

Grace Notes in Miniature

Friday, November 27th

Dear Friends:

You may have noticed that the First Readings for the weekday liturgies over the past few weeks have all been drawn from the Book of Revelation, a work considered to focus on “eschatology” – the branch of theology which deals with “last things”. This is highly symbolic as we live out the “end time” of the Church year in anticipation of the new beginning of Advent. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVCMmZXCeVs> During the year we have gone from Jesus’ birth to the recognition that he is King of the Universe, and Revelation addresses “the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Rev. 22:13). This book has been treated in many different ways over the centuries; today, there are the historicists who see it as covering the whole of history, the preterists who interpret the contents as applying mostly to the first century CE, the futurists who believe that the book continues to predict events in the future and the idealists



who consider it an allegory of the battle between good and evil. As Catholics, we are taught to read Scripture critically in conjunction with the Tradition of the Church, and accept the Book of Revelation as rich in symbolism which reveals Christ to us as the Lord of the Cosmos. It certainly makes for interesting and challenging reading. Although in the past some people have attributed it to John the Evangelist, many scholars today consider John of Patmos, a different person, to be the author, especially as they perceive differences in Christology (study of the nature, person and work of Christ) between John’s Gospel and the Book of Revelation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt75zl4kz6g> Of the Father's love begotten, Ere the worlds began to be, He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He, Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore! (Translation by J.M. Neale, 19th C. of a Latin chant by Aurelius Prudentius, b, 348)

This is a time of year I associate particularly with my grandmother and hearty preparations for Christmas which had to be done before the beginning of December. This included the making of “clootie dumplings”, or Christmas puddings – which had to be made enough in





advance to allow the flavours of the dried fruit, spices and brandy or rum to meld. I always got to give the pudding a stir in the mixing bowl as this was believed to result in good luck. It was customary to put silver sixpenny pieces or specially-bought charms in the pudding, wrapped in wax paper, and one had to be careful with each mouthful not to bite down too hard. After I came to Canada, we started using dimes instead. My family expects to see a pudding flamed with brandy each Christmas. You can find the recipe and video instructions for the traditional pudding stirred up by Queen Elizabeth and her family at <https://www.popsugar.com/food/royal-family-christmas-pudding-recipe-47994415> There is a faith-based significance to this tradition tied to the informal identification in the Church of England - of which the Queen is the head- of the last Sunday in the Church year as "Stir-up Sunday" because the Collect in the Book of Common Prayer used at Sunday services begins, "Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people!"

I am often teased in my family because I am one of the people who really likes dark fruit cake; I have been known to be consuming Christmas cake at Easter because no one else wanted to share this treat with me! Although not specifically a Christmas cake, this fruit cake recipe may be a fun activity for your students if you give them the scripture references and let them figure out the ingredients and instructions!

Pour into prepared 9x13 inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 40 minutes, or until edges pull away from pan.

Scripture Cake

4 Cups - 1st Kings 4:22
1 Cup - Judges 5:25 (first clause)
2 Cups - Jeremiah 6:20 (Sugar)
2 Cups - 1st Samuel 30:12 (Raisins)
2 Cups - Nahum 3:12
1 Tbsp. - Numbers 17:8
1 Lg. Tbsp. - 1st Samuel 14:25
Season to Taste - 1st Chronicles 9:9
6 Total - Jeremiah 17:11
1/2 cup - Genesis 24:20
Pinch - Leviticus 2:13
2 tsp. - Amos 4:5 (Baking Pride)

Follow Solomon's advice for making good boys and Proverbs 23:14 and you'll have a good cake.



Divine Culinarian who brought forth the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation, With gratitude, we celebrate the bakers in our midst. Through the work of their hands, they create edible masterpieces that neighbor can share with neighbor. Their offerings bring peace to the ones looking for comfort food. Their offerings bring joy to the young people celebrating birthdays and the couples joining their lives together in marriage. The bread they bake sits on communion tables as your children are reminded to "take and eat." The pastries created by them will bring people together in our fellowship halls when worship ends.

Bless their hands in the rolling of dough and the ovens as breads rise and bake. Bless the hearts who laugh together in the kitchen as they decorate cookies or finish pies.

Through the work of their hands, we partake in fellowship and see the presence of the Christ in our midst. Michelle L. Torigian (<https://michelletorigian.com/2019/03/08/a-prayer-for-bakers/>)

With every blessing,

Gillian