

# Connection

KANSAS CITY RESCUE MISSION

## A Meal Changed My Life

**Ricky blinked back tears** as he remembered what Kansas City Rescue Mission had done for him. “If you didn’t learn anything coming out of here, I don’t know what will wake you up. Because all you see around here is love.”

It was late fall when he first came to the Mission. Ricky was living on the street and someone told him KCRM had good food and a warm, safe place to sleep. He found all that inside the Mission walls and much more. “I came here for a meal, but what caught my attention was how I was treated when I walked in. They treated me like I was the best thing on the earth!”

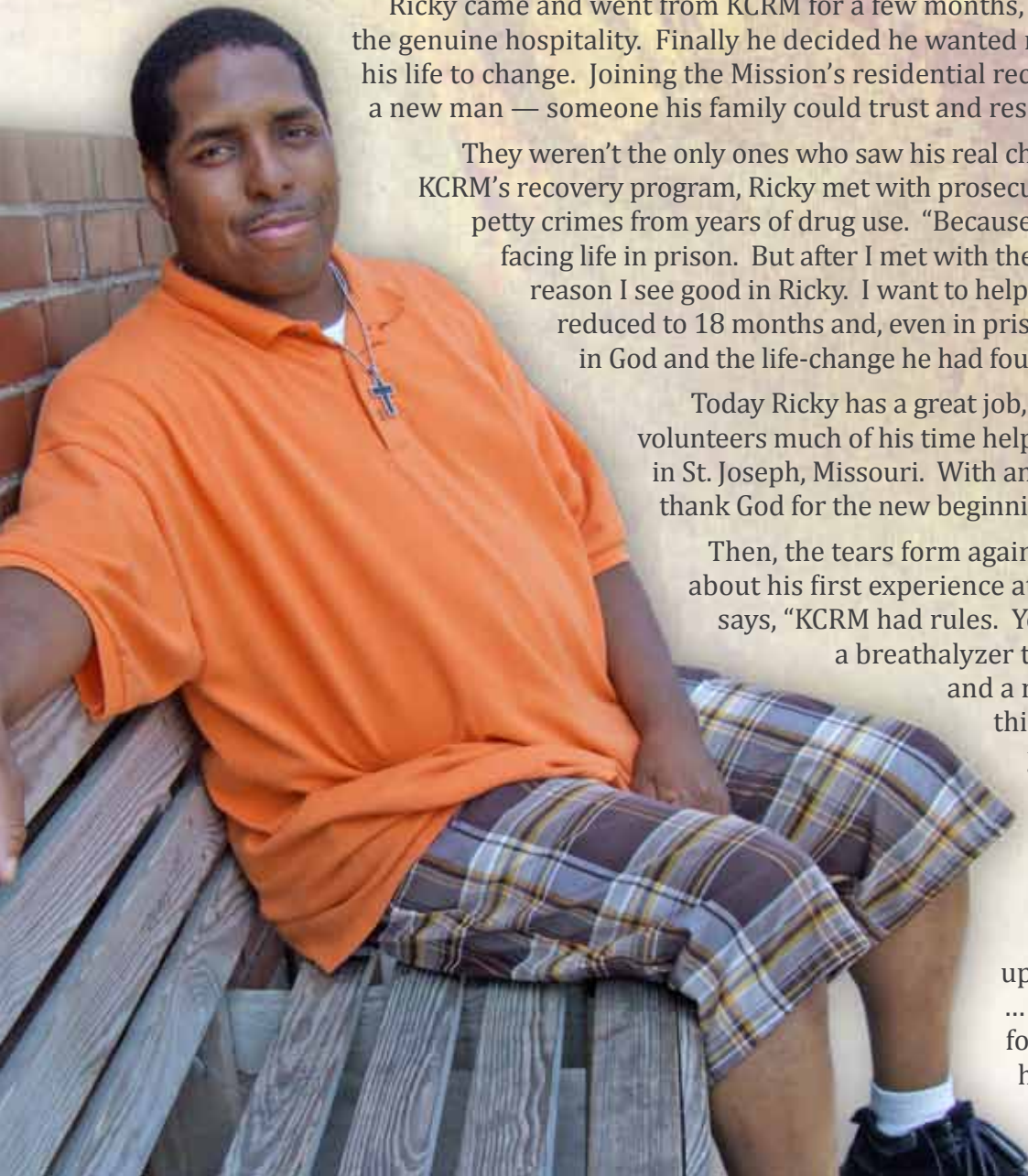
Ricky came and went from KCRM for a few months, enjoying both the food and the genuine hospitality. Finally he decided he wanted more than that ... he wanted his life to change. Joining the Mission’s residential recovery program, Ricky became a new man — someone his family could trust and respect.

