



## RESPONSE SHIFTS TO HEALTH AND RECOVERY IN DISASTER AREAS

**Baltimore, MD (IOCC)** — Even before shockwaves buckled school buildings and homes, only about half of primary school-aged children were enrolled in school in Haiti. After the earthquake, 90% of schools in the affected area were damaged or destroyed, according to data from UNICEF. In response to these needs, IOCC is working with four Orthodox schools, including one for the disabled, to enable over 800 students to learn. The efforts are part of \$4 million in projects that IOCC has provided in response to the disaster.

“Children are particularly vulnerable after disasters and a focus of our concern,” said Constantine Triantafilou, IOCC executive director. “Hundreds of thousands of children in Haiti and Pakistan lost everything in an instant – homes, schools and many lost family members.”

IOCC is also partnering to construct school facilities for an additional 450 students in Léogane and Grand Goave. The schools will also function as hurricane shelters for up to 1,350 people in communities that are prone to heavy seasonal rains and hurricanes.

In the capital, Port-au-Prince, IOCC is working in cooperation with other agencies to develop an environmentally-friendly solution to manage waste. The project, in four newly-rebuilt schools, will provide a clean and sustainable learning environment for 14,000 students.

In Pakistan, IOCC is supporting



M. Guinn/IOCC Baltimore

A child works on a lesson at the Foyer d'Amour (“House of Love”), a school for the developmentally disabled operated by the Orthodox Church in Haiti. Educational projects have been a focus of IOCC’s recovery efforts in Haiti.

the efforts of the Orthodox Mission there to provide immediate food assistance to over 2,200 people in the flood-affected areas. With much of the infrastructure damaged or compromised by the flooding, access to clean water is a concern, especially for children who are vulnerable to water-borne diseases. With the support of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, IOCC provided more than \$265,000 in medicines to help treat dysentery

and cholera.

IOCC has also been providing emergency supplies to people affected by fires in the Ryazan region of Central Russia. Aid to the region southeast of Moscow will reach 640 people and includes personal hygiene kits, blankets, towels and bed linens. The relief is being provided in cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Round Table, an ecumenical forum for social service in Russia.

*(continued on page 2)*

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year has been filled with unexpected crises of enormous proportions. The earthquake that devastated the already impoverished country of Haiti has further impacted the poor. The widespread flooding in Pakistan has impacted more than 20 million people, devastated the crops of thousands of subsistence farmers and continues to threaten the lives of children and families who lacked basic necessities – like clean drinking water – even before the flooding. The extended period of heat and fires that swept across a wide swath of Russia disproportionately affected the very young and the elderly and claimed nearly a third of its wheat crops.

As diverse and geographically spread out as these disasters have been, they all hold one thing in common: the vulnerable and the poor – those with the fewest resources to begin with – are most affected by disasters.

In these pages, you will read more about our efforts to work in close partnership with the local Orthodox Church in Haiti, Pakistan, Romania, Russia and Syria to address the needs of people who have been affected by disaster and families living in poverty and help expand the ability of the Church to respond.

Whether we are taking action following natural disasters or providing assistance in the aftermath of conflict, your steadfast support ensures that we can respond in times of acute need as well as work in communities to address poverty before disasters hit.

When the unexpected happens, your commitment to helping others through IOCC is an enduring source of strength and comfort for the poor and for our partners. Thank you for your faithful and vital support for this ministry.

Yours In Christ,

Constantine M. Triantafilou  
Executive Director & CEO



Jonathan Ems/ACT Alliance

### RESPONSE SHIFTS TO HEALTH AND RECOVERY IN DISASTER AREAS

*(continued from page 1)*

IOCC is grateful to the thousands of people who have responded to natural disasters and to the following organizations for their generous support:

- The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
- Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society
- The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
- ORTAID - Orthodox Church Aid, Finland
- The Orthodox Church in America
- The John G. Rangos Sr. Family Charitable Foundation
- The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

International Orthodox Christian Charities, Inc. (IOCC) is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) and a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy.

