



Slow Miracles . . . Making a Difference

September 2015 Issue

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www.fathermckennacenter.org
 CFC Charity # 32524

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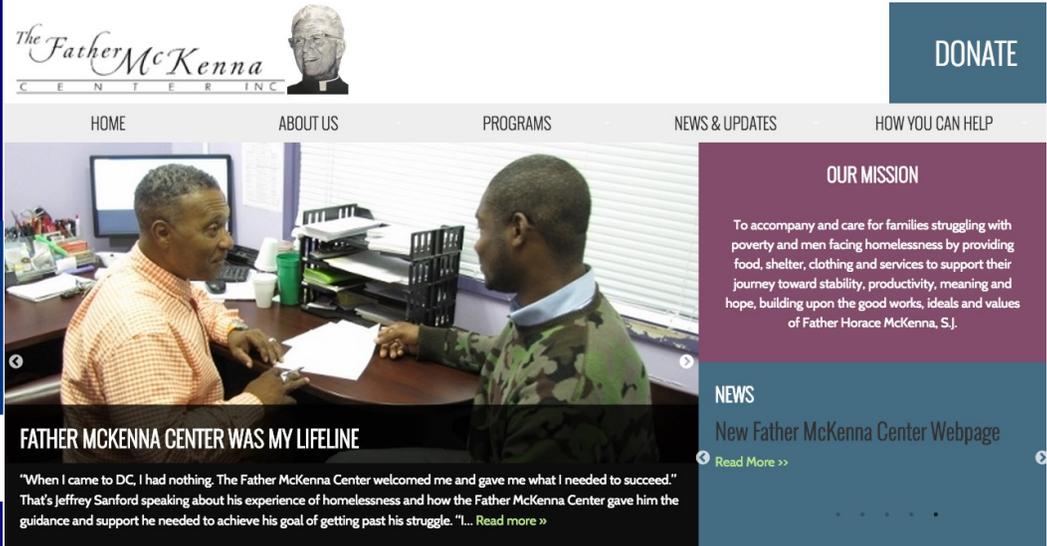


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FMC Launches Revised Website Check Us Out at www.fathermckennacenter.org



The Father McKenna Center now has a revised website.

We hope this new site is easy to navigate, informative and will help our friends and supporters remain connected to the good work that happens every day here at the Father McKenna Center.

Please check it out, and bookmark it, so you can visit us regularly to stay “up to date” with the work of the Center!

Winter Coat Drive - Can You Lend a Hand?

Cooler weather is fast approaching. Men struggling with homelessness do not have a closet to hang last year's coat in - so they will need another coat for this winter.

Can you offer a gently used men's coat? We will collect coats on Saturday October 31 and Saturday, November 7 at the Father McKenna Center from 9:30 to 12:30 pm. We will have folks on the sidewalk in front of St. Aloysius to receive your contribution.

If you don't have a coat to offer, possibly you might have sweaters or sweat-shirts. We will also accept those on the two Saturdays.

Or another alternative is to send a contribution so we can acquire winter coats for the men through “overstock sales” and other outlets available to us.

Summer Interns Impact the Father McKenna Center

“When they were in the same room there was always gales of laughter and they worked so well together. We were really blessed with these four summer interns,” reflected Kim Cox.

Throughout June and July the energy and hard work of four dedicated interns made a real difference at the Father McKenna Center.

Matt Wooters, SJ, is a graduate student at Saint Louis University in Social Work. He worked with our case management team to assist our guests and he made a real impression on many of the men.

Matt Gatti, a Gonzaga grad (2012) and a rising senior at Catholic University, worked as a coordinator of the many volunteers and served as the monitor for our computer lab each morning, providing a very valuable service to our guests.

Meghan Cain, a rising sophomore at the University of Notre Dame, came to us through the SSLP program, an 8-week intense work and reflection program that offers academic credit. Her willingness to engage our guests made her a favorite with the men. She worked at



Br. Matt Wooters, SJ (front),
Meghan Cain, Margaret Atkinson,
Matt Gatti

the reception desk, helping to distribute the mail and working with the men each day.

Margaret Atkinson is a rising sophomore at William and Mary, and she worked with Michael Johnson and helped to organize on our Food Pantry and clothing distribution programs.

Each of the interns brought their own gifts to help our guests, but we quickly learned that the four of them worked very well together and could achieve great things in a short period of time.

“I didn’t know what to expect when I came. I came with an open heart, and I tried to give my energy to the program. As I prepare to leave I learn that I have left my heart here - I have learned a lot about myself and I have grown through my time here,” Meghan Cain reflected.

Matt Gatti, added, “I feel much more aware of how I should approach the homeless - treat them with respect and dignity. Those who struggle with homelessness are just like the rest of us and deserve to be treated that way every day.”

FMC Makes Its Match!

In the June Newsletter we announced a Challenge Match from the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation for \$10,000.

As of September 25 we had received 148 gifts toward the match totaling \$22,511.11.

Thank you to all our loyal donors who helped us exceed the match goal!

Monthly McKenna Mass

Who: Friends of the Father McKenna Center

What: A Monthly Home Mass

When: 2nd Thursday of the Month, 2 PM

Where: Home of James and Janet Walsh
5025 Yorktown Blvd, Arlington, VA

Why: To support the works of
The Father McKenna Center

Attendees make a free will offering for our work.

Please join us!

Please call Janet at (703) 534-3152 if you can join us.

Father McKenna Center Wish List

The Father McKenna Center relies on the generous support of the community to provide our services to the homeless and very low income families who seek our assistance. Below is a partial list of items you can donate to assist us. For more information, please visit our website:

www.fathermckennacenter.org

Food Items

Canned Fruit
Canned Vegetables
Cereal Rice Pasta
Canned Tomatoes / Sauce
Canned Tuna and Chicken
Meal Packets
(e.g. Hamburger Helper)
Canned Soups

To make a donation, please call FMC (202-842-1112) to alert us that you are coming. We will assist you to bring your contribution into the Center.

