

A MERCY OF PEACE, A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE (continued)

To the many workers, volunteers, and Frontliners who risk their lives daily – on our behalf – as they touch the lives of “these, the least of My brethren,” our heartfelt thanks and our unending prayers go out to you. May God bless you all, and may His angels watch over you and protect you; and as our Lord multiplied the fish and bread in the wilderness, may He multiply the fruits of your labor of love; and in the fullness of time, may He reward you with the eternal joy of His kingdom. Amen.

With love in Christ,

Fr. Malek Rihani

St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church | Palos Heights, IL

If you wish to contribute a reflection to the next Priest to Priest, please email kfiani@iocc.org.



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IOCC EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS

- September 23 – Akron, OH
Team IOCC at the Akron Marathon
- October 7 – Chicago, IL
11th Annual IOCC 5K Walk/Run
- October 12 – Salt Lake City, UT
IOCC 25th Anniversary Wine Tasting
- October 21 – Baltimore, MD
Team IOCC at Baltimore Running Festival
- October 28 – Charlotte, NC
25th Anniversary Evening for IOCC
- October 29 – Philadelphia, PA
25th Anniversary IOCC Banquet



FATHERS: PLEASE DISPLAY THE POSTER ON REVERSE IN YOUR PARISH

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Priest to Priest

Fall 2017

A MERCY OF PEACE, A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE

IOCC is blessed to share this personal reflection from Father Malek Rihani of St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church in Palos Heights, Illinois. Father Malek and Khouriya Dina Rihani have faithfully served at St. Mary since its founding in 2003.

As a child, I grew up in Jordan and lived across the street from a Palestinian refugee camp. I saw firsthand the deplorable conditions in which these displaced people had to live. In my recent visits to Jordan, I was also deeply saddened to witness the over one million Syrian refugees who now call Jordan home, likewise living in misery. Through no fault of their own, these innocent refugees must endure the pain of poverty, hunger, homelessness, and loss of their dignity. Despite the tremendous hospitality that Jordan has shown, the strain on its limited resources requires that this desert country depend on organizations like IOCC to supplement its ability to provide for the basic needs of these refugees.



“As a priest, and in following the command of our Lord to be merciful above all else, I find that IOCC is our best vehicle to help us be merciful to those who are beyond our reach, yet need us the most.”

Our priesthood is incomplete unless we are able to offer physical food, along with the spiritual kind. “A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise,” we pray in the Divine Liturgy. How can I offer praise to my beloved Christ, who is the perfect Peace Offering, if I’m not willing to make that small sacrifice and provide mercy and relief to my brothers and sisters whose dream of peace is overtaken by the nightmare of war!

IOCC has become the most efficient and effective tool by which I, my brother priests, and the faithful everywhere can fulfill our Christian obligations to “give to God what is God’s.” The blessed Saints have often reminded us that prayer and fasting are incomplete without almsgiving. IOCC is our much-needed partner on our Spiritual Journey, where we can unworthily offer alms, and in this process see the image of the child Christ in the face of every innocent child crying from the pain of hunger. What a privilege – and a great responsibility – that we were chosen to be on the giving end of this charity, rather than the receiving end.

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A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR ORTHODOX CLERGY

From the clergy of the IOCC Board of Directors:

His Eminence Archbishop Nicolae, Very Rev. Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, Rev. Fr. Luke Palumbis, Very Reverend Fr. Nicholas Triantafylou

Cohesion Through Cultivation

IOCC programs address peoples' basic needs, like food and shelter, while also helping them develop and strengthen ties to their communities.



GREECE

Bringing together Syrian refugee and low-income Greek children in greater Athens for language classes, recreational activities, and interpersonal bonding



UNITED STATES

Joining other interfaith groups involved in disaster response to rebuild homes in places like North Carolina and Minnesota



LEBANON

Teaching safe food handling to Syrian refugee and Lebanese women, allowing them to bond over meals and laughs

UGANDA

Training farmers in Uganda's dry corridor to increase their food security and to pass along newly gained knowledge to others in their villages



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