*IOCC, in the spirit of Christ's love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond.*

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## IOCC PROJECT IN ROMANIA AIMS TO EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SERVICES



N. Chakos/IOCC Romania



A new grant in support of IOCC's efforts to work with the Romanian Orthodox Church will help improve and expand the delivery of social services, such as the provision of emergency assistance following disasters.

**Baltimore, MD (IOCC)** — IOCC's efforts to partner with the Romanian Orthodox Church and local community-based organizations to provide vital social services received a boost recently when it was awarded a grant of more than \$1.8 million to help strengthen the work of community-based organizations in Romania.

"Ten years ago, IOCC opened an office in Bucharest with the vision of working side-by-side with the Romanian Orthodox Church to serve people in need," reflected Constantine M. Triantafilou, IOCC Executive Director. "We are gratified to have this opportunity to take one more step toward that goal of a vibrant network for *diakonia* in partnership with Filantropia."

The project will assist Filantropia, a national network of community-based organizations under the auspices of the Romanian Orthodox Church, to improve the social services it provides to orphans, the elderly,

families living in poverty, prisoners, the terminally ill and others in need in Romania. The training and organizational development that will be provided through the project will enable Filantropia to become a strategic partner in improving social services at the local, regional and national levels.

The new program has been made possible through the Romanian Ministry of Labor, Family and Equal Opportunity and co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectorial Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007-2013.

Over the next two years, the project will provide essential training in the organization and management of the network and its member agencies. The training is expected to improve social service delivery throughout much of Romania, aid in evaluation programs, and assist in the development of a strategic plan that will guide the federation's organizational development and map its future initiatives. The

project will also enhance communication and networking among the federation's members, increase linkages and the sharing of resources and best practices.

The project will help Filantropia develop strategic partnerships and more effectively coordinate with local government agencies and businesses to cooperate more effectively and increase the efficiency of social service activities. IOCC will help promote sustainable social inclusion and provide opportunities for underserved communities to be fully engaged in society.

Training and coordination efforts offered through the project will be offered in the Romanian counties where the twelve members of the Filantropia network are located, including Alba, Bucharest, Buzau, Calarasi, Cluj, Dolj, Galati, Ialomita, Iasi, Mehedinti, Buzau, and Timis.

 Learn more at [iocc.org/Romania](http://iocc.org/Romania)



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ȘI PROTECȚIEI SOCIALE  
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INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX  
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FILANTROPIA  
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# SCHOOL PROGRAM OFFERS NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR LEBANESE YOUTH

By Rami Jubran



Rami Jubran/IOCC Lebanon

**Zahle, Lebanon (IOCC)** — The positive effects of role playing in a school play are all too real for one student in Lebanon. Malek, a boy who was on the verge of being expelled for behavioral problems and poor attendance, has now been transformed into a disciplined, hard-working student with the dream of becoming a professional actor.

“I know that to become an actor I will have to work hard and doing well in school is a large part of that,” said 14-year old Malek.

The transformation began when Malek was asked to fulfill one of the lead roles in the school play – the role of a mother. Reluctant at first, the boy warmed up to the part and the idea of dressing like a woman in front of his peers.

Although both his father and his sister are teachers, school had never been important for Malek and he often skipped classes. When IOCC started extra-curricular activities at his school, Malek was inspired to change his ways. “I had to start improving my behavior or I couldn’t be in the play. Punishment had never affected me before but I wanted to be a part of these activities,” he says.

The play at the Zahle Public School in this picturesque town in Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley is just one of more than 160 such activities organized by IOCC as part of the Lebanon Education Assistance for Development (LEAD) Program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The program includes activities such as sporting events and

health and craft fairs that are designed to foster a positive educational environment and develop creativity among teachers and students. So far, IOCC has assisted 228 public schools throughout Lebanon and supported more than 110 school clubs and 116 parent-teacher associations under the LEAD program.

As for Malek, the program is working. “He was no longer the same person,” says Principal Maria Hadchiti, “there was a 180 degree change.”

