



The Newsletter from
Sophia's Kitchen
103 S. Richard Pryor Place
Peoria, IL
CatholicPeoria.com

Notes From the Kitchen

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Fall 2020

Did you know?

- Sophia's Kitchen is a mission of St. Joseph Catholic Church.
- We feed 300 to 700 people daily
- We never turn down those in need
- All our meals are made fresh
- We love our furry friends too! Every Thursday afternoon, we hold a pet food pantry.

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COVID Christmas

The ongoing danger of COVID-19 continues to impact the operations of Sophia's Kitchen, but with the grace of God, we are able to maintain our excellent service to those in need.

We are still serving lunches out of the window, harkening back to our origin days at Sacred Heart, and the early days of Sophia's Kitchen. Our dining room has instead been turned into a staging area for the food pantry baskets. Once the restrictions have eased, and it is safer, we

will again open our dining room to our guests.

In the meantime, we are preparing for a very different holiday season. Our annual Turkey Dinner will be carry out only. It will certainly be quieter without all the students! The food will be just as delicious, and we'll make an extra effort to see that it is a special day.

A COVID-19 Christmas also means a pause to our traditional basket packing. We'll organize a few small groups of 10 or fewer to help us pack 1,000 bags of food over several weeks. We have been working for months

to organize enough food to still give generous baskets. While this has been difficult this year, God is good always, and we know what is needed will be provided.

Please continue to pray for our guests as they face so many more hardships this winter.

We pray our volunteers are able to stay healthy, and that COVID-19 doesn't force any closures for our mission in the coming months. No one has contracted the virus at the kitchen, although several volunteers are recovering from the virus from other places.

From Claire's Desk...

Sophia's Kitchen has the best volunteers They are the most caring people!

Congratulations to Marty Baker for his recent certificate of appreciation for his outstanding contributions from Serve Illinois, the Commission

on Volunteerism and Community Service. It's a well deserved honor for someone who gives his all.

All of our volunteers have just gone above and beyond during this crazy and sometimes scary time. I'm always humbled by

their bravery and generosity as they make sure no one suffers from hunger. Our crews are smaller, and everyone is working harder, but there are never complaints. They have true servant hearts. God bless them all!

Hero



Volunteer Karen Budzinski treated herself to breakfast at Bob Evans before her recent shift at Sophia’s Kitchen, and proved she really is an angel!

As she waited for her order, she saw the woman at the next table slump forward. Karen quickly went into action. She pulled her down to the floor and began CPR until paramedics arrived.

Thanks to her quick actions, the woman survived.

Great job, Karen! We know Sophia’s Kitchen has the best volunteers, and you really proved that!

“Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

Hebrews 13:1-3

Recipe

Title: **Trail Mix**
Sr. Merlinda

Toss together:

- Pretzels
- Ritz Bits
- Dried fruits
- Chocolate bits
- Animal crackers
- Cereal, assorted flavors
- Nuts

a delicious holiday



Start a new tradition

Every Christmas, Sophia’s Kitchen gives away generous bags of food to the poorest of Peoria. COVID-19 has seriously impacted our ability to source the food that we purchase to fill 600 of these 1,000 bags. This year, we’re not going to be able to purchase quantities of any foods.

We need help!

Canned food drives are needed more than ever this year. Hold one at your office, school or instead of a holiday party. All grocery items are welcome, except glass. Think healthy with low sodium, fat and sugar. Small sizes are best.

Donations can be dropped off Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 3 PM at 103 S Richard Pryor Place.

Items needed for baskets

- Canned fruits & Vegetables
- Tomato paste & diced
- Spaghetti sauce
- Cinnamon, oregano, basil, pepper
- Brown rice
- Whole grain cereals and pasta
- Low sodium soups
- Nuts
- Tampons, toothbrush, band aids
- Toilet Paper
- Cleaning supplies: Comet, SOS pads, laundry soap, Spic and Span
- Coffee creamer
- Soap, bar and liquid

Faith In Action

St Mary's of Kickapoo haven't been able to serve at Sophia's Kitchen this year, and we are missing each other!



Since they can't serve in person, the students are showing their faith by making decorations to go into our Thanksgiving meal carry-out bags.

Hello?



We start each shift with announcements and prayers, and during that time, I don't answer the phone. As we bowed our heads, I heard the phone ringing.

The voice mail was very hard to hear. A very far away voice with an accent pleaded, "Hello? Hello? Is anyone there? I need you!"

I hit redial. It went directly to the message system. I'm here, I can help you, please call me back, I told them.

A few minutes later, a very perplexed man called. "You said you could help? I don't know what to do. We're out of food." His voice broke.

I explained our program, and encouraged him to come to the food pantry for a bag of groceries and more information about other programs too.

He thanked me, and paused. "Why did you call me? I know your message said you were returning our call, but we never called you! We were just sitting there trying to figure out what to do when the phone blinked that we had a voice mail."

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Isaiah 41:10

Joan Chambers

We lost a friend recently.

Joan Chambers was very dear to the Friday morning team. She made sure everyone had a sweet in their lunch. Her quick wit had us laughing all the time. She last was able to serve in March. In her nine years of service, she put in over

1,300 hours and we enjoyed every one of them. We were so blessed to have known this delightful lady!

*Eternal rest grant unto her,
and may perpetual light
shine upon her.*



Sophia's Kitchen

Sophia's Kitchen is currently studying the ductwork in the building. At about 50 years old, the soft, fiberglass ducts have outlived their usefulness and are breaking down. Bids are being gathered to replace them with studier, cleanable ductwork. At this point, we know this is necessary for everyone's health, and will run about \$20,000.

That's a daunting amount for our mission. Can you help?

Donate on-line at CatholicPeoria.com or Mail donations to:

Sophia's Kitchen Duct Work
c/o Sacred Heart Church
504 Fulton Street
Peoria, IL 61602



In the Spirit of Saint Francis and true to the foundation began by the Friars Minor, Sophia's Kitchen is an outreach of Sacred Heart Parish.

All donations are tax deductible and are used exclusive to for the needs of this ministry to the hungry of Peoria.

Contact us
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Mission Statement

As a mission of the Heart of Peoria Catholic Community, Sophia's Kitchen believes in providing nourishment to those most in need through food for the day, support for their health needs and spiritual guidance for their everlasting souls.

Almighty Father, help us love and serve those who are hungry. Use us to feed their souls and bodies, in accordance with the teachings of God's Holy Church. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen

