



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

# Notes From the Kitchen

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Summer 2020

## Did you know?

- 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, thanks to the Peoria Humane Society.

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## Coping with COVID 19

Our summer looks much different from what we had expected. The dining room is quiet. Many volunteers are continuing to shelter in place. Celebrations for our 10 year anniversary have been cancelled.

We're not letting that stop us at Sophia's Kitchen! As long as there are hungry people, we will find a way to serve them.

During the Shelter in Place Order, the Little Free Pantry proved to be the biggest blessing. Thanks to many kind

people, it was constantly filled throughout the day. In this way, no one had contact, but food was always available.

As restrictions eased, a few volunteers came to pack bags of groceries, and we held pantries on Thursdays.



When we reopened, Peoria Notre Dame students stepped forward to fill the spots left empty

by our vulnerable volunteers. One entire shift is all students with just two adult volunteers. These students have been a blessing!

Today, we continue to keep our dining room closed for safety, but harkening back to our origins, we give a sack lunch to anyone who comes to our door. In June, we served 3,900 hungry souls, and gave away more than 400 bags of groceries for them to take home.

Thank you to the many who have made sure we can keep this mission open!

## From Claire's Desk...

A few months after we opened in 2010, a group of ladies from Creve Coeur joined our Friday morning volunteers. These lovely ladies helped shape the program, with wisdom, joy and kindness. They filled the morning with laughter.

Sadly, Mary Schultz died on June 26. At 94 years old, she was our oldest volunteer. She last served in December. Together with her friends, she made sure no one went away hungry. She is so missed, but we'll honor her memory with great

soup, served with her favorite ladle.



### Golden Sandwich Award



COVID –19 can't stop us from celebrating our volunteers! The Appreciation Dinner had to be canceled, so we got creative instead. Since we weren't held to time constraints of a 10 minute speech, we were able to praise every single volunteer in our Book of Heroes. After all, Sophia's Kitchen functions because of every person!

The Golden Sandwich Award went this year to Steve White. A self starter, Steve is quick each shift to figure out what needs to be done and joyfully make sure the day goes smoothly.

We also honored Scott Boerke and Joe Weitekamp. A shift end doesn't stop these two from serving. They are quick to help out in so many more ways to help Sophia's Kitchen. Thank you both for your dedication!

*Recipe*  *Title:* **Chicken Stew**  
*Sr. Merlinda*

In a large pot, brown diced chicken in oil. Sauté chopped onion, followed by diced mushrooms. Add red and green pepper strips. Season with cayenne pepper flakes, Nature's Seasoning, salt, pepper and season salt. Add broth or water and sour cream.

*Measurements depend on what God gives you, both people to feed and ingredients.*



a delicious holiday



### A Joyful Noise



Tuesday afternoon crew with Sr. Merlinda

We've been blessed this summer with 70 student volunteers! These teens have made sandwiches, taken out garbage, washed dishes, served guests, and diced and chopped their way through the hot summer days.

They have filled the kitchen with energy, laughter and singing. From now on, we might require all our dishwashers to also perform

show tunes! The sprayer makes a great microphone!

Seminarian Patrick and volunteer Jane have taken advantage of quiet times to hold impromptu Bible studies with the kids, leading to some interesting discussions.

Sophia's Kitchen is grateful for all their help, especially since so many adult volunteers needed to step away due to COVID-19

## The air we breathe

Every effort is being made to keep Sophia's Kitchen sanitary during the pandemic. In addition to our daily cleaning routines, we will be adding an air cleaner to our HVAC system.

This unit will kill molds, bacteria and viruses, and

reduce allergens, odors and airborne particles.

By keeping the air we breathe cleaner, we hope to further reduce the possibility of catching many illnesses, including the flu and the coronaviruses.

Donations to help fund this project can be sent to:

Sophia's Kitchen  
c/o Sacred Heart Church  
504 Fulton St  
Peoria IL 61602



We have been blessed with mask donations from many talented sewists. Masks help prevent the spread of disease and are required for both our volunteers and guests. With the help of these beautiful creations, we are all getting used to this new situation.

## Masks

Our guests are grateful for the help, as they need them to also ride the bus and enter stores.

However, the homeless have no place to launder a mask, so donations of disposable masks are also needed! Could you help us fund this need?

## Little Free Pantry

The Little Free Pantry is such a blessing to those who can't come during our regular serve hours, and also was a life saver during the shut down. It's the size of a kitchen cabinet, so holds a great amount of food. We welcome donations, especially on holidays and weekends. Pop top cans are great for the homeless, who might not have a can opener. All non-perishable foods are welcome.



Items always needed for the Little Free Pantry

- Low sodium soups
- Fruit
- Fruit leather
- Beef jerky
- Vienna sausages
- Peanut butter crackers
- Power bars
- Cereal
- Deodorant
- Hotel sized soaps/shampoo
- Pudding cups
- Water bottles
- Rice
- Instant potatoes



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.

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Sr. Merlinda Marco  
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[CatholicPeoria.Com](http://CatholicPeoria.Com)

## Sophia's Kitchen is in need of volunteers

Help is needed on several shifts, for a once weekly, 4 hour shift. It's great to do with a friend, so apply together! For more information & to fill out a volunteer application, visit [www.CatholicPeoria.com](http://www.CatholicPeoria.com)

Donate on-line at [CatholicPeoria.com](http://CatholicPeoria.com) or Mail donations to:

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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