Since 2006, IOCC has helped improve the condition of Lebanon’s public schools by creating hundreds of school clubs, parent-teacher associations and after-school activities. The program, which has also provided science labs, computers and infrastructure repairs, has benefited an estimated 75,000 public school students in Lebanon.

IOCC’s after-school programs have been so successful that IOCC was recently invited by Lebanon’s Ministry of Education to standardize the programs throughout the country.

*Rami Jubran was an IOCC intern this past summer and served in the IOCC Office in Beirut, Lebanon. For more information on the internship program, please visit [www.iocc.org/internship](http://www.iocc.org/internship).*



# EFFECTS OF HAITI EARTHQUAKE RIPPLE THROUGH U.S. COMMUNITY



P. Papouras/IOCC Baltimore

With support from IOCC, the Rev. Verel Montauban, pastor of the First Church of the Brethren (left), and staff of the Haitian Family Resource Center in Brooklyn, New York, provide assistance with immigration issues, grief counseling and other care for Haitians living in the U.S.

**New York, NY (IOCC)** — Stepping up out of the last subway stop into the heart of the Flatbush community of Brooklyn, NY, you emerge into a decidedly Caribbean atmosphere. The congestion and bustling crowds of Manhattan are suddenly replaced by people animatedly chatting in a mix of English, French and Creole. The prominence of Haitian culture within this multi-ethnic community is evident in its restaurants, shops and conversations.

The epicenter of the magnitude 7.0 earthquake devastated Port-au-Prince, Haiti, but its effects rippled through this community where family members of some of the 500,000 Haitians who were killed or injured watched in dismay. Nearly everyone in the Haitian community of Flatbush has been left to cope with the loss of family and friends in the disaster.

Doug, a resident of Flatbush, had been patiently attempting to bring his wife into the United

States from Haiti since late last year, but his efforts became frantic after news of the catastrophe broke. “I was reaching out to everyone – local, state and federal government – and nobody was helping me. I almost began to despair when a friend of mine told me about the Haitian Family Resource Center, and then everything changed immediately.”

Within 72 hours of the earthquake, the Haitian First Church of the Brethren had taken a leadership role in mobilizing and organizing churches in the area to open a grassroots family support center. In those early weeks, the Center provided news updates, emergency immigration legal assistance, food, missing family registry services, and pastoral care. The Brooklyn Sikh community also assisted in the effort by delivering food.

“Most who come to seek our help are trying to seek missing relatives or are looking for legal

assistance to avoid returning to a country in ruins,” explained Verel Montauban, pastor of the First Church of the Brethren.

Once emergency needs were met, the Center has since focused on case management, immigration legal clinics, grief counseling and spiritual care. Over 2,800 families have been assisted through the activities at the Center, including Doug. “These volunteers have helped me get my life back, and that is why now I volunteer here often as well.”

“IOCC is grateful for the opportunity to partner with the New York Disaster Interfaith Services and the Haitian Family Resource Center,” said Pascal Papouras, IOCC’s U.S. Program Coordinator, “We are pleased to support their continued efforts to provide a dedicated response to the Brooklyn Haitian community.”

 Learn more at  
[ioccc.org/Haiti](http://ioccc.org/Haiti)

## IOCC PROJECT EXTENDS ASSISTANCE TO IRAQI REFUGEES IN SYRIA



able Iraqi refugees and underserved Syrians residing in and around Damascus, as well as in Aleppo and Jazirat.

Many Syrians have suffered under the economic burden of inflation which followed the massive influx of Iraqi refugees beginning in 2003.

IOCC's program seeks to alleviate part of the hardship by providing vulnerable families with assistance similar to that being offered to the refugees.

Through the program, Iraqi and Syrian families will receive essential items, such as hygiene parcels and school kits. The kits are provided by churches from across the United States, including many Orthodox Christian

parishes, as well as through donations by IOCC partners Church World Service and Lutheran World Relief.

