

# T H E O K L A H O M A C I T Y +CATHOLIC WORKER+

Volume X #2 The world will be saved by Beauty + January 2012

## Survival Strategies for Low Income People - Part 4

This is an on-going series. Parts 1-3 can be read online at <http://www.justpeace.org>

**22. Get ready for next winter RIGHT NOW!** The word is that the government plans to SLASH funding for LIHEAP, which helps poor people with their utility bills. Buy lots of blankets and quilts at thrift stores during the summer, when they tend to be cheaper than the winter. Get some plastic to cover your windows. If your winter heating bill is high, move somewhere else which has lower bills. You can call OGE and ONG and give them an address, and they can give you an estimate based on the past bills at that apartment or house as to how much you will probably have to pay. If you own your home, get on the City's program to weatherize and insulate your house. Call 232-0199 and ask for the "weatherization program" and get some help. If you rent, your landlord may also be able to qualify, so get him or her to call the program and see what they can do. Do not delay, everything always takes longer and costs more. Don't wait until next December and find yourself shivering in the dark. This is a real threat to low income people, and it is coming at us right now.

**23. Get ready for this coming summer RIGHT NOW!** Global climate instability is a reality, and Oklahoma summers are getting hotter all the time. Buy some of those cheap auto sun shades and duct tape them together, and hang them over the outside of your windows and doors that are sunny. Plant climbing vines like morning glories to grow up the sunny sides of your houses – shade is your friend!

**24. Get ready to plant a garden RIGHT NOW!** We will try to provide seeds if you will use them, so when you call for your March food delivery, ask for seeds and tell us what you want to grow. Even if you live in an apartment, you could grow some tomatoes or herbs in pots. The weird weather this winter is interfering with the big vegetable farms, so prices will be sky high this summer.

**25. Get ready for food prices to double RIGHT NOW!** This is the word on the street these days. Be very careful with your food stamps, plan every meal, be as frugal as you can, so you can stock up on things like beans and canned goods that keep well. Stop buying trashy low class junk food that makes you sick and contributes to diabetes and heart disease, and make your own treats at home. Use recipes, ask neighbors.

**26. Enjoy your local library!** Your library has free books, free internet access, free magazines, free classes, lots of important things for you to learn and do. Take your kids to the library, check out books, read out loud to them when you bring them home.

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### WISDOM FOR LIVING

Make a friend when you don't need one. . . *Make do with what you have.* . . Make the most of every situation. . . *Make haste slowly.* . . Humanity is made by its beliefs, as you believe, so you will be. . . *Tomorrow is the busiest day of the week.* . . Many hands make light work. . . *Measure twice, cut once.* . . Bother the bull and you will get the horns. . . *Mistakes are doorways to discovery.* . . Most people are about as happy as they make their minds up to be. . . *Nature is the art of God.* . . Necessity is a great teacher. . . *Neglect mending a small fault, and it will soon become a large one.* . . Never bet your money on another man's game. . . *Never cut what can be untied.* . . Never change horses in mid-stream. . . *Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.* . . Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today. . . *Don't spend your money before you have it.* . . Don't spend your time with people who don't respect you. . . *Don't trouble trouble until trouble troubles you.* . . No act of kindness is ever wasted. . . *No clock is more regular than the belly.* . . No pain, no gain. . . *No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.* . . Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. . . *Once bitten, twice shy.* . . One enemy is too many, and a hundred friends is too few.

**How to Cook Cabbage.** . . Cut the cabbage into small and medium pieces. Slice some onions. Put the onions and cabbage in a pot. Add some oil or butter, salt and pepper. If you like things hot, add some crushed red pepper. Cook over medium heat, stirring oven, until the cabbage and onions are cooked. This will be about 10-15 minutes, depending on the heat of the burner. Enjoy!

**How to Cook Zucchini and Onions.** . . Slice a zucchini (or yellow squash, or both) down the middle, and then slice each half into small slices. Slice the onion. Put the zucchini and onions into a skillet, add some oil. Salt and pepper to taste. One tasty addition is to first fry some chopped bacon bits, remove the bacon, cook the squash and onions in the bacon fat, add the bacon bits back before serving. If you like things hot, add some sliced jalapeno peppers or some crushed red pepper.

**Ways to cook carrots...**Bake covered in oven with broth... Simmer in top of stove with broth & butter... Shred and saute, add to spaghetti sauce... Bake with a roast or chicken... Dice or shred and add to soups.

