

PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION

Transforming lives since 1877

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PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION CELEBRATES 138 YEARS OF SERVICE - - NEW DAY - LIFE RECOVERY - PROGRAM CREATED

*America's Largest Continuously Operating Rescue Mission prepares to bless Chicago's
homeless at Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year*

CHICAGO, IL. On September 15th, America's largest continuously operating rescue mission, Pacific Garden Mission, celebrated its 138th anniversary. Since its 1877 opening, the doors to the "Old Lighthouse" have never closed - a total of over 50,400 consecutive days - over half the age of the United States, spanning the terms of 26 US presidents.

The "Old Lighthouse" has cared for countless hundreds of thousands of homeless men, women and children over the years. The Mission meets immediate physical needs: meals, medical care, clothing, and a comfortable and safe place to sleep. Counseling is provided to help deal with the effects of physical abuse, broken relationships, and substance abuse. Most importantly, PGM seeks to meet each individual's spiritual need: forgiveness of sin and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

This year, the Mission created the in-house New Day - Life Recovery - Program, because 85% to 90% are homeless due to substance abuse or addiction. In need of strategic intervention before they are able to progress, homeless men and women now have the New Day Program. Not a quick drying out program, but a free, three month, five phase program with counselors that help identify and overcome strongholds and transition participants into fully functioning members of society [other such programs may cost thousands of dollars].

New Day is an integrated program that addresses a major root cause of homelessness and helps change lives. It takes a holistic approach, integrating the medical, psychological and sociological needs of each person. The staff Nurse Practitioner coordinates the program, which provides tight integration of all medical needs, with bio-psycho-social needs, in one team location.

All meals, room and board are included. There are separate programs for men and women. Each person with a substance abuse problem is evaluated after 30 days. During this initial period, they receive counseling and guidance to improve their situation. The program includes direct intervention, substance abuse counseling, and classes. There are individual and group counseling sessions. Upon completion of the New Day program, individuals have the option to enter the Mission's one year New Life program that culminates in a formal graduation. Graduates successfully demonstrate the new life skills acquired and begin careers and plans to transition out of homelessness. Like so many these goals and plans become permanent lifestyles. "The numbers are just staggering," said PGM President Philip Kwiatkowski. "The goal is to get people to make a decision."

**Add one - PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION CELEBRATES 138 YEARS OF SERVICE - -
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PGM President Philip Kwiatkowski stated, "Because the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year holidays are especially difficult for the homeless; the Mission goes out of its way to show the love of Jesus Christ. A special Christmas service plus special holiday meals are scheduled for all our guests."

As in the past, Chicago Bulls players and staff, plus a crew of volunteers will serve 1000 men, women and children a pre-Thanksgiving feast with beverages and dessert.

On Thanksgiving Eve, homeless guests will again enjoy a hearty meal served by Food for Friends. And, since 1996, Levy Cares, charitable arm of Levy Restaurants, has served a traditional Thanksgiving feast with all the trimmings. On Christmas and New Years Day, guests also receive a full course holiday dinner and dessert. Over 150 volunteers will give of themselves on Christmas Day to serve the homeless men, women and children at PGM.

PGM addresses the physical, spiritual and social needs of Chicago's homeless, guiding them through difficult times in their lives providing shelter, food, clothing, medical/dental/eye care, education, job training, and many other comprehensive support services.

Due to the increase in the number of homeless seen, PGM has refit a number of dorm beds, raising its daily capacity to 1140, including 325 women and children plus infants. In the most recently completed fiscal year, Pacific Garden Mission provided 344,925 individual shelter days [945 daily average], served 812,204 meals [54,318 monthly, 1811 daily, 604 per meal average], and distributed 896,077 clothing items. Since occupying its larger new facility, the on-site clinic has provided medical care to an average of 4265 people per year. PGM also provides the *Bread of Life* outreach which delivers surplus food and other donations to nearby needy families.

Thanks to the continuing support from The Chicago Community Trust*, the Transient Men's and Transient Women's Ministries enable overnight guests to receive more comprehensive services including job seeking assistance, health care & hygiene classes, basic computer skills, job skills instruction [including resume creation], assistance in locating housing, and many other enabling tools to help them reenter society. They receive job interview tips, salary expectation information, and mock interviews.

PGM is not a soup kitchen, but a place where comprehensive care and programs become stepping stones to the physical, spiritual and social betterment of lives. Mr. Kwiatkowski observes, "We remain committed to the proclamation of the infallible Word of God and will continue to keep the main thing the winning of souls to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

As it has since 1877, the Mission relies solely on private donations for its day-to-day operations. For more information or to make a donation, contact Pacific Garden Mission at 312/492-9410 or visit www.pgm.org.

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* For 100 years, The Chicago Community Trust [cct.org], our region's community foundation, has connected the generosity of donors with community needs by making grants to organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. From strengthening schools to assisting local art programs, from building health centers to helping lives affected by violence, the Trust continues to enhance our region.