



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

Notes From the Kitchen

Lent 2021

Did you know?

- Sophia's Kitchen is a mission of St. Joseph Catholic Church.
- We feed 300 to 500 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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Lenten Journey

It feels like it has been Lent since 2020, doesn't it? It was a bit of a challenge to safely complete our mission during this COVID season, but the volunteers of Sophia's Kitchen have simply been angels doing God's work!

The ingenuity and creativity of our volunteers as they care for our neighbors has been heart warming. They have pulled together to create safe ways to offer food at pantries as they make sure no one goes home hungry.

Our window servers face the virus head on, armed with sanitizer and face masks. They kindly continue to feed the most desperate and hungry souls who still must venture out.

We've learn to work with other agencies. Emails and zoom meetings keep us in touch as we cooperate to help those who are homebound. We've made sure those in quarantine, the elderly and homebound have bags of groceries and know people still care.

With vaccines becoming available, relief and hope fill the air again. We're

proud to say that no one caught the virus while working at Sophia's Kitchen. Our sanitation, masks and air purifier, along with all your prayers, have kept us safe.

We're still dreaming of the days when students can return to help us, and our dining room is filled with guests again. In this longest Lenten Journey, hopefully we've learned patience as we work to create better days.

As you turn towards Christ in your preparations for Easter, include our guests in your prayers. There's no better gift you could give them!

From Claire's Desk...

Friends,
We had a frank discussion about the budget this last week. COVID has made a muddle of all things, and donations have been one of them. Throughout this last year, I have been touched by your kindness as I know each of you

have been affected in big ways and in small by this pandemic.

We missed doing fundraisers that we had counted on, and small group meetings and speeches didn't happen. We've made adjustments, but the bottom line is

looking a bit "rusty".

Will we be ok? Fr. Larry told me when we began that God would provide everything we needed, and of all that has happened, that is the one true thing I know.

God is Good
ALL THE TIME!

Alms for the Poor



Turn your sacrifices into a blessing! When you give up something for Lent, put the money you would have spent on it into a Lenten Lunch Box. This money will be used to fund the needs of Sophia's Kitchen. It will purchase lunch bags, food for the lunches and more. Your sacrifice nourish the hungriest of your neighbors.

Sophia's Kitchen continues to feed hundreds of souls each weekday, and we need your help supporting this mission!

Lenten Lunch Boxes are available at St. Joseph, St. Bernard's Sacred Heart, St. Mary's Cathedral and Sophia's Kitchen. Return them to the churches or kitchen after Easter.

My Family's Green Bean Casserole is Better Than Yours!

Roxy Baker—Volunteer/cook



- 4 cans French cut green beans, well drained
- One stick of butter, plus 1 tablespoon melted
- One medium onion, chopped
- Copious amounts of black pepper, approximately 1 tbsp.
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1-16 oz. Prairie Farms French onion dip (you can use another dip, but it won't be as yummy!)
- 1/4 c flour
- 3 cups cornflakes, crushed
- 2 cups freshly grated Swiss cheese

Melt one stick of butter in large skillet, add chopped onion and black pepper and sweat onions until translucent on medium heat, approximately 5 minutes.

Add sugar and flour and stir frequently, cook for 3 to 5 minutes.

Add French onion dip and stir to combine. Continue to cook on medium to medium/low heat for another 3 to 5 minutes and stir frequently.

Remove from heat and put the mixture in a casserole dish and top with the funky awesomeness that is the grated Swiss cheese (use the food processor...it is easier to grate that way!)

Crush up cornflakes and add the 1 tbsp of melted butter and mix to coat. Cover the cheese with the cornflake mixture...hide that cheese!

Pop casserole, uncovered, in a preheated 350 degree oven for 20 to 30 minutes. When it is done, the top will be golden with some of the cheese bubbling up through the cornflakes. Dig in and don't worry about the calories...

Cooks note: I will never forget the first time I encountered green bean casserole at a potluck...boy was I surprised at how different it was than what I had grown up with! I felt bad for the rest of the world, because my family's version is ooey, gooey, cheesy, with a buttery crunchy top crust...it is truly decadent and I only make it for very special occasions!

Faith In Action

Blessed Sacrament School in Morton surely does know how to share the blessings! The students collected food during Catholic Schools



Week, allowing Sophia's Kitchen the grace to provide 136 bags of groceries to families just before the deep freeze, keeping everyone warm and fed.

Easter Egg Messages

Let's brighten someone's day!

We've enclosed an Easter Egg for you to return to Sophia's Kitchen with your donation.

Write an uplifting message or color a beautiful design. Get creative!

We'll enclose these notes of encouragement in the lunch sacks Easter week.



Need some inspiration?

God is with you, wherever you wander.

Remember that He will never forsake you.

"I have set my angels to guard your path."

Be blessed!

Thank you for sharing God's unconditional love!

Food Pantry Friday

We love the healthy donations you give for Food Pantry Fridays. Whole grains, low sodium and low sugar products help to improve the diet of those we serve. The better nutrition we offer gives our guests the opportunity to care for themselves in a healthier way. How wonderful that we can offer prevention treatment for health issues

like diabetes and high blood pressure by sharing the healthiest of foods!

We asked our guests what they like to get in the pantry, and the top answers were fruit, grits and any can with a pop top. One guest answered, "Anything! We appreciate EVERYTHING you give us! It helps so much!"

Pantry Items

- Canned fruits & Vegetables
- Tomato paste & diced
- Spaghetti sauce
- Cinnamon, oregano, basil, pepper
- Brown rice and grits
- 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

Sophia's Kitchen



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 exclusively for the needs of this ministry to the hungry of Peoria.

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Sophia's Kitchen is often asked if there is anything we need at the store. We are always happy to accept lemonade mix, plastic spoons and forks (we don't use knives), aluminum foil, lunch size napkins, garlic powder and pepper. Sr. Merlinda says to bring onions too! (dried flakes or fresh)

These donations can be dropped off at the kitchen at
103 Richard Pryor Place
Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 3 PM.

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

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

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

