

## *IOCC parish representatives needed*

Here's a new way for parishioners to advance the humanitarian mission of IOCC from the comfort of their own... parish. IOCC is looking for people who can devote one hour a month in their parishes to raise awareness about the people served by IOCC worldwide. These parish representatives, through their volunteerism, will be a link between Orthodox parishes in the United States and needy people around the world. They also will serve as a vital link between parishes and IOCC, especially in places where there are currently no Metropolitan Committees.

Potential activities for parish representatives include displaying IOCC materials in the parish, staying current with IOCC news, informing the parish about IOCC's humanitarian programs and organizing events such as video presentations. We believe that this kind of volunteerism should be done with the priest's blessing. If you have someone in your parish who you think would be a good parish representative, please contact IOCC Communications Associate Stephen Huba toll-free at 1-877-803-4622 or shuba@iocc.org.

## *David Holdridge joins IOCC*

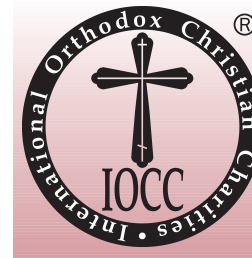
David Holdridge has joined IOCC as Chief Operating Officer. He is responsible for IOCC's general operations, with a focus on program development and implementation. Holdridge spent that last two years with the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation as county representative in Vietnam.

Previously, he served 19 years with Catholic Relief Services, with whom he held regional and country director positions in Africa, Asia and the Balkans. In 1999, he led CRS's humanitarian response to the crisis in Kosovo, and in 1991, he managed CRS's response to the first Iraq war.

## *Upcoming IOCC events*

The following events are being sponsored during the next few months by local Metropolitan Committees in support of IOCC's work. See details at [www.iocc.org/events](http://www.iocc.org/events).

- **BOSTON, MA**  
Evening of Jazz, Oct. 4
- **AKRON, OH**  
Annual Banquet, Oct. 5
- **CHARLOTTE, NC**  
Luncheon with His Grace Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos, Oct. 19
- **CLEVELAND, OH**  
Bowl-a-thon, Oct. 19
- **ORANGE COUNTY, CA**  
Annual Banquet, Nov. 9
- **SAN FRANCISCO, CA**  
"Remembering Home" Banquet, Nov. 23



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

# PRIEST *to* PRIEST

VOLUME 4, NO 3 FALL 2003

## *"Let the children come unto me. . ."*

Serving on the IOCC Board of Directors has given me a better understanding of the value and impact of Orthodoxy's humanitarian aid organization. The mission of IOCC, and the professional manner in which it is fulfilled, my brothers in Christ, is truly inspirational. Equally important is the opportunity afforded our Orthodox people to "respond to the call of Jesus Christ." There are many fine agencies through which we can respond; however, IOCC is the organization of Orthodox Christians, and it is our unified effort that makes IOCC unique.

One goal of the staff and board members of IOCC is to make Orthodox children more aware of the needs in our world, and to make IOCC a part of their prayer lives during their young and impressionable years. To this end, as the new ecclesiastical year approaches, and as our church school programs gear up, a very special publication has been prepared. "My Prayer Journal" describes the needs of children living in countries served by IOCC and concludes with prayer suggestions that our youngsters can make a part of their daily prayers.

My appeal to you is that the children's prayer journal be included in your parish's religious education program for children. I believe you and the staff of your Sunday School department will find it to be a welcome and effective spiritual tool. A separate article in this issue of "Priest to Priest" provides further details about the journal and information about how you can order copies for your parish.

Please accept my well wishes for a spiritually productive church year filled with the blessings of the Lord. I also thank you for your continued efforts to bring the mission and message of IOCC to your parishioners, without whose support the organization's work cannot continue. May our loving and merciful Savior, Jesus Christ, inspire us to share the blessings of IOCC with our youngsters as well.

*Fr. Michael Ellias*

Fr. Michael Ellias

## *Children's prayer journal available*

Prayer is an important part of our daily lives as Orthodox Christians. As a way to engage children in the work of IOCC and encourage them in their prayer lives, IOCC is offering a 12-month children's prayer book called "My Prayer Journal."

This colorful book is designed to help children as they pray, not only for themselves but also for children living in countries where IOCC works.

The journal starts in September to coincide with the beginning of the church year. Each month features a different country where IOCC is implementing humanitarian and self-help programs.

Along with information about each country, there are Bible verses, activities, quotes from the Church Fathers, excerpts from the Divine Liturgy and interesting facts.

To order this free resource in time for the new church year, please go online at [www.iocc.org/journal](http://www.iocc.org/journal) or send your request to IOCC, P.O. Box 630225, Baltimore, MD 21263-0225.

## *Workplace giving encouraged*

Each fall, Americans are invited to participate in a variety of workplace giving campaigns. These include the United Way, the Combined Federal Campaigns, and many state, local and private workplace campaigns. IOCC gives your parishioners an Orthodox choice for their philanthropy.

Please encourage your parishioners to designate IOCC to help provide assistance to families in need throughout the world. IOCC is registered through Global Impact (formerly International Service Agencies), an alliance of non-profit organizations. Use IOCC campaign code #0348 or write in IOCC's name and address on the pledge form.

Camera-ready art suitable for use in your Sunday bulletins and newsletters is available for downloading at [www.iocc.org/art](http://www.iocc.org/art) or by calling IOCC at (877) 803 4622.

