

Table of plenty

We're losing power for most of the day tomorrow. The electric company needs to trim trees near our home, so a few hundred homes in the area will be losing power. First it was supposed to happen today. Now it's supposedly happening tomorrow.

Every night we have tried to finish more of the food in the refrigerator and freezer. I know we'll lose most of what is in our fridge, and I'm not sure how well the frozen foods will survive. So we've been eating and eating—but we've barely made a dent.

It's astonishing to realize just how much we have.

We have frozen dumplings and ground beef and shrimp and ham steaks. We have more ice cream than I would have believed we could fit in the freezer—and we have an irrational number of containers of pulled chicken and beef. We have enough popsicles and freezer pops for a summer camp. And we have cheese and butter and eggs and way too many condiments. You wouldn't believe how many different kinds of mustard we have.

How many times in the past have I opened the freezer and sighed thinking, "There's nothing to make for dinner," when now we are discovering that we have enough food for days?

Somehow, though, as with so many things in life, you don't appreciate what you have until you realize you might lose it. Suddenly when my husband points out a box of three fish sticks in the corner of the freezer, I feel the urge to cook and serve them. They may date back to Lent 2015, but the idea of tossing them in the trash tomorrow makes me wince.

Looking at our dinner table tonight, I found myself thinking of how much we have in

so many ways. We have freedom and peace. We have warmth in the winter and cool in the summer. We have one another. Certainly we have the stresses and worries and concerns any family does, but we also have great abundance. We have so many, many blessings.



Yesterday when our toilet overflowed and water spilled down into the basement, running through the walls and across the floor, damaging the walls we paid someone to install so carefully not even a year ago, we were upset. But I kept remembering the farmers in James Herriot's books who—when they lost a cow to illness or a field of crops to terrible weather—would say something like, "Only those who have it can lose it."

I have so, so much. More than enough—and not just in the fridge. It's a good reminder for me as we prepare for Advent, that time of waiting and readying ourselves for Christ's birth. Especially on the days when I feel stretched thin, unable to handle all the demands of life, I need to remember there's still something left in that dark corner of my freezer. Sometimes maybe we just need to dig a little deeper and recognize the value in making do with what we have.