Educational efforts will focus on ensuring that school-aged children are enrolled in school, providing intensive summer school readiness programs for children who have fallen behind as a result of their circumstances, as well as language and literacy courses for girls and women.

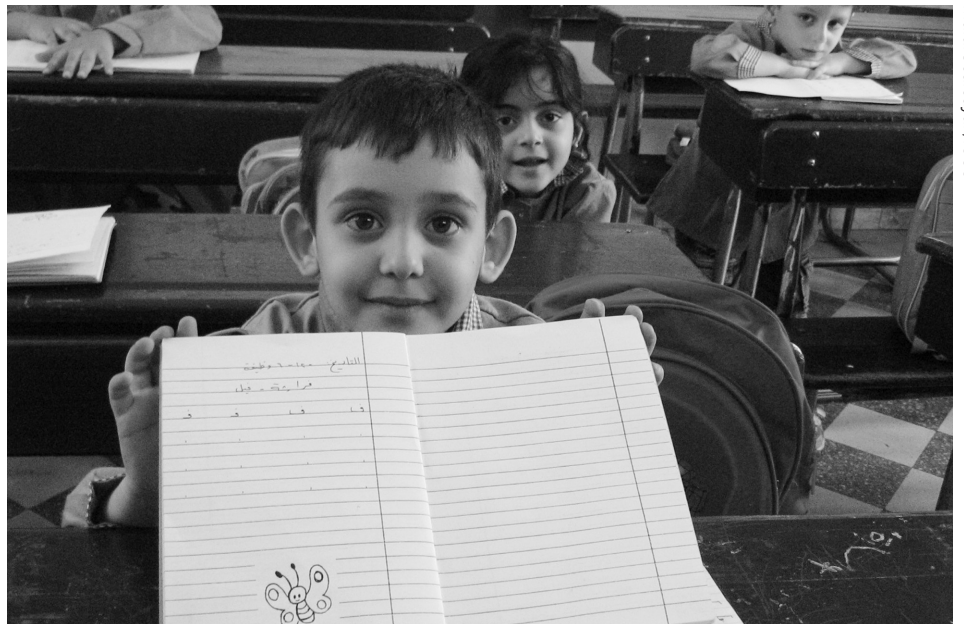
Vocational training will allow Iraqi refugees to acquire portable, professional skills and improve their standards of living. Students will be offered courses in English, computer certification, tailoring, hairstyling, and other professions that are in high demand. The program will also provide 50 small grants to some of the most promising graduates. The grants help start small businesses that create jobs for both Syrians and Iraqi refugees.

**Baltimore, MD (IOCC)** — The U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) signed an agreement with IOCC to extend assistance to Iraqi refugees living in Syria. The \$4.5 million award from PRM, implemented with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, will provide food assistance, educational support and vocational training for Iraqi refugees and Syrians in communities hosting large numbers of refugees.

IOCC Regional Director, George Antoun, anticipates that the project will provide direct assistance to more than 56,000 people over the next two years.

"The future for many Iraqi refugees remains uncertain," explained Antoun. "Although conditions in Iraq have improved, the situation remains fluid and many refugees are reluctant to return in the absence of stability and security as well as access to clean water, sanitation, electricity and other basic necessities. Others fear for their lives and the lives of their children who cannot safely walk to school."

The program will assist vulner-



A refugee child in Syria learns to write through a program run by IOCC and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. An estimated 56,000 Iraqi refugees and disadvantaged Syrians will benefit from the new program funded by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.



## LOVING MEMORIES INSPIRE GIFTS OF LOVE

Ever since my wife, Presbyteria Mary, departed unto the Lord nineteen years ago, I have been leading a Grief Support and Growth Group as a retired priest in the parish I served for 44 years. Leading such a group has helped me cope with my own grief. Losing a loved one after 42 years of living and working together in the closest of human relationships – marriage – is painfully unsettling. It is a time when, in addition to our faith in the resurrected Christ, the grieving person needs caring people to stand by him/her.