## Wisdom of Romero

*Oscar Romero was the Archbishop of San Salvador in Central America. In 1980, his own government assassinated him because he defended the poor against those who attacked and killed them when they stood up for their rights.*

Peoples are free to choose the political system they want but not free to do whatever they feel like. They will have to be judged by God's justice in the political or social system they choose.

God is the judge of all social systems. Neither the gospel nor the church can be monopolized by any political or social movement.

The present form of the world passes away, and there remains only the joy of having used this world to establish God's rule here. All pomp, all triumphs, all selfish capitalism, all the false successes of life will pass with the world's form. All of that passes away. What does not pass away is love. When one has turned money, property, work in one's calling into service of others, then the joy of sharing & the feeling that all are one's family does not pass away. In the evening of life you will be judged on love.

No one can serve two lords. There is only one God, and that God will either be the true one, who asks us to give things up when they become sin, or it will be the god of money, who makes us turn our back on Christianity's God.

To try to preach without referring to the history one preaches in is not to preach the gospel. Many would like a preaching so spiritualized that it leaves sinners unbothered and does not term idolaters, those who kneel before money and power. A preaching that says nothing about the sinful environment in which the gospel is reflected upon is not the gospel.

## Works of Justice and Peace

*A statement of the mission and purpose of the Oscar Romero Catholic Worker House*

**+LIVE** simply and justly in solidarity with the poor and marginalized and be a good neighbor. Make no war on them, rather, be one with them in spirit, truth, and love.

**+HEAR** the truth when it is spoken to you. Discern the signs of the times and speak truth -- to power, to the people, and to the Church.

**+MAKE** injustice visible -- witness, remember, teach, proclaim, tell. Light candles, do not curse the darkness.

**+PROTECT** the poor and powerless-- listen, learn, educate, organize, empower participation, and respect life from the moment of conception to the time of natural death.

**+WORK** for reconciliation with truth, evangelism, catechesis, orthopraxis.

**+CELEBRATE** life, goodness, beauty, virtue, responsibility, & joy. Practice peace, non-violence, servant leadership, harmony, community, voluntary cooperation, & the proper stewardship of God's creation. Pray without ceasing.

**+ ENSURE** fair distribution, subsidiarity, economic opportunity, justice, and food security for everyone everywhere. RMW 1998

For more great low-carbohydrate recipes like these, visit <http://www.genaw.com/lowcarb/index.html> .

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## Catholic Worker Help Line – 405-557-0436

Info needed for deliveries: Name, address, zip code, phone, & number of adults and children. **The next delivery is March 26<sup>th</sup>. The next delivery for Wesley Village, Towers, Bell Air, Charles Atkins, Temple Gardens is March 19<sup>th</sup>. We do not deliver in MWC, Del City, Yukon, Mustang, Moore, Edmond or east of Bryant in OKC.**

## EASY VERY TASTY BROCCOLI & CAULIFLOWER

Chop broccoli and cauliflower into small pieces. Put in a microwave safe bowl, add about 3 tablespoons of water, cover, microwave on high for about 10-15 minutes. Stir. Add 4 tablespoons of cream cheese, 3 tablespoons of cream, and a half cup of shredded cheese. Stir until the cheese melts and combines. Salt and pepper to taste. Or serve plain without the cheese sauce, dab it with butter.

## BROCCOLI MUSHROOM CASSEROLE

2 16-ounce bags frozen broccoli cuts, cooked, drained  
4 ounce can mushrooms, drained

1/2 medium onion, chopped

2 stalks celery, minced                      2 tbspn butter

1/4 cup mayonnaise                          1/2 teaspoon salt

8 oz cheese, shredded                      1/2 teaspoon pepper

1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Sauté the onion, celery and mushrooms in butter until soft using the same pot that the broccoli was cooked in. Mix all of the ingredients in a greased 2-quart casserole. Bake at 350° 30 minutes. Serves 8-12.

