



# TWO SMALL FARMS

## Community Supported Agriculture

July 1, 2, 3 2009

### Every Flower Tells a Story, by Andy Griffin

Rosemary has sky blue flowers because of Jesus, or at least that's one traditional Christian way to read this aromatic herb. Botanists don't explain taxonomical features with folk theology, half-blinded as they are by the harsh light of reason; you probably don't believe the Rosemary story either. But just for fun, close your eyes to the critical glare and let's go back to the utter darkness that prevailed before the beginning of time and see what we can learn about this pretty bush.

Genesis tells us that the Lord spoke out of the deep and with words created our universe and all that is in it. The heavens were pronounced to arch over us and the Lord caused starlight to shine through their blackness, "for signs and for seasons and for days, and for years." The sun and the moon measured out the days, years and months so that we would know where we stood in the present time. The rest of the heavens served to give astrologers access to our future.

With all the sky to serve as a billboard it's no wonder that the Lord chose a blazing star to announce the birth of a son. The story goes that astrologers in the East read this news in the sky, and three of the astrologers have come to be judged "Wise Men" because they didn't confuse the message with the messenger and make the star itself out to be a king like Cepheus. Instead, they traveled west after the light until they came to the court of Herod in Jerusalem.

"You say the stars announce the birth of the Prince of Peace," said Herod, his eyes narrowing as he addressed the regal astrologers, "When you find the infant report back to me that I may go and worship him too."

The three astrologers were wise because they could read the faces of men as well as they could decipher the heavens. "Herod means to kill the child," they said to themselves as they left the palace. They reached the end of their journey at an animal shed and found a young Jewish woman cradling an infant. The astrologers gave the child Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and they gave his mother Mary some frank advice - "Get out of Bethlehem while you can." Maybe the wise men also gave Mary the star-spangled robe she still wears in icons where she is portrayed standing upon a crescent moon back lit by sunbeams as Mother Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Heaven; surely a carpenter's wife couldn't have afforded such a splendid and significant garment.

Mary took her visitors' advice and fled with her young family into Egypt. Along the way, maybe still in the hills of Judea, maybe in the stony wastes of Sinai, Mary took shelter

### Mid-Season Renewal Time

Tempus fugit: It's already July! For those of you on our quarterly renewal schedule, the second 9 week cycle ends July 17th. To secure your spot, especially at those sites that are full or nearly full, please send your renewal payment in early, before the deadline of July 17th. Payment must be received in advance to extend your subscription in our system. (If you're not sure when your subscription expires, check the sign-in sheets.)

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under a rosemary bush and spread her shawl over its pine-scented branches. She had practical reasons. If the sun was out she would want to shade her baby. If it was dark the robe could serve as a makeshift tent to protect her baby from the dew and chill of a desert night. Then too, women all over the Middle East would have known that the aromatic oils that give rosemary its suggestive perfume can help protect the garment from cloth-eating moths. Even scientists, after they're done analyzing the oils as camphor, cineol, alpha-pinene, verbenone, and borneol probably wouldn't argue with this. When Mary wrapped herself up again the healing scent infusing her shawl would help keep her alert and calm.

Rosemary is reputed to be good for the eyes too; so good, that the plant may have served as a magical tool to gaze into the future. This young lady who talked with angels would have mystical reasons too for choosing to drape her cloak over rosemary brush. In the folk language of flowers

rosemary stands for fidelity in love. Perhaps Mary already saw that she was transforming into an Earth Mother and would one day stand cloaked in rosemary's virtues. In the morning, when Mary gathered up her things and wrapped herself in her blue shawl with the stars to continue her journey to Egypt, she left behind a rosemary bush that bloomed as blue as her robe, and to this day the herb reflects back at us a bit of the heavens where Mary always walks.

Or so the story goes. I like to think about the esoteric meanings of the herbs and vegetables that I grow. If all of nature has been created by divine words, then every flower can tell a story if we listen.

Once enthroned by Christianity as Mother Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Heaven, Mary inspired numerous

### This Week

Rosemary <sup>MF</sup>

Salad Mix <sup>HG</sup>

Carola Potatoes <sup>HG</sup>

Red Torpedo Onions <sup>MF</sup>

Strawberries <sup>HG</sup>

Cauliflower <sup>MF</sup>

Red Chard <sup>MF</sup>

Red Beets <sup>HG</sup>

Mystery <sup>MF</sup>

Flowers: Mixed Bouquet <sup>TF</sup>

botanic miracles. When she appeared in Tepayac to Juan Diego, roses of Castile sprouted and bloomed overnight where she had stood. In Europe, where the veneration of Mary took hold, she passed through the countryside on errands of mercy and left drifts of marigolds in her wake. Some plants, like rosemary, prompted many stories.

