

THE OKLAHOMA CITY +CATHOLIC WORKER+

Volume IX #11 + The world will be saved by Beauty + November 2010

Survival Strategies for Low Income People - Part 2 of 3

This continues a three part series which began last month. Part 1 can be read online at
<http://www.justpeace.org/cathworkeroct2010.pdf>.

- 7. The borrower is the slave of the lender.** Pay day loans are bad for your financial health. Stay away from pawn shops unless you want to buy something for a cheap price. Beware even of student loans. Before you borrow money for training or education, make sure you will be able to get a job with the training.
- 8. Go car free.** Gasoline, repairs, insurance – a car can dollar and dime you to death. It is much cheaper to take the bus or take a taxi occasionally than to own a car. If you can't go car-free – walk, carpool, ride a bicycle, or take public transportation more – drive less. If you don't live in a good place to catch the bus, move to another location close to a bus line.
- 9. Take advantage of free stuff!** Instead of buying books or renting videos, go to the library. Look in the newspaper for free concerts and other fun things to do. Take your kids to the park for a picnic. Free is frugal!
- 10. Go to the extreme with energy conservation.** Protect yourself from energy price increases & shortages. Hang blankets and comforters over windows. If the sun doesn't shine through a window in the winter, put aluminum foil on the inside. When the sun shines in the winter, open the curtains and get free heat from the sun. Turn down your thermostat and dress for the season indoors – layer your clothing.
- 11. Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.** Don't let the perfect become the enemy of the good. Don't bite off more than you can chew. Do what is necessary; never do anything for only one reason. Every project should have more than one purpose. Often, the problem contains the solution.
- 12. Get involved!** Don't be a stranger. Get to know your neighbors. Join a church and attend it regularly. Join clubs and participate. If there aren't any clubs to join, start one. Have a game night and a potluck and invite the neighbors. Build a strong community, one friendship at a time.
- 13. Eat good food!** Eating well does not have to be expensive. Buy basic ingredients and make your meals “from scratch”, like your grandma did. Beans, ham hocks or bacon, and cornbread is cheap and pretty good eats. You can bake bread for less money than you can buy it at the store.
- 14. Stay out of convenience stores!** How much convenience do you really need? A convenience store is the worst place to buy anything except gasoline. Plan ahead and if you just won't make your own snacks, at least buy them at the grocery store where they are cheaper. It doesn't matter if you're paying with food stamps; if you are frittering away your food stamp allotment at the convenience store on junk, you are hurting your family.
- 15. Quit smoking.** One pack of cheap smokes per day is \$1,277 per year. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free help to quit smoking, including free nicotine patches to help with the withdrawal. Tobacco is not your friend; tobacco is an abusive partner that hurts you. Tobacco companies enslave you for their own financial benefit. Besides hurting you, tobacco smoke damages your kids and friends who inhale your second-hand smoke.

Continued next month!

WISDOM FOR LIVING

Bad is called good when worse happens. . . *Be careful what you ask for, you may get it.* . . Beauty without virtue is a flower without perfume. . . *Measure twice, cut once.* . . Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship. . . *Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the conquest of fear.* . . All that glitters is not gold. . . *Do not reinvent the flat tire.* . . Frugality is the wealth of the poor and the wisdom of the rich. . . *Experience is the mother of wisdom.* . . Failure is the path of least persistence. . . *A faint heart never won a fair lady.* . . Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is. . . *The froth is not the beer.* . . Give good and you will receive good. . . *God gave us music so that we could pray without words.* . . God gives us pecans but He doesn't crack them for us. . . *Good deeds are the best prayer.* . . Happy is as happy does. . . *He that is hard to please may get nothing in the end.* . .

3 MINUTE CHOCOLATE CAKE

1/4 cup flour	1 tablespoon cocoa
1/4 tsp baking powder	1 tablespoon water
3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sugar or Splenda	
2 tablespoons butter, melted	1 egg, beaten

Mix the flour, cocoa, baking powder and sweetener in a 2-cup glass measuring cup. Stir in the butter, water and egg. Mix well with a spoon or fork. Scrape batter down evenly with a rubber spatula. Cover with plastic wrap and vent by cutting a small slit in center. Microwave on HIGH 1 minute until set but still a little moist on top. Add another 20 seconds if not quite done. Cool slightly and serve warm topped with whipped cream or cool completely and frost as desired. Makes 2 servings

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.

