

So much material written now a days about what's good for the soul. Some of it good advice no doubt. Advice some of us try to apply to our daily lives, but which to few of us really commit, sort of like the diets we go on. I've done my share of reading about what's good for the soul and even given a shot at applying some of these suggestions. And somewhere along the road I ask myself, to what end is what I'm doing good for my soul? I've found that when it comes right down to it, only one thing I do is good in every aspect for my soul – – prayer. I often tell my students that prayer is to the soul as water is to the body. I believe there are times when no matter what we do, all the discussion, all the thought, all the logic, do nothing to help us get into that right inner place. Only prayer can help us get there and *keep* us there. How, when, and where we do it it's all up to each individual, but how often we do it is the essential thing.

What a difference prayer can make in a moment, in 24 hours, in a lifetime. You'd be surprised at its power. And to what end? Well, this life is good, but keep the fork because the best is yet to come. Yes, as Christians, we should live our lives striving to reach this ultimate goal, eternal life, no?. Prayer can get us there because through it the soul falls into place, into the right place, and like a domino effect, it affects everything else around us. As believers, as faithful people, prayer is not an option. Not if you want the best that's yet to come. So let prayer kick off the domino effect in your life. No, really.

In case you're not familiar with the expression "Keep the fork, the best is yet to come":

There was a woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. As she was getting her things "in order", she contacted her pastor and had him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes.

She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in. The woman also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible. Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the woman suddenly remembered something very important to her.

"There's one more thing," she said excitedly. "What's that?" came the pastor's reply. "This is very important," the woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand." The pastor stood looking at the woman, not knowing quite what to say. "That surprises you doesn't it?" the woman asked. "Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," said the

pastor.

The woman explained. "In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say 'keep your fork'. It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming…like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie or something wonderful, and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder 'What's with the fork?'. Then I want you to tell them: "Keep your fork….the best is yet to come".

The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the woman goodbye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the woman had a better grasp of heaven than he did. She KNEW that something better was coming.

At the funeral people were walking by the woman's casket and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing and her favorite Bible and the fork placed in her right hand. Over and over, the pastor heard the question "What's with the fork?" And over and over he smiled. During his message, the pastor told the people of the conversation he had with the woman shortly before she died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to her. The pastor told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either. He was right.

So the next time you reach down for your fork, let it remind you oh so gently, that the best is yet to come…

-by Connie Perez

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