



The Father McKenna

C E N T E R I N C



MEETING NEEDS . . . RECLAIMING LIVES

Slow Miracles . . . Making a Difference

September 2019 Issue

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www.fathermckennacenter.org
 CFC Charity # 32524

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

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The New Father McKenna Center!

The renovations are moving toward completion, and we have wonderful new spaces. Below are pictures of two mostly completed spaces: The Program Space and one of the new offices.



The new program, pictured at left, will seat 120 and provide a positive setting for large group sessions.



A typical office space (at right) provides space for counselling and collaborative work.

Slow Miracles Campaign Update

As of August 23 the *Slow Miracles Campaign* has raised \$4,080,000 to underwrite the renovations and major program enhancements. Our overall goal is \$4,500,000, so we need to raise \$420,000.

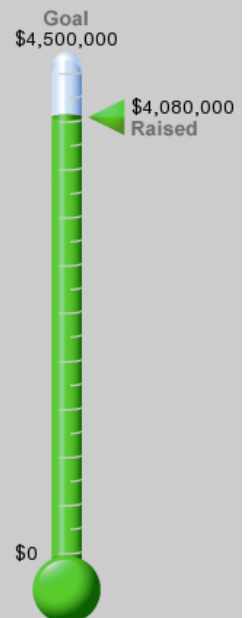
Double Your Gift in September

Several generous donors and members of the Board of Directors of The Father McKenna Center have agreed to challenge our donors to help complete the campaign. Every gift during September will be matched (up to \$120,000) by those donors.

Simply mark the enclosed reply card for the *Slow Miracles Campaign* and return your gift in the enclosed reply envelope.

Grand Re-Opening!

As the renovations move toward completion we are beginning to plan a celebration to mark the "new and improved" Father McKenna Center! All donors to the *Slow Miracles Campaign* will receive a personal invitation.



3rd Annual *Walk for McKenna*

“It’s a great way to join with The Father McKenna Center to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness and to raise a few dollars to help the Center better serve the men who go to the Center each day,” reflected Kate McAuliffe, an attorney with HoganLovells and a supporter of The Father McKenna Center, reflected. “Our family loves to get behind the team at the Center.”

Nearly every day that he served at St. Aloysius Parish, Fr. Horace McKenna would walk through the neighborhoods of the parish, greeting his flock and responding to their needs - a few dollars for groceries, to pay rent, to purchase clothing. “I can’t speak to someone about saving their soul if I know that they are hungry,” was a frequent saying of Fr. McKenna’s.

So, on Saturday, September 14, 2019 we will “walk in the footsteps” of Fr. McKenna and take a 5K walk through the neighborhoods. Registration will happen on the Eye Street esplanade beginning at 8 am. The walk will step off about 8:40 am, and a continental breakfast will be served on Eye Street when the walkers return.

“The event is a great opportunity to gather the friends of The Father McKenna Center and to celebrate what we do to make a difference in the community,” commented Kim Cox, the Center’s President.



3rd Annual Walk for McKenna
Saturday, September 14, 2019
8:00 am to 10:30 am

Registration is \$30.00 per person,
and includes a t-shirt and breakfast.

Parking is available in the Gonzaga garage.

To register: www.fathermckennacenter.org

Save the Date 2nd Annual Lessons and Carols



Wednesday, December 18, 2019

7:00 PM

St. Aloysius Church

Reception to follow in

The Father McKenna Center

**Free will offering to support the work of
The Father McKenna Center is encouraged.**

Father McKenna Center Wish List

The Father McKenna Center relies on the generous support of the community to provide our services to men who are 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 Chicken or Tuna (12 oz or smaller)
- Jelly (in plastic containers)
- Canned Baked Beans (18 oz. or smaller)
- Maple Syrup (in 16 oz. size or smaller)

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 need is for men’s casual clothing.

With cooler weather approaching, we need:

- Jeans, khakis
- Light jackets, Shoes and Sneakers
- Socks (particularly white)

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

Volunteer Spotlight

Mike Rahill, *Shower Empresario!*

Three years ago we “sent Mike Rahill to the showers!” Literally!

One of the key services that The Father McKenna Center offers to the men struggling with homelessness is the opportunity to take a shower each day. Personal hygiene is a challenge for men who are homeless, and the fact that the men can count on a shower at the Center is a key to helping the men be ready for the next step in their journeys to stability, productivity and meaning!



For several years a staff member coordinated the shower program, but when he took a new position, we were left without anyone to fill that role. Mike Rahill had been volunteering with us for about six months when we asked him to fill that role.

“For me, running the showers is an opportunity to meet the men on a personal level. Over time, through countless small interactions, they come to know you and you to know them,” Mike recently said.

Today we have a team of men who fill that role. On Monday it is Ed Shumaker, Tuesday and Wednesday Mike Rahill patrols, on Thursday we have a new monitor, Dan Kerns and on Friday, Fred Daily has been serving the men for about two years.

Thanks to each of you for your service to the men! You each make a difference and each bring your special gifts to this activity..

