

IOCC "Race To Respond"

"Race to Respond," Aug. 3-28, 2002, is a cross-country cycling event to benefit the humanitarian work of IOCC. Covering 12 states from New York to California, major stops will include Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, St. Louis, Denver, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco.

"Race to Respond" is not just a sporting event, but a way to raise awareness and funds for the mission of IOCC — and to celebrate IOCC's 10th anniversary. A coast-to-coast cycling event also is a tangible way of illustrating how IOCC works to connect communities around the globe.

Every day, IOCC is in a "race" to respond to the needs of people suffering from war, disease, natural disaster and poverty.

A team of five amateur cyclists, led by team captain and race organizer Jim Angelus of New Jersey, will cycle approximately 3,500 miles. Race rallies and welcoming events will be held at major stops along the route. In the upcoming weeks, IOCC will provide you with youth-oriented materials that will encourage participation in this event by parishes that are not along the route. For details go to www.iocc.org.

An addition to Priest to Priest

We want you, the spiritual leaders in our Orthodox parishes, to be fully informed about the programs and work of IOCC, because it is through you that we can best inform the Orthodox faithful throughout the country. Therefore, beginning with this issue, we are adding the section IOCC PROGRAMS COUNTRY BY COUNTRY: A QUICK OVERVIEW FOR PRIESTS. This information will be updated with each issue of Priest to Priest. We ask that you share it with your parishioners in whatever way you deem appropriate.

"The price of the kingdom is the food you give to those who need it"
St. Leo the Great

"This and That"

- The IOCC Board of Directors will be meeting in Baltimore, March 8 & 9. The agenda includes election of officers and members of the Executive Committee.
- The Baltimore Business Journal lists IOCC as one of the top 25 non-profit charities in Maryland. The rankings are based on the organizations' program services and size. This is a significant achievement for IOCC, which has been in existence for only 10 years.
- Stephen Huba was recently appointed to the position of Communications Associate with IOCC. Steve, who has extensive experience in journalism, will be part of the organization's Development Department staff in Baltimore, and will be responsible for news releases and other official communications.
- IOCC has received nearly \$250,000 in donations to our U.S. Program for response to the 9/11 tragedy. (See article on the front page for insight on how these funds are being used.) IOCC continues its commitment to international programs while charting new efforts in the United States. We thank all priests and their parishioners for continued support of all our efforts.

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INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES



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PRIEST to PRIEST

VOLUME 3, NO. 1 SPRING 2002

The effort continues ... and expands.

In this issue, I wish to update you about the progress being made with IOCC's response to the 9/11 tragedy.

The Orthodox Pastoral Emergency Counseling Network (OPEN) is an initiative of the IOCC U.S. Program, open to all in need at no charge. The first focus of the program is the families of 9/11 victims, for which IOCC has brought on Fr. David Kossey as coordinator. Fr. Kossey, with the help of volunteers, is currently locating the immediate families of victims and is attempting to identify their parish priests. At the same time, mental health professionals of the Orthodox faith are being recruited who are willing to volunteer their services. These services are being made available to the families through their parish priest, who has an established relationship with them. Thus, the services coordinated by IOCC become a pastoral resource to the local priest with a victim's family in his parish.

The next focus is the expansion of OPEN as a nationally coordinated emergency response mechanism for use in any future disaster. This effort, which will seek to provide quick-response counseling services, will consist of two phases. The first will be the identification of 25 priests and/or mental health professionals across America to serve as volunteer regional coordinators. They will undergo special training in disaster response at Eastern Mennonite University's Conflict Transformation Program in cooperation with Church World Service. Subsequently, each coordinator will recruit and train a team of six volunteers to serve as local support, for whom training will be provided through local offices of National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). Successful implementation of the OPEN program will greatly enhance the outcome of efforts by our priests and their parishioners to respond as Orthodox Christians to disasters in their communities.

Address questions about the OPEN program to Robert Pianka, U.S. Program Director, at rpianka@iocc.org. He is presently seeking priests to serve as coordinators and lay volunteers to serve on the local support teams.

