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EarthBeat



Tofu scramble with vegetables and spices (At Elizabeth's Table/Elizabeth Varga)



by Elizabeth Varga

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Editor's Note: *In this series, Elizabeth Varga will explore how fasting from meat impacts our relationships with self, others, the rest of creation and God. Her reflections and recipes will be posted on the Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent 2022. To receive this series via email, sign up for EarthBeat Reflections.*

When I went to college, I started to think more about what I ate and how I exercised. I read a lot of information about how to be healthy. This put me on a path toward learning the best foods I could put in my body.

Toward the end of my sophomore year, I was convinced: the meat and dairy products I was eating weren't serving me. They were causing me physical discomfort and setting me up for a lifetime of health issues.

So I adopted a whole foods plant-based diet: no meat, no dairy, no eggs and no processed foods.

And I felt free.

I felt free to eat so many foods because I knew they would help my body. Fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains — I could eat all sorts of them. They worked with, not against, my body and how it was designed.

I also felt free because I discovered a connection between my food and my Catholic faith.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul says, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11).

I have a responsibility to be a good steward of my body because the Holy Spirit dwells in me always.

I foster a healthy relationship with myself that honors the presence of the Spirit and my God-given dignity and worth through how I care for my physical body: what I eat, if I exercise and how I handle stress.

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When I adopted a plant-based diet in college, it was because I realized that fueling my body with nutrient-dense foods that work with my body's design is a consistent and meaningful way that I can honor God.

Today, my goals reach beyond myself. Eating more plants can be beneficial to the entire planet. I want to share the message with the world: plant-based food is a beautiful way to honor your body, all creation and God.

Every day when I choose to eat nourishing foods, I am proclaiming my love for God. I live plant-based for God, who gave me this beautiful body — and world — to live in. And I'm doing everything I can to take good care of both homes.

Even if you can't adopt a completely plant-based diet, some ways to focus on relationship with self and honor God by honoring your body this Lent could include:

- Eat mindfully, starting only when you are hungry and stopping when you are full.
- Pray before meals. Pause to reflect on the food that you have and praise God for the generosity you've received in your life.
- Exercise your mind and body. Go for a walk or spend a few minutes taking deep breaths.
- Add more vegetables to your plate. Focus on eating nutrient-dense foods that contain vitamins, minerals and fiber.
- Stretch in the morning or before bed. Move around and allow your muscles to relax.

Recipe: Tofu scramble

Tofu scramble is like scrambled eggs, but using tofu. It's a great high-protein breakfast. With the addition of some tasty spices, it takes on the color and taste of scrambled eggs. Bonus: It takes less than 15 minutes to make from start to finish.



Tofu scramble with vegetables and spices (At Elizabeth's Table/Elizabeth Varga)

Ingredients

- 1 block medium-firm or firmer tofu
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 8 ounces mushrooms, sliced

- 1 red onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne

Instructions

1. Cook the peppers, mushrooms, onion and garlic in a non-stick pan over medium heat for 5 minutes, until mostly soft.
2. Crumble the tofu into the pan and add the spices.
3. Stir and cook 5 minutes more, until the tofu is evenly coated with spices and is warmed through.
4. Serve and enjoy!

Find recipe notes, substitutions and other nutritional information on atelizabethstable.com.

This story appears in the **Recipes for an ecofriendly Lent** feature series. View the full series.