

Something New for Lent

In 2015, a World Exposition took place in Milan, Italy on the theme *Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*. Caritas, the important Catholic Aid Organization, assisted a group of Chefs, led by Massimo Bottura to establish a *refettorio* (dining hall) in an abandoned theatre. The idea was that some 40 various Chefs from across Europe would come and cook the left-overs from all the Fair food establishments and for six months provide a daily nourishing meal for the homeless.

The project was a resounding success and has had the following legacy: an international group, *Food for Soul* dedicated to establishing *refettorio* throughout the world; a continuation in Milan of *refettorio* five times a week; and an interesting cookbook, published by Phaidon, entitled *Bread is Gold, Extraordinary Meals with Ordinary Ingredients*.

What has all this to do with Lent? In short, trying to live consciously aware that food should not be wasted would be a good way to always keep Lent in mind. I would submit that we spend more time eating than in vocal prayer. Indeed, we should examine how we see food. By the way the word *refettorio* comes from the Latin, meaning to restore and rebuild. God has given us an abundance of food and the intelligence to do the extraordinary with the ordinary.

Here are a few examples of what I mean. One of my cooking habits concerns potatoes. I usually buy potatoes for oven baking. Once they are baked I use their inside to make mashed potatoes; the skins are cut up, mixed with onions and fried. Later they are pulsed in the food processor, and presto I have two separate potato dishes, giving variety to my meals. To get rid of small quantities of cooked vegetables, meat and cheese, simply make a pizza

In our world, 1/3 of all food is wasted. There are many reasons for this waste and our efforts are small, but they can make a difference. Why not use Lent to make the necessary way of life changes so that our eating habits are healthy, tasty and not wasteful

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