They weren’t the only ones who saw his real change! After he graduated KCRM’s recovery program, Ricky met with prosecutors to deal with a rap sheet of petty crimes from years of drug use. “Because of the three strikes law, I was facing life in prison. But after I met with the prosecutor, he said, ‘For some reason I see good in Ricky. I want to help him.’” Ricky’s sentence was reduced to 18 months and, even in prison, he stayed true to his faith in God and the life-change he had found at KCRM.

Today Ricky has a great job, takes care of his family, and volunteers much of his time helping poor and homeless people in St. Joseph, Missouri. With an easy smile, he’s quick to thank God for the new beginning he found at KCRM.

Then, the tears form again as he reminisces once more about his first experience at the Mission. “You know,” he says, “KCRM had rules. You have to blow clean (pass a breathalyzer test) in order to get your bed and a meal. You had to say no to that thing that made you steal from your kids ... you set down the crack pipe because you have to be clean if you want that good meal and to sleep in peace.

“I realized if I could give it up for a day so I could stay here ... that maybe I could give it up for good. So, you see, I came here for a meal and a bed ... and it changed my life.”





## Connecting with Joe Colaizzi

**Each Friday morning**, I get to do one of my favorite things. I get to teach a class of men enrolled in our Christian Community of Recovery (C-COR). I've taught this class for many years and, as hundreds of C-COR graduates can tell you, there's a phrase that's echoed from year to year ... a word of wisdom that has guided my own life:

***Keep the main thing the main thing.***

This truism is my way of saying — to the men and to myself as well — that we must keep our eyes on Jesus and choose to follow His lead.

Now, if you've been around Kansas City Rescue Mission for very long, or received updates from us, you've heard us emphasize food and shelter again and again. And, you may ask, "So how do food and shelter relate to the main thing?"

Of course you know I would love nothing more than for every hurting person who comes to KCRM's door to find the total, holistic help he needs so he can truly know freedom from his past and hope for his future.

But, as the saying goes, people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care ... enter Jesus and the amazing miracle He performed when He fed at least 5,000 hungry people with five loaves of bread and two fish.

When He realized that the people who had come to hear Him teach and watch Him perform miracles had gone all day without eating, Jesus set aside His sermon notes and did what it took to make sure every mouth was fed. At that moment, feeding the hungry was ***the main thing!***

The greatest Teacher who ever lived paused in His teaching to become a food service director until the needs of hungry people were met.

This Thanksgiving season as we prepare to serve thousands of hot, nutritious meals and offer hundreds of nights of safe, comfortable shelter, it is our goal to not only teach the words of Jesus, but to demonstrate His heart of compassion. Won't you join us? Together, let's keep the main thing the main thing!

Written in the top right-hand corner of the white board, as Joe teaches on a Friday morning:

***The main thing is to  
keep the main thing  
the main thing!***

The ***Connection*** Newsletter  
is a publication of  
**Kansas City Rescue Mission**  
1520 Cherry • Kansas City, MO 64108-1530  
(816) 421-7643 • kcrm.org • info@kcrm.org  
Volume 10, Number 4



An AGRM "Certified Excellent" Mission



# KCRM Launches New Thanksgiving Community Outreaches

**CALLING ALL  
TURKEY TROOPS  
TO ACTIVE DUTY!**

**Hunger in Kansas City** is on the increase, and once again, KCRM wants to be on the frontlines with those meeting the need. This Thanksgiving, KCRM and partnering churches will continue the tradition of providing feasts for the homeless through our onsite nine-day *Celebration of Thanks*. Below, you can learn more about two new community outreaches and how you can get involved!

## Operation Turkey Convoy

**This Thanksgiving**, KCRM volunteers will deliver around 500 hot single-serving turkey dinners to poverty-stricken families, elderly and injured on Thanksgiving Day! Three different volunteer units will help cook the meals, assemble them and deliver them throughout Kansas City to folks who need a reason to give thanks. Don't have time to volunteer? Donate food or cash to purchase food from our list on this page — we need lots!

