

THE OKLAHOMA CITY +CATHOLIC WORKER+

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Survival Strategies for Low Income People - Part 1 of 3

It's not news to anybody with low income that economic hard times are here. The less money you have, the bigger the impact of the present financial crisis on you. Things are going from bad to worse, and they will get even worse. Your dollars will not buy as much in the future as they do now. Government social programs will be slashed. We are in the beginning of an economic crisis so terrible it will make the Great Depression of the 1930s look like good times. If people are not worried about this, then they simply aren't paying attention to what is happening. Instead of looking out for the common good, powerful politicians in both parties make decisions that hurt ordinary people but benefit special interests that make big contributions to election campaigns.

The good news is you don't have to play their game. Even in the midst of these hard times, you can find security and develop a better quality of life for you and your family. Here are some basic survival strategies for coping with what is coming at us, and triumphing over it. This is the first of three parts.

1. Close your ears to the lies of politicians and corporations. Turn off your televisions and ignore all advertising. It just isn't possible to spend your way to prosperity so don't even try. Your life will not be better if you buy advertised products. Your kids will not be smarter if they wear expensive designer clothes. In fact, if you buy advertised products, your quality of life will deteriorate. You will have less money, more stress, and too much cheap junk.

2. Nurture blessings and hope in your own life and in the life of your community. Promote solidarity & cooperation. Don't give in to despair, don't feel sorry for yourself. Beware of the tendency to resort to bad habits when under stress. With positive action, you gain control over your life & reduce your vulnerabilities. Trust yourself, respect others & all creation. Understand our inter-dependence with each other & the natural world. If we want truth, wisdom, justice, and beauty, then the best thing to do is to practice truth, wisdom, justice, and beauty in our own lives and neighborhoods. Eventually we will get good at it.

3. Work together with your neighbors to increase the safety, security, health, and well-being of your family and community. Know your neighbors. Do not tolerate crime and criminals in your neighborhood. Call the police! Start a neighborhood watch. Take pictures of criminal activity. File complaints about predatory, absentee landlords that don't keep up their properties with the city's code enforcement department. Pick up trash and litter in your neighborhood. Start a community garden. Organize a block party and potluck barbecue and dance the night away with your friends and neighbors! **Be not afraid!**

4. Spend your food stamps wisely. Never buy junk food or soda pop with your food stamps. If you want treats, buy basic ingredients like flour, sugar, cocoa, eggs, etc. and make your own treats. They will taste better and be much cheaper. Plan your month's meals and then cook your meals from basic ingredients. Frozen prepared foods are made with the cheapest ingredients and cost more than "cooking from scratch". If you don't know how, ask around. Get on the internet and go to our online cookbook at www.bettertimesinfo.org. Cook frugal meals. Try to stockpile some food in case extra-hard times arrive. The food stamp program may be cut, war or terrorist actions may make it impossible to use the benefit cards. You need a home food security stockpile to protect yourself from hunger in these troubled times.

5. Increase the size of your household. Combining smaller households to make larger households has great benefits for small families and individuals living alone. Co-housing can be a useful response to troubled economic times. If your kids need to move home, welcome them. Perhaps you should plan for this and encourage family to move home. 2 or 3 smaller families living together can do so for less money than each would spend operating a separate household.

6. Stop buying new stuff. Reduce, reuse, recycle, repair, make it over, made do, do without. Shop at flea markets, garage sales, thrift shops. Never buy new furniture, new appliances, new home decoration items. Always look in the "after market" first, only then, if you simply can't find what you need, should you consider buying something new. Stay away from those "rent to own" shops where you pay 3 times the regular price for cheap junk. **Continued next month!**

Wisdom for Living

You have succeeded in life when all you really want is what you really need. . . For fast acting relief, try slowing down. . . It takes four seasons to know one year. . . If you want to feel rich, just count all the things that money can't buy. . . If you buy what you don't need, you steal from yourself. . . You can never get enough of what you don't need to make you happy. . . You can't have everything, where would you put it? . . . A dog will not tell you he has fleas, but you can tell by the way he scratches. . . A smile is a light in the window of your face to show that your heart is home. . . Fall seven times, get up eight. . . Resentment is letting someone live rent free in your mind. . . Life is fragile, don't break it. . .

