Dear Debi,

A Seasonal Refresher

Don't you love spring - even when it is only a promise or a reminder on the calendar? I know I do. I look forward to being refreshed and brightened by this season. In so many ways.

Spring is an inspiration. Imagine yourself as a flower, preparing yourself for the hard work of bursting forth with dramatic and breathtaking beauty. You might be underground at the moment, but soon it will be your moment to shine. You are patient and persevering. And oh, what is coming. You are about to be renewed in newness of life and beauty. Now that's spring.

We are not flowers of course, but the image is kind of appropriate, don't you think? We toil in obedience to the tasks we have been given and we do our best, even if it's not the bright lights of life. We do this knowing the reward and refreshment that is coming. And we will reflect great beauty and maybe, just maybe, enjoy the moment of overwhelming newness.

That is Easter, of course. Spring and Easter go together. We are refreshed by the seasonal

HomeMakers is here for you!

Website: www.homemakersbychoice.org

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Donna's books, DVD's and study guides for sale: Great tools, great prices here.

DVD Series Choices Matter with online study guides.

Someone new!

Let me introduce myself. My name is Julie Morelock and although I am not new to HomeMakers, I am new to working with this inspiring
changes and promises of new life, but isn't that what Easter is really all about? As we celebrate our risen Lord, we celebrate the full renewal of a new life, a blossoming and becoming life - your life in Christ.

So regardless of the weather, Spring may be late or early in your neighborhood, and it may come with showers and thunder rather than sunshine and flowers, but this is a season of renewal, of refreshment. It is due to the sacrifice and redemption of our Lord.

I love Easter. I love it for what it represents in our life of faith, but also because it represents the promise of newness for me and for you! May you blossom this Easter and be refreshed and renewed.

Donna Otto

P.S. I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! Contact me at HomeMakers87@cox.net

Breathe...Hope for your soul.

Our God is the God of hope! Hope gushes from Him like beautiful, crystal-clean water flowing from an artesian well and splashing over our lives. His desire is that you overflow with hope all the time by the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). When you find your vision fading or evaporating before your very eyes, you need to spend some quiet, alone time with the God of hope and allow Him to refill your empty cup.

From: Youniquely Women Becoming Who God Designed You to Be
Authors: Kay Arthur, Emilie Barnes and Donna Otto

New Music

Have you ever felt like the composer of a song wrote the very words you wanted to sing? A song
that express your heart and helps you worship our Lord? Here are a few new CD's that might have that very song on it:

10,000 Reasons by Matt Redman, Victor's Crown by Darlene Zschech and Passion:Let the Future Begin.

**Kids and Summer**

One of the ways to train a child to do a variety of tasks while also helping him or her to exercise some choice is to use a job jar. We did this in our home, and it worked beautifully. Simply write on slips of paper some household jobs your child is capable of accomplishing or which you'd like your child to learn, such as "Clear away dinner dishes" or "Sweep the driveway or "Dust the furniture." Then say to your child, "Choose any ten jobs (or two or three depending on the child's age) for this week. I'll do the others." This gives the child the freedom and reduces your overall workload. And you'll never hear "You always make me do..." again. You can also make a job wheel with a dozen jobs listed in a circle. The child can then spin the spinner one to three times each day. In this way there's some fun, and no two days of jobs are alike. Obviously the number of jobs a child can handle varies with the time of the year. I assigned my daughter fewer household duties during the school year than in the summer vacation months.

Children are most bored in the summer, which is natural since so much of their lives are organized in the school months. Penny, a friend of mine, decided to alleviate her only child's boredom by planning a camp just for her. The five-year-old was allowed to invite three friends (two more crashed the party) to the camp, which met three days a week for the entire month of June. Penny charged a minimum fee for her camp, which she jokingly named Camp Henny Penny, to cover expenses and a bright-red T-shirt. Trips to the zoo, theaters, the parks, and the swimming pool were planned for two of the three days. The other day was for at-home activities such as art work and table games. One day Penny allowed the children to make chalk drawings on her concrete driveway. Another day the children all worked together to create a 3 x 3-foot collage.

![Visit us on Facebook. Instead of a 'group' HomeMakers is a page. This way you don't have to join or be approved...just click the icon above, 'like' our page, and you're ready to join the conversation!](image)

**From our listeners and readers...**

Encouraging words from PodCast listeners and others:

From our email files...

Thank you so much for your prayers...God has prepared me for this journey I am on. I have been faithful in reading my bible and journaling daily. God directed my attention to Proverbs 3:5, which says "to trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding". I felt God tell me to seek more scripture like this, that offer encouragement and comfort. Two weeks from the day God spoke to me my son was diagnosed with leukemia. I can tell you those scriptures have gotten me through many dark days and nights. Since they had helped me so much I started hand writing copies of them to give to families going through this type of trial.
from magazine pictures. Still another day they took pictures of each other with a Polaroid camera and pasted the pictures onto pieces of paper. Penny asked them to write the answer to the question, "What have I learned about my new friend?" below each child's picture. Needless to say Camp Henny Penny was a big success.

From "Secrets to Getting More Done in Less Time", By Donna Otto

**Items of Interest**

Thank you for your financial support. "God owns all the silver and all the gold". Through families like yours we have served women for 25 years. If you would like to make a gift donation click here.

If you are interested in having Donna Otto speak at a retreat or event, please contact: ottoministries@cox.net.