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR CLERGY OF ALL ORTHODOX CHURCH JURISDICTIONS IN AMERICA

from the Church Relations Committee of the IOCC Board of Directors  
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkoosky, Chairman, Rev. Irinej Dobrijevic, Very Rev. Michael Ellias  
Very Rev. Robert S. Kondratick, Anne Glynn Mackoul, Rev. Nicholas C. Triantafilou

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# IOCC PROGRAMS COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY

A Q U I C K O V E R V I E W - A U G U S T 2 0 0 3

THE FOLLOWING ARE SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS FROM AMONG IOCC'S PROJECTS. PLEASE POST IN YOUR PARISH

## Argentina

Since the collapse of Argentina's economy in late 2001, public schools have lost much of their government funding. In places like the La Matanza district of Buenos Aires, that means children go without school lunches. IOCC, in partnership with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Buenos Aires and South America, is helping a kindergarten in La Matanza develop its own organic farm. The produce from the farm will help feed 120 children and more than 60 elderly people in the neighborhood, as well as generate extra income for the school and its staff.

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

In places like Prijedor, Bosnia-Herzegovina, a hay baler is more than an agricultural implement — it is a tool of peace. Bosnians have witnessed the healing effects of a simple farm implement donated by IOCC as it is shared by farmers and used for the benefit of families across religious and ethnic lines. IOCC is partnering with the Farmer's Association of Prijedor, and others like it, to rebuild the agriculture sector and multi-ethnic communities of Bosnia.

## Iraq

IOCC is responding to the humanitarian crisis in Iraq with emergency relief for the victims of the war. As it has in other war-torn countries, IOCC is working with its Orthodox Church partners to deliver assistance, while building the capacity of the local church to meet the needs of the surrounding community. IOCC plans to provide emergency food parcels, medicines, medical supplies, tents and bedding, first-aid kits and drinking water to Iraqi children and families of all religious and ethnic backgrounds.

## Jerusalem/West Bank

The village of Te'enek, West Bank, has become a real beehive of activity, in more ways than one. Suffering from isolation and unemployment, the village asked IOCC-Jerusalem for help. Through vocational training and other forms of assistance, the villagers were able to build a new community center, agricultural roads and a public library. Women were trained in skills such as embroidery and honey production, enabling them to raise much-needed income for their families.

## Lebanon

As part of IOCC's food-for-education program in Lebanon, 3,000 sewing kits and 192 gallons of anti-bacterial soap will be distributed to participating schools in and around Beirut. The kits, provided by Church World Service's "Gift of the Heart" program, contain spools of thread, cloth, scissors, buttons and other sewing supplies that can be used to make and repair clothing. The soap, for use in school restrooms, will help prevent disease and infection.

## Republic of Georgia

IOCC's micro-credit program in the Republic of Georgia continues to grow. The program gives economic opportunity and security to budding Georgian entrepreneurs who otherwise do not have access to bank credit. Of the estimated 700 borrowers, half are small-scale farmers and half are small-business owners. Many have been able to pay off their debts and take out a second loan.

## Romania

Since IOCC began to participate in a project to reform the child welfare system in parts of Romania, 90 children have been successfully reintegrated with their families. In the counties of Dolj, Gorj and Mehedinti, IOCC and the Romanian Orthodox Church are seeking to reduce the number of children living in orphanages by 50 percent and to reduce the number of child abandonment cases by 90 percent within the next two years.

## Russian Federation

Russian winters are notoriously long and harsh. Each year, hundreds of people in the Russian Federation die from hypothermia, and thousands more must be treated. In preparation for next winter, IOCC, in partnership with the Russian Orthodox Church, will distribute thousands of winter blankets to some of the neediest institutions in the Russian Federation, including hospitals, orphanages and homeless shelters. The project, made possible by a grant from Church World Service, is part of IOCC's ongoing effort to meet the most basic needs of vulnerable Russians.

## Serbia and Montenegro

Nothing warms the heart like the smile of a child. In the past two years, IOCC and its partners have worked to brighten the smiles of children living in Serbia and Montenegro. The "Healthy Teeth-Beautiful Smile" project, implemented in the eight largest cities in Serbia, has helped thousands of children learn and apply proper dental hygiene. With the support of the Group 7 Vlade Divac Children's Foundation, children receive dental kits, educational materials on dental hygiene

and trading cards of their favorite Group 7 basketball players, encouraging them to practice healthy habits.

## United States of America

A pan-Orthodox effort to multiply "Loaves & Fishes" in Atlanta is succeeding, thanks to technical assistance from IOCC's U.S. Program. Thirteen parishes representing eight Orthodox jurisdictions are collecting weekly food and monetary donations for the "Loaves & Fishes" food program of St. John the Wonderworker Orthodox Church in inner-city Atlanta. The program feeds hundreds of homeless people each week.



**Now you can add  
'Humanitarian' to  
your resume.**

When you support IOCC through a workplace giving campaign, you're helping to buy nutritious lunches for school children, rebuild homes for refugee families, and provide job training for widowed mothers. For just pennies a day, your pledge to IOCC through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) or United Way can make a real difference for children and families affected by poverty, war and natural disasters.

**Workplace Giving Code #0348**

*Or, on the campaign form, write in:*  
International Orthodox Christian Charities  
P.O. Box 630225 • Baltimore, MD 21263-0225  
Toll-free: (877) 803-4622 • [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org)

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