

The Father McKenna

C E N T E R I N C

MEETING NEEDS . . . RECLAIMING LIVES



Slow Miracles . . . Making a Difference

September 2016 Issue

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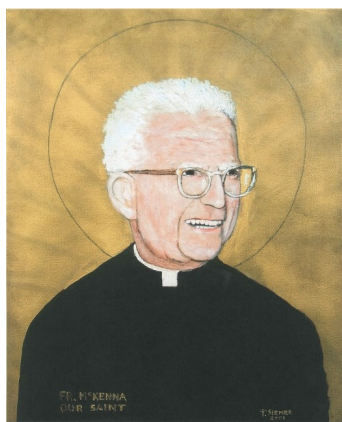
The Father McKenna
C E N T E R I N C

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Horace McKenna— 100 years of loving service to the poor



In July 1916 Horace B. McKenna travelled up the Hudson River from Manhattan to Poughkeepsie, where he entered the Jesuits at St. Andrew-on-Hudson.

Horace was a brilliant student and linguist. His superiors assigned him to teach at the Ateneo de Manila, the Jesuit secondary school in the Philippines. There the young Horace McKenna, SJ encountered people who were desperately poor, and the experience changed his life.

From that day forward he was about serving the poor—both their physical and spiritual needs. He chose to serve parishes where the people were poor in

Southern Maryland and later St. Aloysius.

When Fr. McKenna died, St Aloysius Parish established the Father McKenna Center to carry on his ministry of care for the poor and homeless. Fr. McKenna had been instrumental in the founding of SOME, Martha's Table and Sursum Corda Cooperative Housing, so the care of the poor was his daily work.

Today the Father McKenna Center is dedicated to following in his footsteps, caring for men who struggle with homelessness and for families who live at the edge of deep poverty. With hundreds of volunteers and hundreds of generous donors we carry on Fr. Horace's work each day.

100 years of loving service to God's special people—the poor!

Coats and Backpacks

As winter approaches, we are in need of gently worn men's coats. Please contact Ned Hogan (nhogan@fathermckennacenter.org) or (202) 842-1112 to arrange a time for drop off, or possibly pick-up. We especially need larger sizes.

Another important way you might be able to help is by donating a gently used backpack (or book bag). The homeless must carry their belongings with them and a good book bag is very helpful!

The Father McKenna Center will be distributing winter clothing in November, so please try to help us before then, if at all possible.

Thank you!!

Volunteer Spotlight

Liza Ryner

"Uncle Pat was a regular visitor to our home for dinner, and I remember what a special man he was."

Liza Ryner is a grandniece of Fr. Horace McKenna, SJ, ("Uncle Pat to his own family) and is a weekly volunteer in our Food Pantry. Each Friday Liza assists the patrons of the Food Pantry to check-in and then to select their groceries from our mini-store. It is a simple task of care - but Fr. McKenna believed that every little thing we do for others is a special act of God's love.

Liza is one of five children of Betty McKenna Ryner. All five are connected to the Father McKenna Center as donors and they remind us of the unique love and care Fr. McKenna had for the poor and marginalized in our community.

Liza reflected, "When I am working at the FMC, I feel like I am side by side with Uncle Pat, fulfilling my primary purpose to help the less fortunate. And there are so many!"

During the summer of 2016 Liza brought her nephew, Nathan Ferm, to join her in serving the Food Pantry



and then serving lunch each Friday. Nathan was doing it as a service project for Confirmation, but he got more out of it than just doing a service project.

Did You Know?

In June 2016 the Father McKenna Center saw an average of 113 men per day.

We also received more than 1,645 volunteer hours (the equivalent of 10 additional staff members!)

Guest Spotlight

Lorraine Wills

"Fr. Horace would stop by my home nearly every day. He always wanted to be sure that we had enough. I had twelve children to feed, and he made sure we had enough. He always wanted me to become a member of the church, but I never did," reflected Lorraine Wills. "While I never became a member of the church, I helped Fr. Horace when he began SOME. I always wanted to give back to someone who gave so much to others!"



Ms. Wills, along with her daughter Lorraine, is a regular at the Father McKenna Center Food Pantry.

"The Father McKenna Center Pantry has been a great help to me over many years. I've never had a lot of money for food, but the Pantry has provided things that make it easier to be sure that we have food to eat. The new variety over the past several years (milk, eggs, fresh produce) have been a great help."

"My memories of Fr. McKenna are filled with the ways he quietly and without fanfare did so much for me and others in the neighborhood. He was our saint."

FMC Welcomes Two Full-Time Volunteers!

In late August the Center welcomed two new "staff members." They are Sam Hamilton and Ali Sentmanat. Sam is a Jesuit Volunteer and Ali is part of the Franciscan Mission Service program here in DC.

Sam is from Portland, ME and is a graduate of Boston College. "What I want most from this year is to fully embrace the opportunity I have been given to learn about the issues men experiencing homelessness face. I hope to show up each day with the humility to do good with and for the people I am serving."