## RED ENCHILADA SKILLET DINNER

1 1/2 lbs ground beef                      1 onion, chopped

2/3 cup Enchilada Sauce                      2 tomatoes, diced

8 green onions, chopped                      4 oz cheese, shredded

Chopped fresh cilantro, optional

In a large skillet, brown the meat with the onion; drain the grease. Stir in the enchilada sauce, tomato and green onions. Bring to boil; simmer 5 minutes. Add salt, if needed. Sprinkle with the cheese, cook over low heat until the cheese is melted. Add cilantro, if using. Can be served over chopped lettuce and topped with sour cream. Makes 4-6 servings

## SLOPPY JOE CASSEROLE

1 1/2 lbs ground beef                      1 clove garlic, minced

2 1/2 ounces onion, chopped                      2 stalks celery, chopped

1/2 cup tomato sauce                          1 tbspn vinegar

2 teaspoons granular Splenda                      1 tsp mustard

1 tbspn Worcestershire sauce                      1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper                          4 medium zucchini

8 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded

Brown the hamburger, onion, celery and garlic; drain the fat. Add the remaining ingredients. Simmer, covered, about 10-20 minutes. Meanwhile, slice the zucchini in half lengthwise, then cut into 1/2" thick, half moons. Cook until tender, but not too soft; drain well. Mix the meat mixture, zucchini and cheese in a large casserole; add salt and pepper to taste. Microwave until hot and bubbly, stirring occasionally. Serves 6-8.

# How to Grow Some of Your Own Food

*Gardening is like finding money growing in your back yard! Everyone should have a garden. The best eatin' vegetables are those grown close to home.*

## Gardening is less work than most people think.

**Compost: Because a rind is a terrible thing to waste.** *Compost is the best natural fertilizer for your plants. Here's how to make it:*

**Select a place for a compost pile, and dig the ground up a bit.** Put down a layer of twigs and small branches, and make alternating layers of "brown and dry" materials and "green and wet" materials. "Brown and dry" is dried leaves, shredded tree limbs and bark, newspapers (no shiny slick papers or colored inks), brown cardboard, dried grass clippings etc. Green and wet includes kitchen scraps, green lawn trimmings, green leaves, flowers, coffee grounds, tea bags, weeds, plants, etc. It's best not to put fats or meats in the pile. Wet each layer thoroughly, and toss a shovel of soil on each layer and a couple of small branches. Pile it up about 3 feet high and 3 feet wide. Water it so it stays damp (like a wrung out sponge). You can compost in a container, like a large trash can. Poke some holes in the side of the container to make sure air can get in. Or put some posts in the ground and surround them with chicken wire and compost inside that.

**Wait two weeks, and then "turn it".** Use a pitchfork or shovel and move the compost to a different spot right next to the old spot, so that the outside of the old pile is on the inside of the new pile. During this time, the pile will heat up a bit. If it doesn't, add more "wet and green" and make sure you keep it damp like a wrung-out sponge. If you are composting in a large container like a trash can, simply dump it out and then shovel everything back in, making sure you mix it up. If you are using an enclosure made of chicken wire, move the posts and chicken wire, then pitch the compost into the enclosure. After turning it the 1<sup>st</sup> time, turn it every week or so. If you are in a rush, turn it 2 or 3 times/week. If you turn it often, you can make compost in as little as 3-4 weeks.

**If the compost pile starts to smell bad,** something's wrong – probably too much "wet and green" or it has somehow gotten so compacted that air can't get in. For the problem of too much wet & green, add more brown & dry. If the pile is compacted, turn it and add some small branches (the purpose of the branches is to keep the pile from compacting and to help air circulate).

If you dig into the pile, you will find lots of little creatures at work, roly pollies, worms, etc. That's good, because that's what's supposed to happen. **You'll know the compost is finished** when its parts are completely broken down, dark brown color, and smells earthy, like the floor of a forest.

### Useful Perennial Edible Garden Plants

If you own your house, or expect to be at your location for some time, plant edible perennials. Perennial plants are very helpful to gardeners, because you only plant them once. Each year they come up without further work, & yield a harvest to benefit the gardener. These plants are beautiful! Start with herbs and move on to fruits & nuts & berries (put the herbs close to the door closest to your kitchen). There are many semi dwarf & dwarf varieties of fruit trees that are suitable for small spaces. Blackberries, grapes, blueberries, strawberries, dewberries, boysenberries, & raspberries provide lots of eating & not much work.

An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered; an adventure is an inconvenience rightly considered." Chesterton

### Easy Perennial Vegetables

Asparagus, Rhubarb, Dandelions, Bamboo, Egyptian Onions, Day Lilies, Jerusalem artichokes, Chives. Yes, you can eat the dandelions that grow on your lawn.