Let us be today's Christians. Let us not take fright at the boldness of today's church. With Christ's light let us illuminate even the most hideous caverns of the human person: torture, jail, plunder, want, chronic illness. The oppressed must be saved, not with a revolutionary salvation in merely human fashion, but with the holy revolution of the Son of Man, who dies on the cross to cleanse God's image, which is soiled in today's humanity, a humanity so enslaved, so selfish, so sinful.

What good are beautiful highways and airports, beautiful buildings full of spacious apartments, if they are only put together with the blood of the poor, who are not going to enjoy them?

I denounce especially the absolutizing of wealth. This is a great evil: wealth, private property, as an untouchable absolute. Woe to the one who touches that high tension wire! It burns.

When we preach the Lord's word, we decry not only the injustices of the social order We decry every sin that is night, that is darkness: drunkenness, gluttony, lust, adultery, abortion, everything that is the reign of iniquity and sin. Let them all disappear from our society.

A religion of Sunday Mass but of unjust weeks does not please the Lord. A religion of much praying but with hypocrisy in the heart is not Christian. A church that sets itself up only to be well off, to have a lot of money and comfort, but that forgets to protest injustices, would not be the true church of our divine Redeemer.

It is not an advantage of great value to be well off on this earth by betraying Christ and his church. It is an advantage that is very cheap, one that is to be left behind with this life. It is terrible to hear from the lips of Christ: "Depart from me, wicked, accursed ones. I do not know you. I will be ashamed of whoever is ashamed of me."

Those who put their faith in the Risen One and work for a world more just, who protests against the injustices of the present system, against the abuses of unjust authorities, against the wrongfulness of humans exploiting humans, all those who begin their struggle with the resurrection of the great Liberator – they alone are authentic Christians.

POOR MAN'S CRAB CAKES

16-18 ounces canned chicken (or the equivalent in cooked chicken, taken off the bone)

1 1/2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning

2 tablespoons parsley and chives, chopped

2 tablespoons green onion tops, finely chopped

1/4 cup mayonnaise 1 egg

Pinch salt, optional Pinch pepper

1/4 cup oil

Break the chicken up into very small bits. Squeeze all of the moisture out of the meat. Mix all of the ingredients and shape in 4 patties. Cover with plastic wrap and chill at least 1 hour. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium heat. Fry the patties 4-5 minutes per side, flipping carefully, until golden brown on each side. Makes 2-4 servings

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

Oscar Romero Catholic Worker House

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www.justpeace.org | www.bettertimesinfo.org

www.energyconservationinfo.org

bobaganda.blogspot.com | www.bobwaldrop.net

Catholic Worker Help Line – 405-557-0436

Info needed for deliveries: Name, address, zip code, phone, & number of adults and children.

The next food delivery is Dec 18th for all locations including Wesley Village, Towers, Bell Air, Charles Atkins & Temple Gardens. We are unable to deliver in MWC, Del City, Yukon, Mustang, Edmond or east of Bryant in OKC. Dec delivery requests must be received by noon on Thursday, December 16th.

BACON WRAPPED HOT DOGS

Per serving:

1 hot dog 2/3 ounce chunk cheddar cheese **

1 slice bacon, thin sliced recommended

Split the hot dogs in half lengthwise but not all the way through. Open up flat. Cut each piece of cheese into 2 or 3 little sticks and insert into the slits as shown in the photo below. Take a strip of bacon and wrap it around a hot dog from one end to the other. Adjust the bacon so that it is evenly distributed along the length of the hot dog. Place them on a foil-lined baking sheet and broil on the top oven rack until the bacon is crisp. Watch them closely after the first couple of minutes so that the hot dogs don't burn.

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

Managing Winter Energy Bills

The days of cheap energy are gone. Plan now for more energy price increases.

Windows. Warmth always wants to move towards cold. Windows stop the wind, but they radiate heat to the outdoors. So insulate the windows with heavy curtains, blankets, or indoor shutters. Duct tape 2 or 3 mylar auto sunshades together (depending on the size and shape of the window), and then sandwich them between two blankets. Hang over the inside of the window. Several layers are better than one. You could hide the blankets and sun shades behind regular curtains. If the windows are leaky, use caulk and foam to seal cracks and holes. If the windows don't face south, staple plastic over them, inside and outside. Nail 1 x 2 strips of wood or some other cheap strips of wood, around the edges to better hold the plastic in place. Keep the windows covered whenever there is no light coming through them. If there is no light directly shining through the window, you are losing heat. Go the extra mile in covering up windows. This is easy to do and gives more benefit than most people realize. If you have the money, you can install new double pane, argon filled windows, but even if you do this, you will still benefit from interior insulating covers for your windows during the winter.