The Romans named the plant *ros marinus*, for “dew of the sea,” after the plants habit of growing near the shores of the Mediterranean. Roman armies conquered rosemary’s habitat as they occupied the entire world around that sea. Mary’s worshipers would in turn take the name *Ros marinus* and transform it into “Rosemary” to recall their Lady. Mexicans call rosemary “romero,” after the Spanish word for “pilgrim on a religious quest,” and we’re reminded of Mary’s flight from Herod. I’ve tried to tell you that story in a sympathetic way. But religion aside, rosemary has many practical uses. Rosemary was one of the first plants ever used for incense and its twigs were thrown on the fire at births and deaths. Rosemary drives away flies, it is valued as a diuretic, a bunch of it makes a good wand for basting lamb on a barbeque and it goes great with potatoes too.

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## Recipes and Notes

(also see [www.mariquita.com/recipes](http://www.mariquita.com/recipes))

*How to store this week's box:* Everything into the fridge, including the potatoes. Top the beets right away -- be careful to cut at the stem of the greens and not the beet itself as otherwise the beets will 'bleed' when you cook them. And, cook the greens as you would any cooking green, best within the first day or two when they're fresh. By the way, you can also cook the cauliflower greens in a stir fry or sauté. Cauliflower greens can be quite tasty when they're this fresh.

### Rosemary Infused Olive Oil, from personal chef Jonathan Miller

Add a couple sprigs of rosemary to a saucepan full of olive oil and heat over low heat. Do not allow to smoke. Heat for about 15 minutes, then allow to cool. Strain and save oil for future use.

### Rosemary Infused Cream with Strawberries, from Jonathan Miller

For something different and slightly adventurous, try infusing cream with your rosemary and a lemon peel, then bathing some strawberries in it. Use the peel of one lemon and one sprig of rosemary. Combine them with a cup of heavy cream and slowly heat. As soon as it boils, remove it from the heat and allow to steep for 10–12 minutes. Remove the rosemary and lemon peel and chill the cream. When it is cool, toss with some chopped strawberries. Some people may find the cream a bit better slightly sweetened. Add some simple syrup or fine sugar if that is your preference to the cream before you scald it.

### Rosemary Skewers, from Jonathan Miller

You may get long, relatively thick sprigs of rosemary. These are great for using as skewers for fish. Strip the lower ends of the sprigs of the rosemary needles, leaving the top few

needles. Skewer the sprig with a nice thick white fish (halibut works well, or monkfish), alternating with bay leaves and lemon slices. Season with salt and pepper and grill or sauté on the stove top until fish is just cooked. (Use the stripped needles for another dish.) Serve with a lively topping, such as the following Chermoula sauce.

#### Chermoula.

4 garlic cloves, chopped	salt
2/3 cup cilantro, chopped	1/3 c parsley (Italian!)
1½ paprika	½ tsp. cumin
pinch cayenne	3–4 TBS olive oil
juice of 2 lemons	

Make a paste with the garlic and salt by mashing the chopped cloves with some salt using the side of your knife until you have a smooth paste. Combine with the remaining ingredients. Taste for salt.

### Crusty Garlic and Rosemary Potatoes, adapted from Bon Appetit

2 pounds potatoes, quartered (or halved if they're small)	5 large garlic cloves, sliced thin lengthwise
2 Tbs. olive oil	3 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary

In a steamer set over boiling water, steam the potatoes, covered, for 8 to 10 minutes or until they are just tender. In a non-stick skillet cook the garlic in the oil over moderate heat, stirring, until it is pale golden. Add the potatoes, the rosemary and salt and pepper to taste and sauté the mixture over moderately high heat, stirring for 5 minutes, or until the potatoes are golden.

### Tuscan Rosemary and Pine Nut Bars, From the L.A. Times Food Section 8/11/99

¼ cup pine nuts, roasted	½ Cup butter, cut in 10 pieces
½ cup powdered sugar	1 TBS chopped fresh rosemary
1 cup flour	

Melt butter. Remove from heat and stir in sugar, rosemary and pine nuts. Stir in flour to make dough; it will be stiff.

Pat dough evenly into ungreased 8-inch square baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees until golden and firm at edges, about 20 minutes.

Cool pan on rack about 2 minutes, then use sharp knife to cut bars into 16 squares. Let cool in pan at least 10 minutes before removing with small spatula.

### Roasted Cauliflower Parmesan Puree, submitted by CSA member Darren P.

My favorite thing to do with cauliflower is to roast it at high temperature and puree with brown butter, fried sage, and caramelized garlic, and fold in 3 year parmesan. A knob of butter to round it out, then place in an earthenware bowl and top with a snow layer of parmesan and broil. Very nice!!

*Everything in your box and the flowers are organically grown. From Mariquita Farm: torpedo onions, rosemary, red chard, cauliflower, mystery. From High Ground: salad mix, strawberries, beets, potatoes. From Thomas Farm: flowers.*