In looking at ways that help one cope with grief, I came upon the healing involved in continuing to offer gifts in memory of the deceased loved one. Thus, for several years now I have been sending a monthly check to IOCC in memory of my beloved wife. I cannot describe the comfort this brings me: to sit down every

month and write a check to IOCC that will translate into deeds of love worldwide, enabling those in need to experience tangibly the love and care of God. Although she is now with the Lord, Mary is continuing her ministry of love in the name of Jesus through these memorial gifts. In the words of St. Anthony, “What profit is there in acquiring those things that we cannot take with us? Why do we not acquire those things that we can take with us: namely ... Godly love, love for the poor, faith in Christ ... hospitality? If we possess these things, we will find them going before us, preparing lodging for us in the land of the gentle.”

*Father Anthony Coniaris, who has served the Church for over fifty years, is a noted Orthodox author and President of Light & Life Publishing Company in Minneapolis, Minn. He is Pastor emeritus of St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, Minneapolis.*

## One in Spirit

In times of war, famine and natural disaster, people lose control of their lives. They're forced from homes, separated from loved ones, thrust into a maelstrom of uncertainty. For them, IOCC assistance can be truly life-saving. Whether responding in the immediate aftermath of an emergency or addressing long-term poverty, IOCC provides people with the resources to become self-sufficient once again. Your generous support makes that happen.

By becoming a part of “One in Spirit,” you commit to giving \$85 or more each month to advance the humanitarian mission of IOCC in special ways. This level of commitment translates into programs that help people help themselves – the kinds of programs that have an impact over the long term.

“One in Spirit” is a partnership – between you and the people served by IOCC – that addresses some of the most pressing problems in our world today in places like the Balkans, the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, and the Caucasus.

**To learn more or join the “One in Spirit” program, please visit [www.iocc.org/OneInSpirit](http://www.iocc.org/OneInSpirit).**



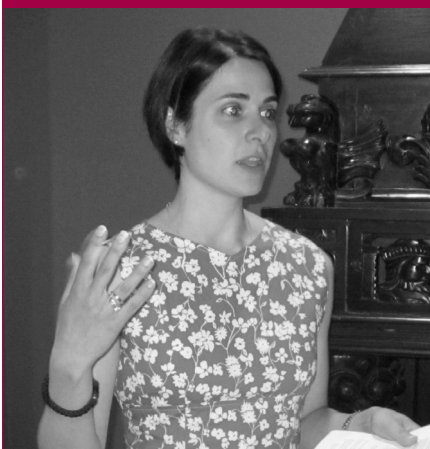


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## IOCC VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT: PRESVYTERA FLORA MORAITIS



Each year on IOCC Sunday, Presvytera Flora Moraitis gathers people of all ages in her parish to participate in assembling Emergency Kits for IOCC. "The Emergency Kit Program has helped me to re-learn and understand that there is more to helping those in need than donating a dollar." Over the years, Presvytera Flora and her parish have assembled hundreds of kits for those in need. The kits they

have made have helped IOCC to deliver assistance to people in places like Haiti, Lebanon, Georgia, and Romania.

Presvytera plans to continue the Emergency Kit project in her parish, teaching her community about those in need and prayerfully doing the will of God. "It is a very humbling and beautiful experience that should be shared," she observed.

*Presvytera Flora Moraitis and her husband, Fr. Dimitrios Moraitis, serve at the parish of St. Paraskevi in Greenlawn, NY. To learn more about how Presvytera Flora organizes the Emergency Kit project in her parish, please visit [www.iocc.org/kits](http://www.iocc.org/kits).*



## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

You can play a vital role in helping children and families in need in just about an hour a month.

Parish representatives help to communicate the work of IOCC in their local parish. For more information on how you can make a difference for people in need, please contact: Megan Carniewski ([mcarniewski@iocc.org](mailto:mcarniewski@iocc.org)) or Vasi Jankovich ([vjankovich@iocc.org](mailto:vjankovich@iocc.org)) or call 1-877-803-IOCC (4622).

**Learn more at [iocc.org/getinvolved](http://iocc.org/getinvolved)**