

# 31 Days of the Little Way: Cooking a Fondue Dinner on a Weeknight

Some days are just packed with little moments where I discover holiness in ordinary life.

I saw it in the smile of the teacher who waved as I dropped off our boys at school. When I stopped at the grocery store, I witnessed it in a friendly exchange among strangers in line at the checkout—strangers who were disagreeing politically and yet still managed to part ways with a smile.

Then a Jesuit friend and former colleague who lives out of town stopped by my office for a surprise visit, and the timing was just right. I realized how much I had been hoping to see him for a good conversation—and here he was. Isn't it extraordinary how people walk into our lives just at the right moment?

It was a good day, but a busy one. At the end of the day, as I was driving to school to pick up our children, I remembered that I had promised the boys fondue for dinner. That's a special treat, usually saved for the weekend, but as we experience these darker fall evenings, fondue felt really appealing.

And I was overdue, as I so often am, to make a really good dinner.



*We do have four plates that match, but we never have them all out at the same time.* But, as I was driving, noticing that yet again I was not running ahead of schedule, I sort of wished I had announced I was making something simpler—something that didn't involve peeling and chopping and heating broth and finding the fondue set and calling to ask my husband to stop at two different stores to pick up the items I had forgotten.

But I had promised fondue. And when I picked up the boys, they remembered—and they were excited. So I let myself be excited too, even though I knew how much food preparation lay ahead of me.

Fondue is a family favorite. Before we became parents, John and I made fondue together. But we thought that once we had children—at least while they were young—we would put our fondue days on hold. But we realized we could do it safely, and our children love having fondue.

I don't usually plan fondue dinners for a weeknight at such a busy time of the year, but sometimes we take on a little extra (maybe a little too much) and hope it works out. This was one of those nights. I jumped into making a dinner that I had no business starting after 6 p.m. on a weeknight, but somehow it just came together.

John found the fondue set and helped the boys with their homework. I realized I had forgotten to buy scallions—a key ingredient—so I chopped up some onion instead. No one seemed to notice.

When everything was chopped and ready to cook, we sat down to dinner and John took over the cooking. All I had to do was eat and participate in the conversation. And although some nights the dinner table conversation can dissolve into giddiness or knock-knock jokes or people who want to leave the table two minutes after we sit down, fondue somehow makes people want to stay.



It was almost like a little campfire at our dinner table. We talked about recess and World War II and Pokemon and things that happened during the day and how good fondue is. And it was.

Then after dinner John did all the dishes. Every single one.  
And that, my friends? Oh, that's holiness.