Websites to visit: *Spiritual Formation Society of Arizona* - www.sfsaz.org - "Spiritual formation, without regard to any specifically religious context or tradition, is the process by which the human spirit or will is given a definite form, or character." Dallas Willard

*Family Matters* - familymatters.net - This is a great resource that offers hope for today's family.

We'd like to introduce you to GoodSearch.com, a website which makes raising money for the ministry incredibly easy. GoodSearch.com is a Yahoo!-powered search engine which donates about a penny per search to HomeMakers By Choice. GoodSearch donates money when you search the internet, shop online or dine out at local restaurants. Go to www.goodsearch.com to get started.

**Contribute to ACSTO and Working Poor Agencies**

Tax credits to help families and the working poor

Are you an Arizona resident? Do you owe state and I have been blessed by the response. God has already taught me so much through all of this. I am thankful for the experience to grow my faith, and to be able to give God glory for every passing phase and victory along the way."

-CM

**Create a Peaceful Ambience this Spring**

**Keep it clean**
It's hard to feel peaceful in an environment that is grubby, sticky and unsanitary.

**Keep it clear**
Clutter can be visually stressful. Try to keep surfaces relatively clear, even if it means (temporarily), piling all the extra stuff in a box and hiding it away. Resist using flat surfaces for storage.

**Keep it cozy**
"Clean and uncluttered" doesn't have to mean sterile and antiseptic. Soft pillows, cozy throws, comfortable seating, and soft lighting all contribute to a sense of safety and security.

**Use sound to create a sense of peace**
Quiet music is a time-tested way to "soothe the savage beast."

**Use good scents**
Pleasant aromas can do a lot toward making your house feel like a peaceful refuge. Try a drop of aromatic oil on a lightbulb ring, a fragrant bouquet, a spritz of perfume in the closet, or a loaf of bread in the oven.
taxes for 2012? You can help the families in the ministry to get their children a Christian education. Arizona does a dollar for dollar tax credit (up to $1000/married couple or $500/single) for Az state tax payers it's called the Arizona Christian Student Organization (ACSTO). The state of Az recently changed the deadline for STO's and you (the taxpayer) now has until April 15, 2013 to make a payment to an STO and still take the credit on your 2012 taxes. How it works is that every person or couple that take the credit greatly decreases the amount of tuition a family owes. Let us explain...

1. Let's say you're married and you owe the state of Az $1200 at tax time. Instead of paying the state $1200 you could send that $1000 to ACSTO. That $1000 will then be sent as a grant to a requested childs tuition for their Christian private school education. Then you (the taxpayer) will receive the state credit of $1000 at tax time and only owe $200 to the state.

2. Another situation is: Let's say you owe $200 the state of Az at tax time. You can pay that $200 to the STO and it will go towards a credit on your 2012 taxes. Or if you pay more that the $200 to the STO (Ex:$400). You will have that credit and not have to pay the state $200 this year (2012 taxes) and the remaining cash ($200) will go as a credit towards your 2013 taxes.

3. If you do not owe state taxes and feel led to help a mother in the ministry you could pay any amount up to $1000/couple (or single $500) to ACSTO and you will receive that dollar amount back as a state tax refund!

In the end you either have a state credit or you get your money back. This is an opportunity that Homemakers By Choice does not benefit from, but the families of the ministry and the state of Az do. It's redirecting the funds from the state to families as a grant, that desire a Christian education for their children. If you would like more information you can go online to www.ACSTO.com. If you already take the public school tax credit you can also take the private school tax credit. Just remember not to give above $500 if you are single and $1000 if you are married.

Recipes

Berry Nice

Ingredients:
8 oz softened cream cheese
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 tsp vanilla
1 carton plain nonfat yoghurt
sliced fresh fruit (strawberries, peaches, kiwi, or mix 3 berries)
Confection sugar

Directions:
1. Beat cream cheese, sugar and vanilla at medium speed with an electric mixer.
2. Gradually add yoghurt.
3. Whip until thick and place in refrigerator.
4. Mound berries in one side of glass dessert bowl and dust with confection sugar.
5. Pour cream cheese mixture beside fruit and garnish with mint.

Pesto Pie

Ingredients:
1 15oz package folded refrigerated piecrust (2 crusts)
4 oz Monterey Jack cheese with jalapeno peppers, shredded (1cup)
1/2 cup prepared pesto
Milk
Paprika
2 Tblsp pine nuts

Directions:
1. Let piecrusts stand at room temperature 12-20 mins.
2. Preheat oven 400 degrees.
There is also another Arizona individual income tax credit that is available for contributions that provide assistance to the working poor. This is a dollar for dollar tax credit just like the STO for up to $400 that offers people a helping hand with their basic needs such as medical care, food, clothing, shelter, child care and job training services and placement.

If you are interested in using your tax money in this way and would like to specifically help mothers in this ministry or the working poor feel free to contact us at homemakers87@cox.net

"God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply"
-Hudson Taylor

3. Spread one pastry round on lightly floured 12" pizza pan or baking sheet.
4. Bake in oven for 8-10mins or just until crust begins to brown.
5. Stir together the cheese and pesto. Spread evenly over the hot crust to within 1/2 inch of edge.
6. Place second crust on top. Seal edges with a spoon. Cut slits to allow steam to escape.
8. Bake for 15-18 mins.
9. Let stand 10 mins before you cut into slices.

Serve warm.

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