### Essential perennial kitchen herbs:

Rosemary, Thyme, Winter savory, Sage, Chives, Garlic Chives, Horseradish, Catnip, Oregano, Lovage, Lemon balm, Mints (many kinds). *Any lemon-scented herb (like lemon balm) is a good insect repellent. Simply crush the leaves and rub on your skin.*

### Perennial Tea Plants

Make refreshing home-made teas from mints (all kinds), lemon balm, bee balm, lavender, lemon verbena, chamomile, stevia.

### Edible flowers (ONLY the flower petals):

Day lily, violet, nasturtium, rose, bee balm, borage, calendula, carnation, chives, chrysanthemums, dandelions, cornflower, gardenia, gladiolus, hibiscus, hollyhock, honeysuckle, lemon verbena, lilacs, pansies, primrose.

### Bob Waldrop's Notes on Square Foot Gardening:

*The Easy/Less Work Method for Beginning Gardeners*

We start small or we don't start at all. Don't plow up your entire back yard for your first year's garden. Start small – AND don't plow or till, ever. Build your soil up rather than dig down. Let the worms till your soil. If the area is covered by grass, remove the sod first. Then lay down two layers of cardboard, and build the garden bed on top of that. The cardboard helps to keep the grass from coming back up amongst your veggies.

Put your garden in a place that gets 6-8 hours of sunshine each day, as near to the door closest to your kitchen as possible. Instead of rows, think "squares" – 4 ft x 4 ft. You could make it longer, like 4 ft x 8 ft, but it should never be wider than 4 ft. You can go smaller, like 2 ft x 8 ft. If you have more than one square, leave an aisle at least 3 ft or so between them so you have room to work.

Make a frame for the garden bed about 6-8 inches high, and 4 ft x 4 ft square. Make it out of lumber, rocks, bricks, sheet metal, whatever you have laying around. Don't use treated wood or railroad ties; a good place to find free wood is at construction sites. All you need is something to hold the planting mix in the bed.

Fill this bed with 6 inches of "Bob's Cheap as Dirt Mix" – 1/3 soil, 1/3 straw (or shredded leaves or grass clippings), 1/3 compost. You can buy some compost if yours isn't ready, it's cheap at stores. If you have some extra potting mix, add that too.

Each 4 ft x 4 ft bed has 16 "squares", each square is 1 ft x 1 ft. When you plant, organize the plants by those one foot squares, and use the plant spacings recommended below. It will help if you use string or tape or rope or two pieces of marked wood so you can see the squares in your bed as you plant. If you have an old venetian blind, you can take it apart and use tape to make a grid, sort of like a checkerboard. If your bed is 4 x 4 ft square, then you have 16 "squares" in which you can plant something.

Do not walk on your beds, that's why they are never more than 4 ft wide. Stand, kneel or sit beside them and lean over to plant, weed, and harvest. Plant a variety of seeds

or plants in the bed. The rule of thumb for spacing is: If the seed packet recommends that the plant spacing be 12 inches apart within the rows, plant one plant per square foot. If 6 inch spacing; 4 per square foot. If 4 inch spacing; 9 per square foot. If 3 inch spacing; 16 per square foot.

As your plants sprout, when they are 3-4 inches high spread some mulch around them to cover the soil and conserve water. Water them by hand using a cup or dipper, with sun-warmed water. Harvest as your food ripens and enjoy. Pull out the old plant and add some more compost and plant something else!

### **Vertical growing.**

Plants can be grown vertically in square foot gardening beds. Grow vine tomatoes 1 plant per square foot, and plant four of them in a row along one edge of a bed, so they don't shade the rest of the plants. Make a trellis by putting 6' fence posts at either end, and then put a 1 X 2" or other pole across the top. Use welded wire or a net or rope and train the tomatoes as they grow to go up the trellis. Bush type tomatoes don't use a trellis, and can be planted as close as 2/square foot. Zucchini and yellow squash can also be grown on a trellis. Plant beans/peas with corn or sunflowers so they grow up the stalks.

### **Typical Square Foot Garden Plant Spacings**

16 per square foot:	radishes, onions, carrots
9 per square foot:	bush beans, spinach
8 per square foot:	pole beans and peas (on trellis)
4 per square foot:	celery, chard, corn, garlic, lettuce,
2 per square foot:	cucumbers (on trellis)
1 per 2 square feet:	winter squash
1 per square foot:	cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, peppers, potatoes,
	eggplant, okra, summer squash (grow summer squash
	vertically), tomatoes (in a row of 4 squares, on a trellis)

### **Container Gardening for Beginners**

Don't have a lawn? Don't despair, almost anything edible you can grow in the ground, you can grow in a container. It is a cheap way to garden! Grow in a sunny window, on a deck, on a driveway or sidewalk.