## Operation Family Feast

**For many hurting families** in Kansas City, having the means to purchase a Thanksgiving feast is unthinkable! Their meager incomes are stretched to the limit as they choose between paying for rent, utilities, food, medication, clothing, school supplies, transportation and other needs.

That's why KCRM is teaming up with urban churches to identify 200 truly needy families and provide each with a box brimming with holiday and everyday foods that will last for several meals! In the week before Thanksgiving, we'll create an assembly line to fill our boxes then deliver them just in time for the holiday.

To learn more about volunteering for Thanksgiving, please first check our volunteer webpage at [www.kcrm.org](http://www.kcrm.org) to see what positions still remain. Then contact Volunteer Coordinator Zach Story at [zstory@kcrm.org](mailto:zstory@kcrm.org) or call 816-421-7643.



## We Need a Lot of Thanksgiving Food!

We're counting on your help to supply the hundreds of pounds of food needed to provide 2,200 meals for hungry, poverty-stricken and homeless men, women and children through our three Thanksgiving community outreaches. Here's a list of items we'd love for you to contribute:

- Turkeys, hams
- Stove Top-type stuffing mix
- Boxed instant potatoes
- Packaged gravy mix
- Canned corn
- Canned green beans
- Canned fruit
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Canned yams or sweet potatoes
- Brown sugar
- 1-lb. butter in tubs or sticks
- Cake mixes
- Canned frosting
- Bisquick
- Brown and serve rolls
- Pumpkin and fruit pies, pre-baked
- Mini-marshmallows
- Jello

## Did You Know?

September-December are the "giving months" at KCRM, when we raise up to 50 percent of the income we need for the entire year. Please contact Chief Development Officer Julie Larocco at [jlarocco@kcrm.org](mailto:jlarocco@kcrm.org) or 816-421-7643 to find out how you can invest in KCRM during the holiday season and throughout the year.

If you don't have time to shop, please consider sending a cash gift in the envelope enclosed with this newsletter. **Thanks for giving!**





## Women's Center Update

### Renovation

Plans for the Women's Center renovation are progressing rapidly! Architect Laura Pastine of Form Field Studio is working with KCRM's Leadership Team to design an environment that meets this mission: *KCRM Women's Center welcomes single, homeless women into a safe, therapeutic setting offering hope for healing, security and peace.*

### Hope Ambassadors

Volunteers Jenny Hines and Penny Dunman have registered for kitchen, bath and bedroom items for the new Women's Center! You can find most items at **Bed, Bath & Beyond**. Type in "Other" in the registry, first name "KCRM" and last name "Womens Center." You can also check out **Wal-mart's** registry for additional items. To learn more about *Hope Ambassadors* and how your church, business or group can join, contact Paul Masao at [pmasao@kcrm.org](mailto:pmasao@kcrm.org) or 816-421-7643. He'll help you with ideas for coordinating a shower for the center and tell you about other ways you can serve.

**Ready to learn more?** For detailed information about KCRM Women's Center, contact [jarocco@kcrm.org](mailto:jarocco@kcrm.org). Also, you can watch a video about the Women's Center on YouTube! Just go to [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) and search "KCRM Women's Center."



## Show Your Compassion at Work!

You can support KCRM at your workplace by including the Mission in your company's United Way or Combined Federal Campaign! Here's how:

- **United Way** — Ask your employer for a Donor Choice form and write in Kansas City Rescue Mission as your designated recipient, along with our address (see page 2).
- **Combined Federal Campaign** — To give to KCRM, write in CFC number **90936**.

## Overheard...

- **From a former Hotline for the Homeless operator:** "I worked on the hotline for eight years. I never had one complaint from a homeless person about KCRM! That says a lot."
- **After chapel from a client chatting with Chaplain Joe:** "You know, I've heard more grace here in the past two days than I've heard in the past two years!"
- **From Janet C. Baker during a volunteer meeting:** "There is something miraculous about this place!"
- **On Facebook:** "[KCRM has] an amazing team — compassionate people who desire to see measured change. You don't just offer services, you offer accountability. You are the hands and feet of Christ. You journey WITH the homeless and don't just walk through the valley or stand on the mountaintops with folks."