the daughter to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she sipped the rich aroma. The daughter then asked, “what does this mean?”

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity- the boiling water. Each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong and hard and unrelenting . However, after being subjected to the boiling water it became softened and weak. The egg had been fragile. It's then outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, it's inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they changed the water. “Which are you?” She asked her daughter. “When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond?” Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes their way. Go forward in life and let go of your past failures and heartaches.

Action for Happiness
Making May Meaningful for Yourself and Others

- Find your sanctuary and visit it every day.
- Do something kind for someone you really care for.
- Focus on what you can do rather than what you can't do.
- Take a goal toward an important goal, however small.
- Send your friend a phot from a time you enjoyed together.
- Look for people doing good and reasons to be cheerful.
- Let someone know how much you mean to them and why.

Just for Fun **Articulation Exercises**
Read aloud the sentences that follow.

1. Does this shop stock short socks with spots?
2. Theophilus Thistle, the thistle sifter, sifted a sieve of unsifted thistles; where is the sieve of unsifted thistles Theophilus, the thistle sifter, sifted?
3. The guest drink toasts at their host's behest, 'til one insists that the host fast while he feasts and persists in his boasts.
4. Six silky slithering snakes slid along simple simpering and slightly sneezing slipping slightly from side to side.
5. Prize lizards sizzle in a drizzle, lazy lizards require a blizzard to sizzle.
6. Whether the weather be fine or whether the weather be not, we'll weather the weather, whatever the weather, whether we like it or not.

ASPARAGUS Galore

“I feel like I should clean the house, so I am going to my garden until the feeling passes.”

This week is exciting. I have a visual image for you. The first fruits of spring. Isn't nature amazing: God's gift! Here we go to the garden. I have a pair of scissors, a flat round wicker tray. Snip and I have a nice pile of fresh lettuce leaves, a few more snips of spinach, chives, parsley, thyme, pansy flowers to toss on top and I have a salad. This salad tossed with the citrus dressing from last week's offering will accompany my roadside asparagus soup.

Toasted asparagus rolls would be a nice addition to complete this lunch. A lunch worthy enough to celebrate spring and happy Mother's Day! Some freshly cut daffodils and the table is set. You guessed it, the roadside asparagus is up.

Toasted Asparagus Rolls

Ingredients

- 12 slices white bread, crusts removed**
- 8 oz. cream cheese**
- 2 Tbsps. chopped green onions or chives**
- 8 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled (op)**
- 24 fresh asparagus spears, trimmed**
- ¼ cup butter, melted**
- 3 Tbsps. grated Parmesan cheese**

Directions

- 1. Flatten bread with a rolling pin. In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese, onions and bacon (op). Spread mixture over bread slices. Cut asparagus to fit bread; place two spears on each bread slice, facing the opposite way. Roll up bread and place, seam side down, on a greased baking sheet. Brush with butter; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.**
- 2. Bake at 400° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve immediately.**

ASPARAGUS SOUP

Ingredients

- **2 lbs of asparagus**
- **2 tbsp butter**
- **1 onion, diced**
- **2 garlic cloves**
- **1 1/2 tsp salt**
- **1/4 tsp pepper**
- **2 Tbsps cornstarch**
- **1 cup of cream/milk (I used 0% cream)**
- **4 cups of chicken broth**
- **4 green onions frizzled by slicing them lengthwise multiple times, then chopped fine**
- **1 1/2 cups shredded old cheddar, plus more for garnish (optional)**

Directions

- 1. TRIM and finely chop tender part of the asparagus stalk approximately (4 cups). Keep 2-3" of the tops, depending on the size of the asparagus set aside.**
- 2. MELT butter in a large pot over medium. Add onion and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions begin to soften, about 7 min. Add salt and pepper and stir until fragrant, 2 min. Use the immersion blender to break down the onions and garlic.**
- 3. Add the broth and asparagus stems. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer until stems are fork-tender, about 4 min.**
- 4. PURÉE soup with an immersion blender, just enough to break the stems up a bit. It's nice to leave pieces in the soup. Return pot to heat, reduced to low. Thicken the soup with 1 cup of cream/milk and 2 Tbsps of cornstarch. Boil until it thickens. It should just barely cling to the spoon.**

Enjoy and God Bless, The Zany County Gardener

BASIC CRÊPES

Ingredients:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- 2 eggs**
- ½ cup milk**
- ½ cup water**
- 2 tablespoons melted butter**

Directions:

- 1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk flour and salt, make a well and add eggs then slowly add milk, water and melted butter. At this point immersion blender works well. Let rest in container for at least an hour.**
- 2. Heat a lightly oiled (I use a paper towel with 1 tsp oil) 8 inch frying pan over medium high heat.**
- 3. Pour ¼ cup batter onto the griddle. Tilt the pan with a circular motion so that the batter coats the surface evenly.**
- 4. Cook the crêpe for about 1 ½ minutes, until the bottom is slightly brown. Loosen with a spatula, turn and briefly cook the other side. Serve hot or store in refrigerator. Place parchment paper between crêpes. Can be frozen.**

Strawberry Breakfast Crêpes

Place crêpe on luncheon size plate.

Place line of whipped cream down the centre of crêpe followed by a stream of strawberry jam (freezer jam is wonderful for this). To make this easier, place jam in an empty milk bay with corner snipped off. Then add sliced strawberries. Fold edges over filling. Sprinkle with icing sugar. A dollop of whipping cream and add a few more sliced strawberries. Yum

Asparagus Crêpes

Place crêpe on parchment paper. Place a slice of swiss cheese followed by a little shaved black forest ham and the 2 spears of asparagus. Fold edges over to cover filling. Transfer to baking sheet. Bake in oven 15 minutes to melt cheese. Serve with homemade hollandaise or prepared from a mix. Sprinkle with chopped chives.