A Cheap Window Insulation Idea. Cut pieces of rigid board insulation and use them as indoor shutters. Thermax has aluminum foil on one side and some kind of plastic-like film on the other. A 4' x 8' sheet is about \$10 in OKC. Tape several sheets together at the edges with gorilla tape. Cut them so they fit snugly inside the window frame. 3/4 inch Thermax is R-5, so four sheets taped together would be R-20, which is as good as most conventional walls. After you gorilla tape them together, wrap them in aluminum foil to increase their fire safety. To make them more attractive. . . paint them, encase them in canvas or other cloth slip-covers, or apply contact paper to them. They are lightweight and easy to handle.

Free heat from the sun. South-facing windows get free heat whenever the sun shines through them. In the morning, when the sun strikes the windows, open curtains or shades. Increase the heat coming through the window by placing a reflector on the ground outside so that the light reflects back up to the window. The reflector should be the same size as a window. Cover a sheet of cardboard with aluminum foil and use it to reflect more light into your south facing windows. Don't cover south-facing windows with plastic, as that will cut down the amount of sunlight coming through the windows. You can get some free heat in the morning from east-facing windows, and in the afternoon from west facing windows, but put up your window curtains, shades, or shutters as soon as the sun stops shining directly through them. Most of your heat will come from your south-facing windows. If you have a south-facing door with a glass storm door over it, that will also collect free heat. See <http://www.builtitsolar.com/> for more ideas for free heat from the sun.

Bundle up your body! Dress for the season indoors. Wear several loose layers of clothes. Clean clothes keep you warm better than dirty clothes. Don't forget a hat, even when you are indoors and when you go to bed! Put blankets and quilts on sofas and chairs, so people can bundle up while they are sitting around. When you go outside, beware of wind and wet. Wet clothing loses its ability to insulate, and can suck heat right out of you. Stay out of the wind as much as possible. Heat less of your house. Organize things so you can live in fewer rooms. Where possible, heat only the area occupied by people, when people are there. Keep unused rooms closed and close any heating vents in those rooms. It is easier to keep a room warm when several people are inside it, than when there is only one.

Caulk and Weatherize. Do all the obvious places – windows, doors, but also think about less obvious places. If there is no insulation in your attic, you can do a lot of caulking up there. The rule of thumb for your attic is – anywhere in the floor of the attic that two pieces of wood come together, lay down a bead of caulk or use some insulating foam. Read *Insulate and Weatherise* from Taunton press, it is available at most public

libraries. Inside your house, use a burning incense stick to find places where air is infiltrating. When you find a little incoming breeze of cold air, plug up the hole with caulk, foam, insulation, whatever. Put heavy objects against outside walls, especially book cases and books. Hang layers of quilts and blankets on the inside of your exterior walls. Look for places to rent with lots of south facing windows and ask the landlord about insulation.

Recover Heat. Don't pour any heat down the drain! When you take a shower, put the stopper in the tub. Let the water cool before you drain it. Air dry your freshly-washed clothes inside the house. Don't pour hot cooking water down the drain, let it cool first. These practices will add humidity & heat to the inside of your house that would otherwise go down the drain or out into the cold back yard.

At Night. . . Turn the thermostat down or the heater off and pile on the blankets. Dress warmly for bed in sweat pants and shirt, socks, and maybe even a cap (depending on how cold it will get and how low you set the thermostat).

Floors. If you have bare floors, put down area rugs. You can layer these for even more insulating effect. Area rugs can also be placed on top of carpet to increase the insulating effect.

Food helps you keep warm. Eat good meals with lots of carbohydrates for fuel. Winter is a great time for warming and nourishing soups and casseroles. Drink plenty of fluids.

Hot Water. Use less of it by installing low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators. This can cut your hot water requirements as much as 50%, saving 14,000 gallons of hot water/year/family of 4. Low flow showerheads go for as little as \$10 at a home supply store and they are easy to install yourself. Insulate the hot water tank with a special "jacket" made for the purpose (typically \$10-20 at home supply stores), or wrap it with insulating materials. Do not cover the top or the bottom, the thermostat or the burner compartment of the tank. Lower the temperature on the water heater to 120 degrees or less. Take quick showers, not baths. **A simple solar heater:** paint a 5 gallon plastic bucket with a tight fitting lid black. Fill it with water, put the lid on tight, set it in the sunlight for a few hours.

