

THOUGHTS FROM THE KITCHEN

The present moment

Uli Yeomans shares a recipe for Quark Pastries.

Early January, a brand-new year, the tree and the crib are still up, and the supermarkets are selling Easter eggs! Once my initial flush of disapproval at the commercialisation of these cherished religious high-days and holi-

days has passed, I realise that in writing this article I too, am focusing on Easter even though the nights are still long and dark.

Thus, I surmise, it is not only commercial enterprise which must always be one step ahead, but in everything we do, there is an element which is somehow connected to the future, or the past.

At an outlet of the Centro Ave Art Centre in the little Focolare town of Loppiano I once saw a beautiful, pure white ceramic plaque designed to represent the sacred host of the Eucharist. 'Take and eat, this is my body, given up for you...' With words such as these the host is raised in memory of and re-presenting the sacrifice of Golgotha.

In the centre of that artistic host which I subsequently bought as a present for a friend, was a small image, slightly raised from the surface and flawlessly covered in a shiny white glaze. It was a man and woman adoring the new-born babe: the symbol of Christmas was set within the mystery of the redemption and resurrection of Easter. The seeds of an event are often stirring in different circumstances long before they fully blossom in their own right – something we are often not aware of.

As brothers and sisters within the human family, closely interrelated with all things and events around us, we do well to be fully focused on the requirements of the present moment, wherever these may have originated and whatever they may lead to. Then that 'divine adventure', which we are called to live out, in harmony with each other and the world around us, can unfold in its own good time, and with outcomes far beyond our imagining.

For a healthy treat, perhaps during the holiday period when children may want to help in the kitchen, try the following recipe. It is a 'present moment recipe', as these pastries don't stay crisp for long and are best prepared and eaten the same day. That, however, won't be a problem – they are delicious!



Quark pastries

Ingredients

- ▶ 250g each of quark*
- ▶ plain flour
- ▶ butter
- ▶ pinch of salt
- ▶ egg white for basting
- ▶ redcurrant jam for filling

Method

Cut or grate the cold butter into the flour, mix in the salt, add the quark and quickly knead to a soft dough. Roll out thin and cut into 9cm squares. Put a teaspoon of jam into the centre, baste the edges with egg white and press together diagonally. Baste the top also. Place on a baking sheet and bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C for 15-20 minutes. Sprinkle with icing sugar if you must!

**As a virtually fat-free soft cheese, neutral in taste, quark takes on a silky consistency when beaten well to make a (savoury or sweet) sauce, dip or filling. Add it to mash or use it in pastry, where it produces a kind of puff pastry result.*