**Containers:** Use whatever you have or can find. Buckets, totes, bins, use your imagination as long as they are at least 6-8 inches deep. Poke a few holes in the bottom for drainage, fill with potting soil, voila, a place to grow veggies. 6-8 inches is a minimum, for larger plants like tomatoes, a larger container (like a 5 gallon bucket) helps. If the container is smaller, it will take more care and need watering more often. Scatter a half dozen crushed egg shells in the bottom of the container. Don't put rocks in the bottom, they often inhibit drainage.

**Watering:** Watering too much, or too little, is a common mistake. You will need to water container veggies more often than plants in the ground, but you don't want to drown your plants either. Stick a finger about an inch into the potting mix, and if it feels dry, water. Make sure the pot drains well, and set it on something to catch any water draining out, unless your containers are outside. Note that in the high heat of summer, you will likely have to water every day. Water until you see water coming out the drain holes. The larger the container, the less often you have to water. While you generally pour the water on top of the mulch, every once and a while give the plants themselves a nice spray, especially if they look dusty or its been hot. If the plants are outside in the summer, water in the morning or evening, not during the heat of the day.

**Soil:** The best choice for container gardening is potting soil, buy the "value priced" bags. If you can't afford

potting mix, make some Bob's Cheap as Dirt Mix and use that, mix it half and half with compost. Or simply fill a container with compost. Once your plants are going, mulch the top of the potting mix or soil with grass clippings or shredded leaves to help keep it from drying out. With deep containers, like buckets, I often fill it about 1/3 full with grass clippings and/or shredded leaves mixed with coffee grounds and tea bags, then I put my soil on top of that. At the end of the season, don't throw your potting mix away! Refresh it with new compost the following spring and use it again!

**Fertilizing:** If you buy a commercial potting mix, mix it about half and half with compost. Then feed the plant at least every week. Some ideas for fertilizing techniques include: Sprinkle coffee grounds underneath your container mulch, or add a half-pound can of coffee grounds to 5 gallons of water and use that to water your plants. Put a layer of compost under the mulch before you water. Mix some compost with water and use that. Fill your blender with water to about 2 inches from the top; add a cup of vegetable peelings mixed with coffee grounds, blend well, water plants with the mixture. When you are adding water mixed with compost or other fertilizer, pour the water on the top of the mulch, not on the plant leaves. Put crushed egg shells under the mulch..

**What should you grow?** Grow something you like to eat. Greens of all kinds are great in containers, most of them are "cut and come again" plants – that is, snip the leaves and then they grow back and you can snip them again and again. Swiss chard does that. Turnip greens are great in a pot. Collards love containers too, as do mustard and kale and all the lettuces and cabbage and they need less sun. Peas? Sure, put a stick in the middle of the pot so they can grow up the pot. Hot peppers? You bet, and if you bring the pots inside during the winter, they won't die, you can enjoy their greenery all winter and then have hot peppers early in the next spring. Tomatoes? Of course. Bush varieties like Roma are best for smaller containers, the vining varieties will need to be pruned to keep them under control. Plant greens thickly, and thin them as they get biggerdd the thinnings to soups or salads. Generally, if you are growing from seeds, plant several as not all seeds will germinate. Then thin the plants to however many you want in your container.

**Don't forget herbs!** Herbs are great for containers – thyme, rosemary, parsley, etc.

### **Some internet sources for more info:**

*Remember, you can access the internet for FREE at Oklahoma City Public Libraries, they can help you.*

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/containergardening/default.cfm>  
<http://www.squarefootgardening.org/>

### **Oklahoma Garden Guide**

<http://osufacts.okstate.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1092/HLA-6004web.pdf> – has planting dates for Oklahoma gardens. For a free copy mailed to your house, in Oklahoma County call 713-1125. They have staff and volunteers on hand during business hours to answer any gardening question you may have.

The Regional Food Bank's **Urban Harvest** program can provide expert advice, seeds, and plants to start **community gardens**. Call them in OKC at 604-7108. <http://www.regionalfoodbank.org/Programs/Urban-Harvest>

*We can complain that roses have thorns, or rejoice that thorn bushes have roses. . .*

*Time is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once.*