

CCS Monastery Migrant Shelter Update  
3.23.19

Dear Friends

This past week has been a very busy one for Monastery volunteers. Over the past weekend, and again on Friday, we received over 100 guests a day which raised our numbers to almost 350 men, women, and children! Imagine the dining room with comfortable space for fifty or sixty people, full to capacity with lines out the door as guests waited for their meal. Families gathered to eat in the hallways, outside, and in every available nook and cranny. Volunteers in the clothing area kept pace with 100 guests arriving and leaving each day, sorting clothing and personal item donations and helping each family to select adequate clothing for their final destination. Our medical teams were kept busy with sick parents and children. (Yet one physician told me that most guests made it through the harrowing journey north in remarkably good health.) Intake and transportation volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth transition for guests from arrival one day to departure the next. In addition, news teams, elected officials, schools, and immigration delegations formed a steady stream of people touring our shelter.

It is difficult to imagine our transportation volunteers making the many phone calls necessary to arrange for that many people's travel and rides to get to the station or airport. Our intake volunteers check, clean, and assign beds for our guests. The laundry team makes sure hundreds of towels, blankets, and personal clothing items are washed, dried and folded. Volunteer groups help sweep and mop floors and do general cleanup. One man comes in several times of week just to empty the trash. With the support of more than 150 volunteers a day and many many donations of food, clothing, and other supplies, the shelter hums with the voices of those who are finally free from fear mixed with those who serve them. Guests and volunteers alike are most often seen with a smile on their faces. Laughter resounds through the halls.

Volunteers tell me that this is the most fulfilling thing they do. One of our medical team members reported, "What everyone does here brings joy and light, not just to our guests, but to other volunteers as well." For me, volunteering at the monastery shelter is a powerful antidote to feelings of despair and anger over how our guests are treated in detention and almost every step thereafter of the asylum process.

**The CCS Monastery Migrant Shelter is now one of the largest in the country, run almost completely by volunteers and in-kind donations. And we are in great need of financial support in order to keep the lights on and water running. With an ever increasing number of guests our costs are also rising. We need your help to continue to serve these vulnerable and at-risk families. A list of immediate needs follows for those who live close enough to drop donations off. Please also consider a financial contribution and encourage friends and family to do likewise. Please share this email with anyone you think might like to support our work to ensure safe transition for our families seeking asylum to their sponsors' locations. We cannot do this work without your help.**

I have heard repeatedly that this collective effort to shelter families seeking asylum has been

incredibly life and soul saving for volunteers and guests alike. Our ministry together has carried beyond our wildest imaginations to inspire and embolden others to act for justice, compassion, and joy. This is truly Good News. Pass it on!

In hope for a better future.  
Delle

Rev. Delle McCormick  
Monastery Shelter Volunteer