

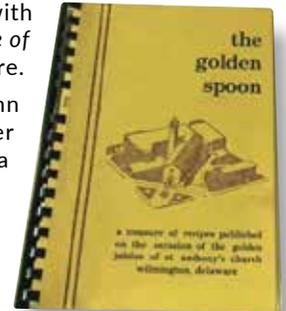
the golden spoon for a golden feast

One of my go-to cookbooks is not one filled with glossy photos of haute cuisine. Rather, it is bound with a plastic coil, and its pages were typed on a typewriter in 1974. It is *The Golden Spoon: A treasure of recipes published on the occasion of the golden jubilee of St. Anthony's Church, Wilmington, Delaware.*

Many in the tri-state area are familiar with St. Anthony of Padua Parish, founded in 1924 by Reverend John Francis Tucker, OSFS. Father Tucker built a community for the residents of Wilmington's Little Italy, and under the leadership of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, the parish went on to construct St. Anthony of Padua Grade School and the beautiful Padua Academy where I teach.

It seems only fitting that I consult recipes from *The Golden Spoon* for holiday dishes, such as Easter Bread, and weekend breakfasts, such as eggs in purgatory. Many of the recipes are intended for the Christmas season, and in this month's column I share two. The first, baked manicotti, can be served as a pasta course or a main course with meatballs. This is the manicotti recipe that I have been using for years. The second is for the Milanese sweet bread, Panettone.

These featured recipes along with the majority in *The Golden Spoon* belong to Mary Ciaffi, the chef at St. Anthony's rectory. Mary spent decades cooking for the Oblates and, according to the cookbook, helped neighbors and friends with all sorts of culinary questions from "Mary, how much?" to "Mary, how can you tell?" I am grateful to Mary for sharing her recipes and preserving them for generations of home cooks. 🍴



baked manicotti

For the Crêpes:

- 2 cups water
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Lightly beat the eggs and water, and add the flour and cornstarch. Mix well. Add the butter and salt, and blend well. In a small frying pan greased with butter, pour about 3 tablespoons of batter, and tilt the pan so the batter completely covers the bottom. (I use a nonstick griddle, spoon on the batter with a nonstick ladle, and spread around the batter with the bottom of the ladle). When light brown, turn and lightly brown the other side. This should only take a couple of minutes. Stack the crêpes on a plate separated with pieces of parchment paper. Continue to use all batter, and grease the pan when needed.

For the Filling:

- 2 pounds ricotta
- 1 package Mozzarella cheese (diced)
- 1/3 cup grated cheese (I suggest Parmesan)
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon parsley (chopped)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Add the first 7 ingredients, and beat well with a wooden spoon. Place about 1/4 cup of filling in the center of each crêpe and roll up. When all crêpes are filled, spoon some of your red sauce of choice in the bottom of two 12 X 9 baking dishes. Place the crêpes seam side down in a single layer, cover with the remaining sauce, and sprinkle with grated cheese. Bake uncovered 30 minutes in a pre-heated 350 degree oven until bubbly. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

panettone

- 2 packages yeast (dry or compressed)
- 1 cup lukewarm water
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 whole eggs and 3 egg yolks, well beaten
- About 5 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup chopped citron
- 1/2 cup white raisins, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup dark raisins, rinsed and drained

Mix yeast with lukewarm water and stir until dissolved. Mix butter, salt, sugar, eggs, and egg yolks together. Add yeast and egg mixture to 5 cups of the flour. Stir until well blended.

Turn out on floured board and knead until smooth and free from stickiness, add additional 1/2 cup flour if needed. This will take from 10 to 15 minutes, and the dough will be soft. Then knead in citron and raisins. Handle the dough as little as possible after you have added the raisins and citron or it will discolor.

Place in a greased bowl, grease top of dough, cover, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place for about two hours, or until it is double in bulk. Punch down, and knead until smooth. Put into a greased three-quart pan or two small loaf pans. Butter the top surface.

Let rise again until double in bulk - about 40 minutes. Using a sharp knife, cut a deep cross in the top of the loaf. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bake Panettone until surface starts to brown - about 8 minutes. Reduce heat to 325 degrees and bake about an hour longer. Yield: 1 large loaf or 2 small loaves. Glaze and decorate with candied fruits. 🍴

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