Lights. Your grandfather was right: Turn off the lights when you're not using them. Compact fluorescent bulbs work in regular light fixtures, last longer and use much less energy. They cost more, but they use 75% less energy than regular bulbs & last for 1000s of hours. Use less electrical lighting during the day when natural light is available.

Washing Clothes. Wash clothes in cold water. Wait until you have a full load, don't do small loads. Instead of using the dryer, air dry your clothes. Get some racks to use for indoor clothes drying when its raining or too cold outside. **Dishwasher.** The best thing to do with your dishwasher is disconnect it and sell it to somebody else. Washing dishes by hand should be a family affair -- when many hands pitch in, the work is less tedious and gets done faster. At minimum, don't use the heat dry cycle.

Small batteries. Avoid spending money for small batteries. For \$30 or less, you can get a solar powered battery charger and some rechargeable batteries, and go solar. Or you could use a charger that runs on household current. Small batteries are expensive -- the fewer you have to buy, the more money you have for other things. A good source for inexpensive (about \$15) solar-powered small battery chargers is <http://www.ccrane.com/more-categories/batteries-chargers/solar-powered-battery-charger.aspx> .

Gadgets and Ghost Loads. Many modern appliances and gadgets have "ghost loads" -- they use power all the time, even when you think they're "off". Instead of wasting power, plug them into an extension cord or power strip that has an on-off switch. Use the switch to turn it off and on. Be wary of bringing more electrical gadgets into your house and scrutinize what you already have. Do you really need all that stuff? Never use the television for "background noise" while you do something else; a radio consumes less power. **Computers.** Don't leave your computer equipment on 24/7. It is a myth that turning computers on and off is hard on your computer.

Keeping warm in a winter weather emergency

For when there is no electricity or natural gas due to a utility shut-off or natural or man-made disaster.

The time to build the cellar is before the tornado hits.

Don't wait for a winter emergency to decide what to do. Plan now and get things together before the power fails. Useful items include: extra blankets and towels, candles, flashlights and batteries, matches, battery powered radio, propane camp cooking stove, propane or kerosene heater, extra fuel, aluminum foil, extra food, hats and gloves, power inverter, marine battery or extra car battery, battery charger, buckets with tight-fitting lids, 2 liter bottles filled with water. If power failure is likely, keep your house warmer than usual to store heat in the structure of your home and its contents.

First, bundle up your body! Wear several loose layers of clothes. Don't forget a hat, even when you are indoors! If you must go outside, beware of wind and wet. Keep dry. Wet clothing loses its ability to insulate, and can suck heat right out of you. Stay out of the wind as much as possible. Make sure your head, hands, and feet are protected. Clean clothes keep you warm better than dirty clothes.

Don't try to heat the entire house. Gather everybody into 1 or 2 rooms and don't forget your pets. Close doors and hang blankets over doorways. Use plastic sheets, blankets, quilts, aluminum foil & newspapers over windows. More window insulation is better than less! Look for leaks and drafts and use cloth, newspapers, caulk, or weatherstripping to close them. Insulate floors with blankets, newspapers, and rugs. Neighbors can gather together in one house or apartment. Each human body radiates about the same heat as a 100 watt light bulb. We're all familiar with the way a crowded room gets warm, so put that to work for you to stay warm.

Safety first! If you use an open flame heater to keep warm, ventilation and attention to safety details are required for open flame heaters such as kerosene or propane heaters. Place the propane or kerosene heater in front of the ventilation opening (such as a window open 1/4 inch). If you place it away from the ventilation, the fumes will first fill the room before they exit from the window. Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors can save lives!

Never use charcoal briquets or Coleman fuel camp stoves inside a house or garage for cooking or keeping warm. People die every year from carbon monoxide poisoning when they fire up charcoal briquets inside the house to keep warm. There are no exceptions to this rule. **Never run an electrical generator** inside a house or a garage. Always put it outside. Make sure it stays dry and let it cool down before re-fueling it. **Carbon monoxide poisoning is always a risk** with open-flame heating indoors. If the room seems "stuffy" & you begin to feel headachy & lethargic and/or your vision gets blurry - get everyone out of the room & ventilate it with fresh air immediately. Pregnant women, children, and unborn babies are particularly at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Beware of fire! Place a fire extinguisher where it can be quickly used. If you don't have a fire extinguisher, get a couple of large boxes of baking soda and a bucket of sand. Don't leave candles or open flame heaters burning unattended or while you are sleeping. Make sure candles are in secure holders that can't be knocked over. Keep them away from small children. **Don't keep a gas cook stove burning 24 hours a day for heat.** They aren't designed for that. Turn the burners on to warm things up for a couple of hours and then turn them off. Wait a little while before you turn them back on. Turn the oven on, at a moderate temperature, for 3 or 4 hours and then turn it off for a while. **Don't leave the oven door open** to heat a room. That will burn out the thermostat and then the stove won't light and you will have NO HEAT. The warmth still moves through the room with the door closed. While the oven is on, make something good to eat to help you stay warm. Store fuels like propane and kerosene safely outside of the house or apartment.