Kenneth is a Washington DC native who is moving to a better life. He came to The Father McKenna Center after a friend brought him here and said, “Cortez helps people.” Kenneth came for help because he got tired and was “thinking about my son growing up without me.”

Kenneth has been homeless for about six years. He moved to Florida for a job, but that only lasted two years. When he returned, his relationship with his son’s mother dissolved and he was out on the streets. He figured out how to survive – working just enough to keep a membership at a gym, where he could take a shower and keep a locker.

Guest Spotlight



Kenneth Talley

He learned he could sleep in the massage room. A little money from his mom helped, too. It was enough money for a bus pass. “I never went to a shelter. I would ride the bus all night.”

After about a month at the Center, Cortez McDaniel, FMC’s Director of Services, asked Kenneth to work for us to cover janitorial responsibilities for one day. He could see that Kenneth was taking it all in. Kenneth proved to be a hard worker. After that day, Cortez pulled him in and said, “You’re a hard worker and a smart guy. What’s going on?” Kenneth said, “I guess I just got comfortable being homeless. Other places don’t help you out, they just roll out the red carpet. I got into a routine.”

With encouragement from Cortez, Kenneth, who has construction skills, started applying for jobs. He started with a drywall company in late July. The Center has supported Kenneth by purchasing work boots and putting funds on a SmartTrip card to cover his transportation until payday. When asked if he had anything he wanted to share he said, “Just don’t give up. There’s hope for everyone.”

FMC Welcomes New Volunteer Coordinator

Over the past six years The Father McKenna Center has been blessed with a growing number of volunteers who come to share the work of the Center. This past Spring we regularly had 50 weekly volunteers who came to serve meals, help in the kitchen, monitor the shower program, serve at the Reception Desk or assist in the Food Pantry.

In 2014 no one was assigned to coordinate the volunteers, so Ned Hogan, the Director of Development, was asked to serve as a point of contact, to communicate with the volunteers and to keep a record of the volunteer hours. As the number of volunteers grew, it became a job unto itself—taking Ned away from his duties to raise the funds need by The Father McKenna Center.



Nayeli consulting with Mike Rahill and Pat Kisicki

On August 1 Nayeli Garcia, who had been with us for the past year as a full-time volunteer as part of the Franciscan Mission Service, assumed her new position as Volunteer Coordinator and Social Media Coordinator for The Father McKenna Center.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to continue my time at McKenna Center! I am looking forward to deepening the relationships that I fostered with the guests, the families, the staff, and our volunteers.

I hope that my new role will allow me to grow professionally and to develop new skills that can help me do my job at the center!”

Nayeli is from York, PA and is a 2018 graduate of Neumann University in Aston, PA.



From the desk of

Kimberly Cox, FMC President

The heat wave of August is finally breaking as I pen this note. I think we are all looking forward to the cool, crisp days and evenings of Fall. Students are back in school, and it is great to have their energy and excitement back on Eye Street.

On August 21st, all of the new students, class of 2023 came to the

Center to learn about service opportunities and The Father McKenna Center.

For me, Fall feels like a fresh start. I imagine this is true for a lot of folk – probably connected to school starting and all those years when we got fresh boxes of crayons and new, sharp pencils. It is like a new beginning without the burden of New Year's Resolutions!

The Father McKenna Center will experience a fresh start this fall, too. In a few short months the renovation will be complete and our guests, volunteers and staff will be able to use the new spaces to bring our services to a higher level of quality and effectiveness.

We have called this effort the ***Slow Miracles Campaign*** – recognizing one of Fr. Horace McKenna's profound insights: "Our Lord did his miracles instantaneously at a word, but his church, his brothers, his sisters, his fathers and mothers have to do their miracles slowly." We are slowly receiving the new spaces, one at a time, step by step. This models for our guests the patience and persistence that are necessary in their own journeys to a better level of living.

The most recent step was the reopening of the Food Pantry. On August 16th, our patrons got to experience the improved and updated Food Pantry. Now in air-conditioned space, with fresh paint, good lighting, some new shelving, and fully stocked items, the Food Pantry provides a more dignified and respectful atmosphere. One of the patrons, Ms. Carmela B, said, "This is so nice! Now I know what you were doing."

On Tuesday, September 10th we will open the dining room for the men, with a blessing of the meal given by our Chaplain, Fr. Gap LoBiondo.



You are Invited! Join Us in Prayer and Praise!

An ancient tradition in the Catholic Church is to celebrate the Nativity in word and song. Many Catholic communities have ***Lessons and Carols*** as a prelude to Christmas masses.

At The Father McKenna Center we have started a new tradition of ***Lessons and Carols*** with a men's choir from The Father McKenna Center singing alongside the Least of These Gospel Choir from Holy Redeemer Parish and lessons read by representatives of a variety of partner organizations to the Father McKenna Center.



This year we will celebrate on Wednesday, December 18 in The Great Church of St. Aloysius Gonzaga. The service will begin at 7:00 pm, followed by a reception in the Father McKenna Center.

Please join us!