



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES NEWS & NEEDS

SHARING GOOD

WINTER 2012

OPENING DOORS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN OF FAMINE

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(right) It's been five months since these Somali teens fled their homes and their communities to find food and safety in Ethiopia, and even longer since they attended school regularly. Through your support, IOCC is helping restore normalcy back into their lives by building a new high school in Bokolomanyo refugee camp where hundreds of teen refugees like these can resume their education.

As the young refugee children of Somalia's famine begin to regain their strength under the watchful care of international relief organizations, many are heading back to class in one of the several elementary schools existing in the refugee camp of Bokolomanyo and other nearby camps in Dolo Ado, Ethiopia. For their older brothers and sisters, the nearest high school is more than 60 miles away leaving displaced refugee families desperate to find an accessible and safe place for their adolescent sons



Mark Orianjan/IOCC

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and daughters to complete their education. Responding to their needs and a desire to help, IOCC in cooperation with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC) is constructing the first high school in Bokolomanyo for teen refugees.

Access to a school and regular class attendance will be the first step in restoring some normalcy to the turbulent lives of the more than 500 youths from ages 15 to

20 that have not had an opportunity to complete their education because of famine and civil unrest. The first phase of construction will include four classrooms, an administrative office, storage rooms and living quarters for the school staff. Classrooms will be equipped with desks, blackboards, and teaching materials, and a new water and sanitation facility will provide the children and faculty with clean, running water.

From The Executive Director



Dear Friends,

It's a new year and a new opportunity to share with you the many meaningful ways your support has helped IOCC rebuild the homes, health and livelihoods for thousands of people in distress around the world. To keep you better informed, we've found a cost effective way to bring *News & Needs* to you four times a year instead of three. Our compact, easy-to-read format is filled with the latest updates about IOCC programs and full-color photos featuring the places where your compassion is at work helping to uplift the lives of men, women, and children impacted by natural disasters and manmade upheavals.

For those of you who, like me, also stay connected with IOCC on the Internet, I invite you to take advantage of the new IOCC Quick Response code that appears on the front page. You can access our website by scanning this QR code with your mobile device.

I hope that these changes will bring you closer to the people whose lives and dignity you are restoring through your support.

In Christ,

Constantine M. Triantafilou
Executive Director & CEO

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn for daily IOCC developments, event news and highlights from past IOCC events.



MEDICAL SHIPMENT STRENGTHENS ZIMBABWE'S AILING FAMILIES



Godlove Ntaw/IOCC

Surviving the first five years of life is a struggle for Zimbabwe's children because of a lack of medicine to treat life-threatening infections and water-borne diseases. These toddler patients at St. Nectarios Orthodox Clinic are thriving thanks to your ongoing support of IOCC's program to provide the pharmaceuticals and medical supplies needed to save young lives.

As the number of hospitals and doctors in Zimbabwe continues to decline, St. Nectarios Orthodox Clinic in the capital city of Harare remains as one of the few medical support lifelines for the country's most impoverished families. Intestinal and respiratory tract infections along pregnancy complications are constant health threats in Zimbabwe, especially in remote parts of the country with little access to healthcare. As a result, UNICEF reports that nearly 100 children die every day from preventable diseases, and at least eight women a day don't survive childbirth.

The lack of healthcare makes life very hard in Zimbabwe, especially for disabled children who cannot stand or walk on their own. Many are hidden away at home because the family cannot afford to buy a wheelchair.

Through a generous donation from the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, IOCC in

cooperation with the Zimbabwe Orthodox Church and medical partners, Medical Teams International (MTI) and Wheels for Humanity (WFH), delivered 185 wheelchairs and two large medical kits to St. Nectarios Clinic filled with enough lifesaving medicine to treat 20,000 ailing children and adults for intestinal and respiratory infections, malaria, cholera and pneumonia.

The medical care package also contained multivitamins vital for protecting expectant mothers from prenatal complications and for shielding children against vitamin deficiency conditions such as blindness and life-threatening intestinal infections.

Since 2006, IOCC has helped keep Zimbabwe's most vulnerable people healthy and mobile with shipments of medical supplies, surgical instruments, medical equipment and critically-needed medicines, as well as wheelchairs, walkers and crutches.

To learn more about how IOCC helps others help themselves, please visit www.iocc.org

NEW STOVES BRING WINTER RELIEF TO SERBIA QUAKE SURVIVORS

More than one year after an earthquake in the Serbian village of Vitanovac crumbled the walls of her home and destroyed her only source of heat, this woman eagerly assembles the new wood stove now sitting in her kitchen. Through a generous gift from the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand, IOCC provided wood burning stoves and firewood for 150 families struggling to rebuild their earthquake damaged homes.

The greatest destruction from the 2010 tremor was recorded around the city of Kraljevo where it caused serious damage to houses, the power supply, water and sanitation

facilities, roads and critical public buildings such as hospitals and schools. The 5.4 earthquake was followed by almost 100 aftershocks that destabilized already vulnerable buildings even further, and destroyed homes beyond repair.

IOCC and relief partner Philanthropy, the charitable fund of the Serbian Orthodox Church, responded after the initial quake, assessing the needs of the survivors and supplying them with emergency hygiene kits and personal care products for the elderly. The most recent relief efforts included a shipment of bed linens, baby kits and quilts distributed in cooperation with the Red Cross of Serbia.



