



IOCC

INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

IOCC Delivers Relief To Gaza's Displaced Families

August 7, 2014



IOCC workers in Gaza, many of them also displaced, deliver hot meals to displaced families seeking shelter at St. Porphyrius Greek Orthodox Christian Church in Gaza City. More than 2,400 displaced people have fled to the church since the escalating conflict began July 8. *photo: IOCC*

Baltimore, MD — Living conditions for thousands of displaced families in the Gaza Strip are rapidly deteriorating as families uprooted from their homes and forced to find shelter now face a shortage of water as well as decreasing access to food. The recent escalation of the conflict has destroyed Gaza's power plant and civilian infrastructure, depriving vulnerable Gazans of the most basic needs and adding to the misery of more than half a million people displaced across the densely populated territory.

Many of the displaced families have sought refuge at schools, mosques, and churches, including St. Porphyrius Greek Orthodox Christian Church in the Az Zaitoun neighborhood of Gaza City. More than 2,400 displaced children and their parents are sheltering at the church, sleeping in the community center as well as outside in the church courtyard. International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) staff is on the ground in Gaza to provide humanitarian relief to families in urgent need of food and basic supplies.

IOCC distributed hot meals to hundreds of displaced families seeking refuge at the church, for many their first hot meal in weeks. "We were not able to provide meals like this," explained Hani, one of the church council members, who expressed gratitude for the critically-needed assistance. "With this support we are able to help feed these people who have come to us for help."



A displaced boy from Gaza City welcomes the hot meals delivered by IOCC for his family and hundreds of other families seeking refuge at St. Porphyrius Greek Orthodox Christian Church in Gaza City. IOCC is providing emergency relief to hundreds of displaced families occupying the church and a nearby mosque. *photo: IOCC*

IOCC is also working to provide emergency relief items such as water, bedding, blankets, hygiene items and infant supplies to 40,500 displaced people seeking refuge at the church and a nearby mosque, as well as to vulnerable families in the northern Gaza communities of Gaza City, Beit Hanoun, Shuj'iyeh, Az Zaitoun, and At Tuffah.

IOCC has had a humanitarian presence in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza since 1997, assisting more than 30,000 families with emergency food and household items as well as working with communities to improve their access to food, employment opportunities, and agricultural production. In the Gaza Strip, IOCC has been establishing reliable water sources and support for home gardens and livestock care to ensure that families have enough to eat and to help the local economy by supporting locally-produced fresh food.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can help provide relief in Gaza by making a financial gift to the IOCC Gaza Relief Fund, which will provide immediate relief through the provision of emergency assistance as well as longer-term support. To make a gift, please visit www.iocc.org or call toll free at 1-877-803-IOCC (4622), or mail a check or money order payable to IOCC, P.O. Box 17398, Baltimore, MD 21297.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$488 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of more than 140 churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy, and a member of InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based secular and faith-based organizations working to improve the lives of the world's most poor and vulnerable populations. To learn more about IOCC, visit www.iocc.org.

Media contact: Rada K. Tierney, IOCC Media Relations, 443-823-3489, rtierney@iocc.org