

Preface for "Pigtails and Frog Legs: A Family Cookbook from Neiman Marcus"

Michael Jackson, preface of "Pigtails and Frog Legs: A Family Cookbook from Neiman Marcus" (September 1993)

To a child, food is something special. It isn't just a delicious taste or the vitamins that build a healthy body. Food is love and caring, security and hope — all the things that a food family can provide. Remember when you were little and your mother made a pie for you? When she cut a slice and put it on your plate, she was giving you a bit of herself, in the form of her love. She made your hunger go away, and when you were full and satisfied, everything seemed all right. Because that satisfied feeling was in the pie, you were nourished from a deep level. Food is something we all need physically, but so is love, the deeper nourishment, that turns into who we are.

Think about how necessary it is to nourish a child with a bit of yourself when you use this book. It is full of delicious things. Every recipe has an extra ingredient of caring, because the people who wrote them were thinking of the children. They were specially thinking of those who aren't able to take nourishment for granted because they are poor, sick or disabled. These are the children who need food to heal. The theme of 'Heal the World', which has been close to my heart, is the central theme of this book, also. Here are recipes for the spirit. Please make them with that in mind. Your child is growing spirit that can be knit strong with love. When you break an egg and measure a cup of flour, you are magically mixing the gift of life. The food's proteins and minerals will turn into bones and muscles, but your feeling as you cook will turn directly into a soul.

It makes me happy to think that the needs of children's spirits are at last becoming important in this world. Children have no power to end wars directly or to mend age-old differences.

All they can do is be themselves, to shine with gratitude and joy when love is turned their way. Yet isn't that ultimately the greatest power? In the eyes of a child you become the source of joy, which lifts you into the special category of caregiver and life-provider. You may think that your apple pie has only sugar and spice in it. A child is wiser — with the first bite, he knows that this special dish is the essence of your love.

Enjoy!

Michael Jackson