November food delivery requests must be received by 12 Noon on Thursday, November 18th.



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.

I will not tire of declaring that if we really want an effective end to violence we must remove the violence that lies at the root of all violence: structural violence, social injustice, exclusion of citizens from the management of the country, repression. All this is what constitutes the primal cause, from which the rest flows naturally.

Would that the many bloodstained hands in our land were lifted up to the Lord with horror of their stain to pray that he might cleanse them. But let those who, thanks to God, have clean hands -- the children, the sick, the suffering -- lift up their innocent and suffering hands to the Lord like the people of Israel in Egypt. The Lord will have pity and will say, as he did to Moses in Egypt, "I have heard my people's cry of wailing. It is the prayer that God cannot fail to hear.

The church is calling to sanity, to understanding, to love. It does not believe in violent solutions. The church believes in only one violence, that of Christ, who was nailed to the cross. That is how the gospel shows him, taking upon himself all the violence of hatred and misunderstanding, so that we humans might forgive one another, love one another, feel ourselves brothers and sisters.

We have never preached violence, except the violence of love, which left Christ nailed to a cross, the violence that we must each do to ourselves, to overcome our selfishness and such cruel inequalities among us. The violence we preach is not the violence of the sword, the violence of hatred. It is the violence of love, of brotherhood, the violence that wills to beat weapons into sickles for work.

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 food delivery is Nov. 20th for all locations including Wesley Village, Towers, Bell Air, Charles Atkins & Temple Gardens. We are unable to deliver in MWC, Del City, or east of Bryant in OKC. Nov delivery requests must be received by noon on Thursday, November 18th.

BREADLESS PUDDING

3 eggs
3/4 cup heavy cream
3/4 cup water
1 cup cottage cheese, full fat small curd

1 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 cup Splenda

Beat all of the ingredients with a mixer until as smooth as possible. There will still be some lumps of cottage cheese. Pour into a buttered 8x8" baking dish. If desired, sprinkle some additional cinnamon on top. Bake at 350° for about 1 hour or until the top is nicely browned. Serves 6-8.

MOM'S CRAZY CABBAGE

1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1 small onion, chopped,
1 small cabbage, chopped,
14.5 oz can diced tomatoes, undrained

3 strips bacon
Salt & Pepper

Brown the beef and onion; drain off the grease and season with salt and pepper. Put half of the cabbage in the bottom of a greased 9x13" baking dish. Season with salt and pepper. Top with the meat then the remaining cabbage; season again. Pour or spoon the tomatoes evenly over the cabbage and lay the strips of bacon over the top. Cover with foil and bake at 325° for 3 hours. Discard the bacon before serving. Makes 6 servings

SPANISH CAULIFLOWER AND HAMBURGER

1 pound ground beef
2 tablespoons onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon cumin
1/4 cup green pepper, chopped
1 lb fresh cauliflower, grated

4 slices bacon, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/8 tsp garlic powder
8 ounce can tomato sauce
4 oz cheese, shredded

In a large skillet, cook the hamburger, bacon, onion and green pepper; drain the fat. Add all of the remaining ingredients except the cheese. Mix well; cover and simmer about 15 minutes, until the cauliflower is tender, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle the cheese over the dish. Cover the skillet and turn the stove to the lowest heat. Cook about 5 minutes, or until the cheese is melted. Makes 6 servings

QUESO CHICKEN

6 pieces of cooked chicken
8 oz cheese, shredded
1/2 cup mayonnaise

3 tsp Taco Seasoning
1/2 cup heavy cream

10 ounce can tomatoes with green chilies, drained
Season the chicken pieces with the taco seasoning. (Or cook with the seasoning.) Grill briefly to warm. In a medium microwavable bowl, mix the cheese and cream. Microwave 2 minutes on HIGH to melt cheese; stir until well blended and creamy. Whisk in the mayo until smooth then stir in the tomatoes. Microwave about 2 minutes on 50% power until heated through. Serve the sauce over the chicken. Garnish with green onions, if desired. Serves 6.