Clothing

Our primary need is for men’s casual clothing.

With cooler weather coming soon:

- Casual slacks & jeans
- Shirts
- Sweatshirts / Sweaters
- Winter Coats
- Underwear (new, please)
- Socks (particularly white)
- Shoes

If you have suits and sports coats to donate, please call Strive DC at 202-484-1264

Volunteer Spotlight

Marguerite Tom-Wigfield

The Father McKenna Center relies on hundreds of women and men to share their time and their talents to carry out the work of feeding the hungry and caring for the marginalized in our society.

One such volunteer is Marguerite Tom-Wigfield, who spends many Friday mornings working alongside Raymond Derr in our kitchen.



“I like working with Marguerite,” says Raymond.

Michael Johnson, Food Pantry coordinator reflected, “Marguerite brings great creativity to her passion for cooking. She can take an odd assortment of ingredients and make a delicious meal or side dish that will add a lot to the quality of the meals we serve at the Father McKenna Center.”

Marguerite brings her love of cooking to help with our Healthy Food Demonstration Program for the patrons of our Food Pantry. Marguerite shares tips to use the fresh produce we received from Clagett Farm and from the Capital Area Food Bank. And we hear that her suggestions are delicious and easy to use!

Partner Profile

Clagett Farm / Capital Area Food Bank



FMC continues to practice the “multiplication of the loaves and fishes.”

Each year the Center distributes more than \$120,000 worth of groceries to very low income families in the neighborhoods surrounding the US Capitol, and provides more than 14,000 Midday Meals (about \$80,000 worth of food). And all of that on a food purchase budget of \$40,000!

How do we do this? As partners of the Capital Area Food Bank, FMC receives thousands of pounds of food (canned goods, fresh produce, meats and other nonperishable goods) at deep discount prices. And this summer we have received more than 4,000 pounds of farm fresh produce from Clagett Farm, including tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, greens, peppers and other items to add to the menu for the meals we prepare and for the families who come to our Food Pantry.

Kim Cox reflected, “Our staff have become ‘smart shoppers’ to acquire items so that our patrons can find what they want and need in our Food Pantry.”

FMC Hypothermia Program to Re-open on November 1

Each winter the Father McKenna Center provides about 20 men with an opportunity to move ahead in their journey from homelessness to stability.

The Hypothermia Program has been one of the most successful efforts to help our guests to move ahead in their lives.

In 2014-15 we had 33 men enter the program and of them 24 (73%) found a job, a place to stay, reconnected with family or had a plan in place to move past their current circumstances.

Those men who stay in the public shelters typically have to be at the shelter by 4 pm to secure a bed for the night, which restricts the time available to carry out



their plans to move ahead.

At the Father McKenna Center they must be in by 6:30 pm. Each day the men can shower, they share a wonderful meal prepared and served by Gonzaga families and they build a community, where the men challenge and encourage one another to grow.

This year a case manager, Dennis Dee, will be part of the program five nights a week to work with the men and to support their journey to stability.

Each year the program requires \$50,000 to operate, so a gift of \$500 pays for 1 1/2 nights of the program! Can you help us?

From the desk of

Kimberly Cox, FMC President



Homeless Lives Matter; Lives Crushed by Poverty Matter

This was the clear message delivered by Pope Francis during his historic visit to Washington DC. At every meeting and in every speech he noted how the poor suffer and he made an inspiring call to serve those in need.

During his moving encounter with the homeless at St. Patrick's Parish downtown, the Pope recalled the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem where he was laid in a manger because there was no room at the inn. "The Son of God came into the world as a homeless person. The Son of God knew what it was to start life without a roof over his head," Pope Francis remarked.

From childhood most of us grew up with an image of the Baby Jesus in the manger, but as adults, we may not stop to think about the reality of his homelessness the way his parents must have. A reality faced by thousands of people – men, women and children – in our community every day.

Pope Francis went on to say, "Jesus not only wanted to show solidarity with every person. He not only wanted everyone to experience his companionship, his help, his love. He identified with all those who suffer, who weep, who suffer any kind of injustice. He says this clearly: 'I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me' (Mt 25:35)."

We are called to show this solidarity, to provide companionship, help and love. At The Father McKenna Center it is our privilege to accompany and care for families facing poverty and men who struggle with homelessness. We are inspired by Pope Francis to "Go out to proclaim the merciful embrace of the Father. Go out to those who are burdened by pain and failure, who feel that their lives are empty, and proclaim the folly of a loving Father who wants to anoint them with the oil of hope, the oil of salvation."

I am grateful for this visit of Pope Francis and his words of hope and inspiration. I am also grateful for the hard-working staff, devoted volunteers and generous donors who make it possible for lives to be touched, changed and lifted up – anointed with the oil of hope.

Volunteers Needed - *Can You Help?*

The Father McKenna Center needs volunteers to help us serve those who rely on us each day.

Food Pantry Team - offer 90 minutes once per week (10:30 to 12 Noon)

Clothing Distribution Team - offer 2 hours once every other Tuesday (9:00 to 11:00 am)

Reception Desk - Daily from 8:15 am - 1:00 pm (offer all or part of that time once per week)

Computer Lab Monitor—Daily from 9:00 to 10:45 am and from 12:30 - 2:30 pm (offer two hours one day a week) Volunteer must have strong computer skills.

Breakfast Service Team - Daily from 7:45 am to 9:00 am (offer any day once per week)

To volunteer, contact Ned Hogan at (202) 842-1112 or nhogan@fathermckennacenter.org.