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THANK GOD FOR DIRTY DISHES

Lifestyles have changed drastically as we shelter in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to this unprecedented time, Americans on average spent as much on eating out as on groceries. Now we find ourselves forced to prepare meals at home. Ideally we have a well-stocked pantry to make life simple.

For cooking tips, recipes, and ideas here are three resources

- USDA Nutrition <https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/shopping-cooking-and-food-safety/recipes>
- Cooking Matters at cookingmatters.org/tips
- Academy Nutrition & Dietetics www.eatright.org

Put your kids in charge of screening the videos and picking recipes. You might discover a blossoming foodie and future chef.

The ability to place a grocery order on-line has been a blessing. Still, despite my best efforts to do inventory, plan meals and grocery lists, supermarkets routinely have only a portion of the order. Often I find myself forced to find substitutions to make our favorite dishes. Assuming you have this same challenge here is my advice:

*If you have a Kitchen Aid mixer then buy the meat grinder attachment. Nothing tastes better than fresh ground and in my perfect world I grind a chuck roast to make my burgers. The fact is you can take almost any cut of meat or poultry and grind it to make ground meat for soups, stew, chili, and the American favorite burgers. This tool has been invaluable.

Buttermilk makes baked items tender. Saco Pantry makes an excellent powdered cultured buttermilk blend, available at the supermarket, which I always keep in the fridge.

* You can make your own buttermilk substitution by adding 1 tablespoon distilled white vinegar or lemon juice to 1 cup of milk.

*Who couldn't use a little chocolate these days! If a recipe calls for unsweetened chocolate substitute 3 tablespoons of cocoa plus 1 tablespoon butter or margarine.

The University of Nebraska Extension has an excellent guide for substitutions at <https://food.unl.edu/article/ingredient-substitutions> Print a copy and hang inside your kitchen cabinet.

*Make your own salad dressing and tartar sauce (see recipes).

ITALIAN DRESSING

1/2 cup olive oil
1/3 cup red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt

Mix ingredients together and shake well.

NOTE: *Substitute another type oil or vinegar, if needed.*

TARTAR SAUCE

1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup sour cream
2/3 cup chopped sweet pickles
1/4 cup chopped olives
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 small onion, finely grated

Mix all ingredients and refrigerate for several hours before using.

I end this article with a simple prayer from a favorite cookbook “Calling All Cooks,” published by the Telephone Pioneers of America, Alabama Chapter. The poem’s author is not given. May it bring a chuckle and reminder of gratitude during this very difficult time.

Thank God for Dirty Dishes

Thank God for dirty dishes,
They have a tale to tell.
While others are going hungry
We’re eating very well.
With home and health and happiness,
I shouldn’t want to fuss.
For by this stack of evidence,
God’s very good to us.

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