Ali is from Houston, TX and graduated from the University of Dallas. "I am excited that I have the op-



portunity of offering a year of service at the Father McKenna Center. I hope that through serving the men and families I will grow spiritually and emotionally. I look forward to making good friends here at the Center"

Between them they are leading the Food Pantry, the mail program at the Center and are working with us to strengthen our social media and web presence.

Both of these volunteers will be with us every day through next July. What a gift they are making to serve the poor and homeless in the footsteps of Fr. Horace McKenna!!

Goodbye . . . And Hello!

Farewell Dennis Dee



On August 27, 2014 a first time guest at the Center signed in as Dennis Dee. It was immediately clear to Cortez McDaniel that Dennis was special. Dennis was homeless, and had lost a marriage, his kids, his job and his relationship with God, but with Cortez' support Dennis began to rebuild a life. He enrolled in the Hypothermia Program, found a job and then found transitional housing. In January 2015 Dennis was offered a job at FMC.

For the past nineteen months Dennis has served in many capacities here at the Center - driver, mailman, pantry assistant, and Assistant Case Manager, working closely with his mentor, Cortez McDaniel.

Dennis recently reflected, "The McKenna Center family - staff, volunteers, guests and donors (many affiliated with Gonzaga and Holy Trinity) - contribute to providing an environment where a man struggling with homelessness can find himself, and just as importantly find God. For someone who has found himself and found God in his life, an end to homelessness is inevitable."

On August 26, 2016 Dennis moved to Chicago to pursue a new life and a job as an addiction counsellor.

No amount of space can capture what Dennis did with and for us, so we simply say "Thank You and God be with you, always!"

FMC Achieves Cafritz Challenge Match

Through the generous support of more than 100 donors the Father McKenna Center raised more than \$19,000 to meet the match.

Thank you to our many donors!

We are also grateful to the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz for many years of supporting the Center's work. This challenge has been met! Thank you!

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.

Welcome Syd Slocum

The departure of Dennis Dee meant that the Center needed to rethink its staffing. Michael Jones, who had been a Hypothermia Coordinator last winter, and was brought on staff full-time in April, was promoted from the Operations team to be Assistant Case Manager. Michael will work closely with Cortez to serve the men who are looking to make real differences in their lives.



Michael Jones



Syd Slocum

To fill the Operations position, Cortez recommended that the Center offer a job to Syd Slocum. Syd has been a guest of the Center over the past couple of years, and like Dennis stands out by his willingness to work with Cortez to make changes in his life. Syd worked for many years as an Air Traffic Control Specialist, but lost a job in late 2013, and subsequently became homeless.

Over the last 2 ½ years Syd has listened to Cortez and he has found housing and has worked for the past year as a salesman at a local appliance and electronics store.

Syd, welcome to the team!

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

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 upon us, we need:

- 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

From the desk of

Kimberly Cox, FMC President

Our mission here at The Father McKenna Center is to “accompany and care for families struggling with poverty and men facing homelessness by providing food, shelter, clothing and services to support their journey toward stability, productivity, meaning and hope, *building upon the good works, ideals and values of Father Horace McKenna, S.J.*” (emphasis added). Today, 100 years after a young Horace McKenna entered the Society of Jesus and dedicated his life to serving God by loving people, we are still talking about him and carrying on his works.



I believe the greatest impact of Father McKenna’s life was the way he inspired others. He was so well respected in the city that he helped people see past their differences and find common ground to build institutions that bring about better lives. At his funeral, the Sursum Corda Citizens Association honored Fr. McKenna in this way, “For Horace’s priority in life was PEOPLE of all conditions, ages and races. Nothing

was too much to bring them the comforts of a better life or build their self esteem. He truly radiated the love and concern of Christ for every person he knew.” Archbishop Hickey wrote at that time, “...we are thankful for the many ways this simple splendid priest and enriched this community, for the example he set for all of us in tenaciously advancing charity and justice.” [and for the love and service he gave to our poorest brothers and sisters.]

Father John Adams, President of SOME, worked closely with Fr. McKenna. He said, “I learned a lot from Horace. He was out there with the people, as Pope Francis has called us to be. Horace would walk up from St. Al’s in the morning to have breakfast with the men. He understood that breaking bread with someone made for a beautiful connection. Horace loved people.”

The current President of Martha’s Table, Patty Stonesifer, noted, “Father Horace McKenna’s dedication, aligned with the Jesuit tradition of service, inspires all of us at Martha’s Table to increase access to quality education, healthy food, and family supports across the District.”

A simple listing of the organizations that he helped to found or supported does not seem to do justice to the change in the landscape of the city or the way people’s hearts changed because of Fr. McKenna. He lived his life so consistently and with a genuine love for others that people were drawn to him and inspired by him and still are today.

The world has changed in the past 100 years, but the need for love and understanding, the call to stand up for what is right has not changed at all. Fr. McKenna inspires us all to see Christ in others and be Christ to others. This is what we at The Father McKenna Center - and many others - are doing today.