Red Cross of Serbia

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IRAQI REFUGEES CRAFT NEW CAREERS

Faten, 48, will tell you that she misses her life in Iraq but the growing violence that surrounded the home she shared with husband, Khalid, and their three sons made her desperate to find a safer place for her children. The family fled to Syria with little money, a few possessions, and no job prospects, but still relieved to be away from fighting and bloodshed.

Like many Iraqi refugees fleeing to Syria, Faten and her family had to rely on humanitarian assistance with no source of income to rise above certain poverty. With your support and funding from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM), IOCC is helping Iraqi refugees and disadvantaged Syrians develop untapped artistic talent into a money-making craft.

Through a special artisan training program implemented in cooperation with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East (GOPA), Iraqi refugees hone their creative skills in producing bead, metal, and stone jewelry, as well as glass etching. After graduation, the artisans display their handcrafted work at several expositions and fairs throughout the year. The craft fairs generate income and renewed hope for the refugee artisans while providing the buyers with high quality, fashionable products.

The beauty of beadwork had always fascinated Faten, and the

opportunity to put her passion to work now means the ability to earn income in Syria or wherever she and her family ultimately settle. "My mind and hands are active again, I am creating jewelry that people can enjoy and that makes me happy and thankful."



Nabeel Jazrawi/GOPA

Faten's colorful beaded jewelry exhibit attracts a buyer at one of the many indoor craft shows held throughout the year in Syria.

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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actalliance

MAKING THE GOSPEL ALIVE

Father Michael Rosco

Our Lord's most powerful and important message can be found in Matthew 25:31-46. In relating the Parable of the Last Judgment, Christ vividly illustrates what criteria will be used when "...He shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead."

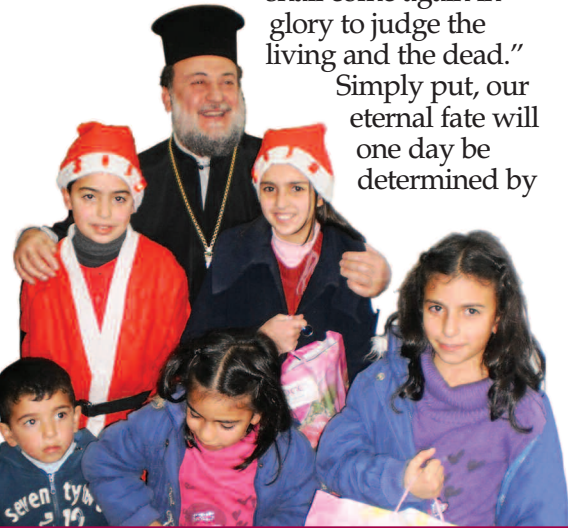
Simply put, our eternal fate will one day be determined by

how we respond to the basic human needs of others. Indeed, we are called upon by our Savior to feed those who are hungry, to offer drink to those who are thirsty, to offer clothing to those who have none and to visit and offer comfort to the ill and imprisoned. He emphatically reminds us that when we do these things for the least of His brethren, it is as if we have acted charitably towards our Master Himself.

For twenty years now, IOCC has based its very existence on following Christ's words in this Gospel lesson. IOCC has been a global organization, responding to emergency situations throughout the world as well as obediently

heeding our Lord's command to feed, clothe, comfort and teach. The impact of IOCC has been seen in the remote villages of Africa, the war-torn region of Bosnia and the streets of New Orleans, to name just a few places that have seen IOCC in action. Whenever a helping hand has been needed, IOCC has been there to extend it.

Can we call upon each other to play a leading role in promoting the work of IOCC? If we are enthused about the exciting and life-changing work of International Orthodox Christian Charities, our enthusiasm can serve as encouragement for others to share in our support of this fine apostolate of the Church.



Your support kept Christmas alive for families living in isolation in the Gaza Strip as IOCC distributed gifts to more than 540 children attending a Nativity celebration hosted by His Beatitude Archbishop Alexios of Gaza. (Photo: Dimitrije Djukic/IOCC)

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS FOR 2012 ORTHODOX ACTION TEAMS

Join the growing network of over 600 IOCC Orthodox Action Team volunteers as we continue to help families rebuild their lives by constructing new homes or doing critical renovations to existing ones. You do not need to be skilled—just energetic! We are recruiting volunteers for one week of active service in Houston or Minneapolis. Activities vary depending on location and construction schedules, but can include siding, roofing, framing, landscaping, painting and support.

Please consider becoming a part of this growing network of good and helping your brothers and sisters in Christ who need your support. To volunteer, please fill out and submit the online form at www.iocc.org/actionteam. For specific questions, please contact the US Programs Department of IOCC at 1-877-803-IOCC or by e-mail to dchristopulos@iocc.org.



IOCC cordially invites you to our
**20TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION GALA**

Tuesday, May 8, 2012

Capital Hilton Hotel • Washington, D.C.
Cocktail Reception 6:00PM • Dinner 7:30PM

www.iocc.org/20thanniversary



**INTERNATIONAL
ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN CHARITIES**

Respond. Rebuild. Uplift.