The Triduum and Easter, darkness to joy

Description

Gentle Reader,

The great Triduum or three holy days ending triumphantly in Easter begins today. I took on one new thing for Lent in response to the half page of suggestions our Saint Mark's Episcopal worship committee sent out, activities that would increase mindful living. When I read on the list "Write a letter to someone, stamp and mail it," I thought about the boxes full of letters I have from my husband, Don Bell, and from my daughters when they went off to college, plus much of the correspondence from dear friends who meant so much to us and to me over the years. These letters are treasures, little vignettes of life, soul pictures living on paper. I have a grandson in college. I wrote to him and quoted some passages from his grandfather's letters to me. Don died before any of his grandchildren were born and I have been writing the memoir of our early time together with these ten grandchildren in mind. Ben's response surprised me. He wrote back to me asking for more.

Writing a letter requires slowing down, with intention, choosing words carefully, pouring over Don's letters for just the right passage to share. It felt like holy work.

Our whole-heartedly secular culture does not help the practicing liturgical Christian any more than it supports the Muslim or Jews in following their holy calendars. I felt this tension more acutely this Lent than ever before. A new business possibility came into my inbox and has swept me off my feet, nearly obliterating the contemplative aspect of these 40 days. The battle between successful entrepreneurship and prayer put me in an anxious state. I discovered a left over bag of Reese's Peanut butter cups, Halloween candy, in the freezer. I made myself a cup of tea, sat down and ate them. All. Excitement over this new thing that promised expert training in network marketing and a compensation plan that create wealth kept me awake. The combination of sugar and sleeplessness resulted in a head cold. Is my immune system that stressed by a heap of sugar and lack of sleep?

Have you been able to pin point a connection between sugar consumption, lack of rest and catching a cold? Not too far-fetched. WebMD published an article on the immune system which includes comments on sugar. From their page on Cold, Flu & Cough Health Center:

3. Eating foods high in sugar and fat: Consuming too much sugar suppresses immune system cells responsible for attacking bacteria. Even consuming just 75 to 100 grams of a sugar solution (about the same as in two 12-ounce sodas) reduces the ability of white blood cells to overpower and destroy bacteria. This effect is seen for at least a few hours after consuming a sugary drink.

For the whole article, click here: 10 Immune system booster and busters. I knew this. I ate the stuff anyway, without thinking about the consequences. The priets are available for confession on Good Friday. For a person who claims to care for my body as a holy thing, I feel stupid and guilty. I will probably just take a long walk and eat tons of Swiss chard and kale, drink Throat coat tea and shovel in the Vitamin C. Eating sugar doesn't seem like it deserves the sacrament of confession.

I'd love to hear how this Lent/Passover is going for you. Anything come up that effects your health? Perhaps we can all support each other.

Do not forget the joy. There will be 30+ people in my living room on Sunday. The college and highschool, middle school aged kids will be full of conversation as well as ham and potatoe, asparagus and salad. It will be glorious and promises not to rain so we can spill out into the back yard. They don't want to give up dyeing eggs even though it is doubtful they will hide any. Children want to hang on to the traditions even though it means not being cool. I love it.

Fondly,

Be Well, Do Well, Keep Moving

Betsy

Injured at 52. Diagnosed and sentenced to a wheel chair at 55. Hiking, skiing, dancing and walking at 75. Read my story.

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