Refrigerator and freezer issues. If the temperature is below 42 degrees, and the power fails, take the food from your

refrigerator and freezer and put it in an ice chest or other box with a tight lid. Put it outside in a covered place, such as a porch or shed. During the day, keep it in the shade. If it is below freezing most of the day, the frozen food will stay solidly frozen too. However, if frozen food thaws, cook and eat it, or cook it before you re-freeze it. Do not simply re-freeze frozen foods that have thawed; cook them first.

Lights and alternative power . Emergency lighting can be candles, flashlights, and lanterns. To increase the illumination, put lights in front of a mirror. DO NOT go to sleep with candles or lanterns burning. The flame of one candle can generate enough heat to keep a person from freezing to death. Make sure there is nothing burnable close to the candles. **Use a car battery for lights and radios.** Brake or back-up lights, electric wire, and a car battery can be an emergency light source. This will cause a car battery to deteriorate faster, but in an emergency, sometimes such risks are worth it. Marine, RV, or golf cart batteries are better choices than car batteries for emergency power. They are designed to be drained slowly and recharged. If you use this set-up indoors, remember that batteries are filled with toxic, corrosive acid. Make sure the kids can't get to them. Large batteries (car, marine, etc.), if used indoors must be in a room that is well ventilated. Keep them well away from open flames.

The sun is your friend! Open the curtains when the sun shines directly through the windows. If the windows are dirty, clean them - more light will pass through them and thus you will have more heat from the sun. Cut pieces of cardboard so they are the same sizes as your south facing windows. Cover the cardboard with aluminum foil. Place them outside the south windows straight out horizontally from the window ledge so that the light which hits the ground in front of the window is reflected into the window. As the sun moves in the sky, and light no longer shines directly through a window, cover it with curtains and extra blankets/auto sun shades.

"Store" daytime sunlight for night-time heat by placing bottles of water (or buckets with tight-fitting lids) in direct sunlight coming through your windows. This warms the water. When the sun stops shining on the bottles or buckets, their stored heat will be slowly released. Paint the bottles or buckets black to store more heat. This is free hot water for bathing or washing dishes! **To keep warm at night, bundle up.** Use extra blankets. Sleep more than one person in each bed. Wear a cap to bed. Make a "tent" of blankets or sheets over the bed (like the old fashioned "canopy beds"). Or you can make a tent in the middle of a room, and gather the family inside. DO NOT use open flame heating inside a tent. **The best place for babies is on their mother's bodies**, in their arms or using one of the many ways of carrying a baby and still having your hands free. Check on your elderly and vulnerable neighbors to make sure they are OK.

Food and drink can keep your warm! Drink a lot of water, and eat frequent meals with lots of carbohydrates. Soups, casseroles, bread, biscuits and gravy are comfort foods for stressful conditions that give you extra fuel to stay warm. Besides natural gas stoves (which work when the power is out), you can cook inside with propane camp stoves, a wood burning stove or fireplace. You can warm food over candles or cans of sterno or chafing dish fuel. You can cook outside on a gas grill. Don't pour any heat down the drain in the form of hot water! Let hot water cool to room temperature before draining, and you get more heat and humidity in the house. If the air is really dry, put a pot or kettle of water on the stove and keep it at a low simmer.

Newspapers are great for emergency insulation. Just ask anyone who's been homeless. Wrap them around your legs, arms, torso, tape them over windows, lay them on the floor, or layer between blankets. More layers = more insulation. Auto sun shades can be hung over the inside of windows to reflect heat back into the room.

Beware of the tendency to resort to bad habits when under stress. *This information is provided as a public service, and has been compiled from credible sources, but responsibility for use of this information is with the reader. Use it at your own risk. Your mileage may vary. Bob Waldrop, www.energyconservationinfo.org .*