

Gerrard McMahon

London & SE Fundraising Coordinator, Mary's Meals



Gerrard has worked for Mary's Meals for 18 months. He lives in Watford, is married to Sarah and they have 5 children.

Tell us a bit about your current work

I work as a fundraiser for Mary's Meals in London and SE England – my role is to raise awareness of the charity, support volunteers and generate income.

What does a day in your life entail?

It can be very varied. I work with volunteers to get many administrative tasks done and train them up on how to approach potential donors e.g companies. We also manage (volunteer) speakers here to go into schools/churches/community groups and present the work of Mary's Meals. Often I work on Sundays leading our Rags to Riches campaign at various places of worship.

What is most rewarding about your job; what makes it all worthwhile?

It is wonderful to realise that for every £12.20 raised one child is not only fed a good meal every school day in a place of education but also will receive a basic education too. The consequences for the child who will one day be able to read and write are enormous.

How did you get to where you are today?

I have working in fundraising for both small and large charities for over 15 years.

Tell us about someone you have always admired?

John Paul II was a strong influence. I went to see him (with thousands of others) when he came to England over 30 years ago. I was at University at the time and felt compelled to go, got on a bus with no tent etc for an overnight stay. Fortunately some other young Catholics let me share their 2 man tent. The only problem was there were 5 of us in all! Anyway it was a great time and made a real impact on my faith life.

How does your faith link with what you do?

I believe it is God's will for us who are rich to support those who have less than we do. We do not spend frivolously – we manage resources very prudently.

What are the most important things you have learnt from your work and has anything surprised you?

The growth of the charity from feeding 200 children 13 years ago to almost feeding 1 million every school day now is phenomenal. I have learnt that we need to tell our story, to not push people into supporting us but rather leave it with them and trust that it will turn out well.

What words of wisdom/advice would you give to students?

My journey has been quite rocky – I have done jobs I didn't like, even very bored in and been unemployed, but I persisted in asking God to open doors for me and now I work for a charity that is wonderful in so many ways! Christ is the key – seek Him and other things will fall in to place.