



The Father McKenna

C E N T E R • I N C

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Winter 2024 - 2025 Newsletter



Dear Friends,

The past few months have been joy-filled, with our winter services in full swing alongside our Day Shelter and Food Pantry. We have served over 5,000 hot meals to men struggling with homelessness since November 1st and have provided groceries to more than 3,000 shoppers across ~1,500 Food Pantry visits. The 10-man Hypothermia Transition Program also continues to yield success, with some men who joined in November already securing housing and/or employment, opening space for three more men to enter the program. Additionally, we have been blessed to

welcome dozens of volunteers over the holiday season, including service immersion groups from Ohio State, St. Norbert College, and the University of Scranton.

None of what we've achieved this winter would have been possible without your overwhelming and generous support. On behalf of our clients, our staff, and our volunteers, we thank you for your commitment to our mission and the work we do. As we look forward into 2025 and search for new ways to continue to meet the ever-growing need among the people we serve, I could not be more grateful for the strength of our community.

With thanks,
Dennis Dee, Executive Director



Save the Date: Fr. Horace McKenna Memorial Mass May 11th, 2:00 PM - St. Aloysius Church - 900 N. Capitol St NW, DC



Please join us for a memorial mass celebrating the life of our saint, Fr. Horace McKenna, SJ, on the 43rd anniversary of his death. Gonzaga President and FMC Board Member Fr. Joseph Ligan, SJ will be presiding, with The Georgetown Chimes serving as the choir.

Light refreshments will follow in the McKenna Center. We look forward to seeing you at 2pm on Sunday, May 11th!

Our Busy Winter - In Pictures

Students and Chaperones from the



University of Scranton joined us during the week of January 13th for an Immersion Service Learning Trip. Highlights of the group's experience included winter clothing distribution, working in the McKenna Center kitchen with Russell and Carmen, and their visits to the Air & Space and American History Museums.

Development and Communications Specialist Ben Hoffschneider grabs a photo with three of the McKenna Center's youngest supporters, who ran a hot cocoa stand one cold December weekend and kindly donated the proceeds to the Center! This is a regular occurrence for these three, who use their year-round bake sale, lemonade stand, and hot cocoa stand efforts to support a variety of organizations serving the poor, homeless, and needy in DC.



Students from St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin joined us the week of January 6th, serving across all our programs and helping us stay open and provide full services through DC's early January snowstorm. The group found sharing dinner and conversation with our Hypothermia Program guests to be especially meaningful during their stay!

Success Stories You Make Possible

Gibran K. has found great success in the Hypothermia Transition Program! Gibran recently began work as a bartender and secured a bed via a work-bed program. Thanks to his participation in the Financial Stability Network personal budgeting classes held in partnership with Catholic Charities, Gibran has successfully saved

enough to secure SRO (Single-Room Occupancy) housing through S.O.M.E., which he will move into in the coming weeks!



Longtime Day Shelter Program client Paul H., pictured here with a student volunteer from Georgetown Visitation, recently secured housing and has now transitioned from Day Program to Food Pantry client! Paul credits the McKenna Center with helping him secure the mental health treatment that enabled him to move into permanent housing.

McKenna Man and 2016 Hypothermia Graduate Gregory G. stopped by the McKenna Center in early January to update us on how he's doing and to make a generous donation to the Center. We're so grateful for Greg's continued engagement with and support of our Day Shelter and Hypothermia Transition Programs.



Staff Spotlight

Matthew Querfeld

Matthew Querfeld is rounding his 6-month mark at the McKenna Center, having joined us in August as part of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC). Matthew, who graduated from Fordham University last year and is originally from West Hartford, CT, is spending a year with us in DC, living in a house with other Jesuit Volunteers also pursuing a meaningful and immersive full-time volunteer experience. Matthew has quickly become a vital member of our team, assisting with organization and administration across all of our programs,

coordinating and retrieving food and clothing donations from around the region, and championing the storage, stocking, and day-to-day operations of our Food Pantry.

“It is a joy for me to be at the Father McKenna Center” said Matthew, “and to meet the people that are part of this community.” We’re grateful to Matthew for his service to the Center and are excited to see what else we achieve together during the remainder of his term!



Former Client Yared S. Returns to The McKenna Center



Yared S. first came to the McKenna Center in 2008, having come to the US from Ethiopia to care for his mother. He entered the Hypothermia Transition program and worked closely with Cortez to receive legal immigration services through Catholic Charities. To help Yared remain in the country, Cortez took responsibility for him for 6 months, going with him to every necessary appointment. 14 months later, Yared had ID and a green card, and now has his US Citizenship and passport.

With the McKenna Center’s help, Yared obtained an apartment and has been working for the past several years. In May of last year, Yared got chemical burns on both arms while working in a nursing home. He has come back to the Center to work with Cortez and McKenna Center Board Member Dan Collopy to pursue Workers Compensation for the injury.

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