AgNews

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Delaware DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE
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Contact **Anne Fitzgerald**
800.282.8685 (DE only)
302.698.4520
302.242.4092 (Cell)

Are you ready for an eclectic flight of culinary fusion?

Father Leo, a break dancing, cooking priest with a black belt, is coming to the Delaware State Fair

The Delaware Department of Agriculture, the Delaware Beef Advisory Board, and the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Delaware invite Delaware State Fair visitors to enjoy yet another culinary delight on July 26th. The Rev. Leo Patalinghug, a priest from Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD, will demonstrate his particularly eclectic style of fusion cuisine during two presentations (1 PM – 2 PM and 3 PM – 4 PM) in the DDA Commodities and Education buildings on Rider Road.

Father Leo believes that families should come together by sharing meals at the dinner table. He believes that the family that eats together stays together. Father Leo often cites research that indicates that children of families who eat together are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol as teenagers. His firm belief in families strengthening their bonds by creating and sharing meals together led him to found a movement known as *Grace Before Meals.* The movement is recognized worldwide and he travels extensively promoting family meals and meal preparation through culinary demonstrations.

Cooking is something that Father Leo learned from his mother as he grew up in a Filipino-American household in Baltimore, MD. Today, Father Leo's personal style is fusion cooking, i.e., combining the many flavors of cultures or countries honed through his years at a seminary in Rome and others endeavors. His website and blog (www.gracebeforemeals.com) is full of wonderful "food for the soul" recipes to help families prepare meals together.

Cooking is not Father Leo's only talent. He also break dances and is a martial arts black belt. He won a world championship in Arnis, a stick fighting form of martial art that originated in the Philippines.

Secretary of Agriculture Ed Kee said, "I consider family meal time to be an important part of the day. It is a time to share, enjoy, and learn. I am really pleased to have Father Leo bring this message to Delaware."

Father Leo has also taped an appearance on the Food Net Work episode, "Throw Down with Bobby Flay" that will air at the end of August or in early September. Flay, famous on his own, challenged the good priest to a cook off with fajitas being the main item.

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