Fr. Jim Kyriakakis, Director of Quality Assurance

Ivan Bojanic joins IOCC Baltimore

Metropolitan Committees across America now have a new contact at IOCC Headquarters in Baltimore. Ivan Bojanic, a specialist in international law and affairs with a law degree from the University of Texas, brings a wealth of experience in humanitarian aid to his new responsibilities with Metropolitan Committees. Born in Columbus, Ohio, of immigrant parents from Yugoslavia, he is fluent in Serbian and served for two years as IOCC Head of Office in Belgrade. In addition to working with Metropolitan Committees, Ivan will be assisting the Development Department with IOCC's "Race to Respond" and other elements of our 10th anniversary celebration.

Ivan can be contacted at ibojanic@iocc.org. He intends to establish regular and frequent communication with all Metropolitan Committees.

Honors Internship Program advances

The 2001 internships were successfully completed in Bosnia, Moscow, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, and the selection of five 3-month interns for 2002 from a group of outstanding applicants is nearing completion. A priority for the upcoming months is to seek accreditation of the Internship Program by colleges and universities. If you think you can help with this effort, please contact us at relief@iocc.org.

Applications for 2003 internships are due by November 31, 2002, and are available at www.iocc.org, or by request toll free at 1-877-803-4622. Please inform college students in your parish and encourage them to apply.

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.

- Fayetteville, NC, Concert/Talent Show, March 9.
- Houston, TX, Benefit Concert, March 10.
- Baltimore, MD, 10th Anniv. Celebration, April 18.
- Atlanta, GA, Walk-a-thon, May 18

You can help organize an IOCC Metropolitan Committee in your area. Contact Ivan Bojanic at ibojanic@iocc.org.

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A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR CLERGY OF ALL ORTHODOX CHURCH JURISDICTIONS

IOCC PROGRAMS COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY

A Q U I C K O V E R V I E W - F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 2

Albania

IOCC is partnering with Diakonia Agapes ("Service of Love"), a ministry of the Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, to rehabilitate a women's health clinic and nursery in a rural village; supply a children's health education program in a village school; and support a public health campaign among young people in the capital of Tirana.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Refugee families returning to their pre-war communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina are achieving economic security through IOCC agricultural programs such as a greenhouse project. In 2001, 60 greenhouses of 1,600-square-feet each were installed and supplied with seeds, fertilizer and tools, providing families with healthy produce to eat and sell year round.

Ethiopia

A pilot project with the development arm of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church will seek to establish diverse agricultural projects at the Belbeit and Gashola monasteries, benefiting both the monasteries and their surrounding communities.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Six years after the end of the Bosnian war and two years after the Kosovo crisis, IOCC remains committed to helping the more than 400,000 refugees still in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. IOCC, through its extensive network of local partners, is working to educate refugees of all ethnic backgrounds about their rights and to facilitate their return to their pre-war communities.

Greece

Greece remains a key source of support to IOCC and its field offices, as with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' recent funding of a rural development project in the West Bank.

Jerusalem/West Bank

With funding from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IOCC is implementing a project to strengthen neglected rural communities in the Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin regions of the West Bank. The program, which will be expanded in the coming months, benefits at-risk Palestinian women and youth.

Lebanon

More than 20,000 school children in Beirut, southern Lebanon and the northern Akkar district are receiving daily school lunches and healthy-lifestyle materials thanks to IOCC's participation in the Global Food for Education Initiative. By providing school lunches, the program encourages underprivileged students to stay in school and offers them the prospect of a better education.

Republic of Georgia

A new school lunch program under the Global Food for Education Initiative has helped thousands of school children in the capital of Tbilisi. Funded by the sale of surplus agricultural commodities donated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the program also gives children much-needed school supplies.

Romania

An IOCC-run community center in the southwest town of Bistrita offers training in various language and life skills to the surrounding region. The center has a waiting list of more than 100 children wanting to enroll in its programs. Recently, IOCC was given permission by local authorities to add additional space to the center.

Russian Federation

Partnering with the Russian Orthodox Church, IOCC continues to provide emergency food relief to orphanages, hospitals, nursing homes, parish soup kitchens and other institutions in and around Moscow. An estimated 57,000 tons of food have been delivered over the past three years, giving food security to the Russian Federation's most vulnerable citizens.

United States of America

In the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, IOCC is providing the framework for an ongoing trauma counseling network that links Orthodox clergy and mental health professionals with the victims and their families. The program lays the foundation for a national network of Orthodox clergy and laity that will be able to respond to future disasters with physical and spiritual assistance.

