

Every Day Miracles

Pancakes for Supper?

It seemed like a good idea at the time.

As Sr. Mary was driving to the house, she heard an announcement on the radio that caught her attention. IHOP was having a pancake promotion, and all of the proceeds from pancake sales that evening would be donated to children's charities. An idea started to form.

There were six children at the house at the time. Three of them were older and had a tendency to be quite "busy," so Sr. Mary asked Miss Ethel that afternoon if she was busy at dinnertime and how would she like to go on an adventure. Miss Ethel looked at Sr. Mary with that "what are you up to now" look and just said, "Why?"

So Sr. Mary told her about the promotion and said, "Why don't we take the three older ones to IHOP tonight for pancakes and we can explain to them how the money from their dinner is actually going to help other children. It will get them out of the house for a while and give them a different experience. What do you think?"

Silence. Then, "OK, Sr. Mary, let's give it a try."

Of course, they didn't tell the children until just before it was time to go. But when they found out they were going to a restaurant for dinner, they could hardly contain themselves.

Sr. Mary explained to Joey, Marlita and Mayra on the way to IHOP how they were going to be helping other children by eating at the restaurant this evening. At first, they were having a hard time understanding how eating pancakes was going to help someone else, but then they started to understand that it was really the restaurant that was going to give the money that they paid them to a place like Blessing House to help kids. They thought that was cool.

Sr. Mary also had the brilliant idea that this would be a good opportunity to help the children learn how to behave in a restaurant.

"Sr. Mary, what can we have to eat?"

"Pancakes, remember, that's what I told you we were coming to get."

"Is that all I can have?"

"Yes, that's all. And something to drink."

"But I don't like pancakes."

"But you said in the van on the way here that you liked pancakes."

"But I want something else."

"Well, we are going to be ordering pancakes for everyone. You can pick out your drink. You can have milk or juice."

"I want tomato juice!"

“Tomato juice! Are you sure? I didn’t know you liked tomato juice.”

“I love tomato juice!”

“I’m thirsty, I want a big glass of milk.”

“And I want milk, too.”

Drinks were brought to the table and orders were placed.

“Mayra, don’t drink your whole glass of milk right now, you won’t have room for your pancakes. Save some for later.”

“But I’m thirsty. What are we having for dessert?”

Joey just sat in the corner and rolled his eyes. He was hungry and couldn’t wait for his pancakes. He figured he could put up with anything because he loved pancakes.

Soon, stacks of pancakes arrived at the table. Unfortunately, so did 4 different kinds of syrup.

“I don’t know which kind I should take. Let me try this one.”

“No, let me try this one.”

“Maybe I will like this one better.”

“Oh, I bet you this one is the best.”

Miss Ethel just looked at Sr. Mary. Somehow, Sr. Mary just knew that any time after this, if she asked Miss Ethel if she was busy, the answer would always be, “yes.”

“Mayra, you haven’t eaten one pancake. You need to stop talking and eat because we have to leave soon.”

“But, I’m not hungry. I think I drank too much milk.

By the way, I thought pancakes were for breakfast. Does this mean that we can have supper tomorrow morning?”

At that point, Sr. Mary knew it was time to go. They paid their bill and bundled up to leave.

When they arrived back at the house and the children had settled in for the evening, Sr. Mary commented to Miss Ethel that it really hadn’t been that bad after all, had it?

Miss Ethel just shook her head and chuckled the way she always did when she knew what her answer would be. “Naw, it wasn’t that bad. The kids had a great time. But before you get any more great ideas, talk to me first, OK? See you tomorrow, Sr. Mary.”

Kids helping kids.

Pancakes for supper.

Doesn’t get any better than that, does it?