

Archbishop Iakovos remembered

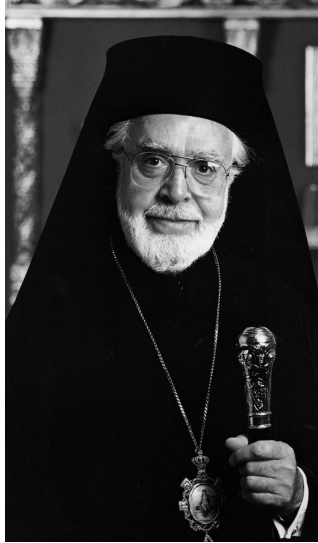
IOCC mourns the loss of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, the Orthodox hierarch most responsible for the founding of IOCC in 1992.

Archbishop Iakovos, 93, passed away on Sunday, April 10, in Stamford, Conn., from a pulmonary ailment. He was primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America from 1959 to 1996.

His Eminence was chairman of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), the parent body of IOCC, at the time of IOCC's founding in 1992.

"The longtime support and encouragement of IOCC consistently voiced by Archbishop Iakovos flowed out of his larger vision for a just and peaceful world," said IOCC Chairman of the Board Bert W. Moyar. "His leadership helped set the course for what has now been 13 years of effective humanitarian outreach to some of the most vulnerable people in the world."

IOCC Executive Director Constantine M. Triantafilou praised Archbishop Iakovos as a visionary leader. "His faith, courage, dignity and love were exemplified in his life and ministry," he said. "We are saddened by his passing but know he is resting in peace with our Lord. May his memory be eternal."



"Someone who speaks in defense of a person who suffers injustice will find an advocate in his Creator." — St. Isaac of Syria

Spring Appeal booklets available

IOCC's 2005 Spring Appeal, which mailed during Lent, was accompanied by an attractive eight-page booklet titled "The Image of Christ in the Poor." Authored by Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, dean of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, the booklet explores the biblical and patristic foundations of Orthodox philanthropy.

Extra copies of this booklet are available for download. Visit www.iocc.org/greatlent2005 for your copy.

Upcoming events scheduled

The following events are being sponsored in the next few months by local Metropolitan Committees in support of IOCC's work. See details at www.iocc.org/events about these and other events.

- **CLEVELAND, OH**
Cleveland Metropolitan Committee banquet, June 6, Cathedral of the Falling Asleep of Blessed Virgin Mary (Romanian); Featured speaker will be former IOCC Intern Chrysanthe Loizos
- **DALLAS, TX**
IOCC Opera Benefit, July 23, hosted by Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
- **PITTSBURGH, PA**
2nd annual John G. Rangos-IOCC Golf Scramble, Aug. 27, Lindenwood Golf Club, McMurray, PA
IOCC Metropolitan Committee of Pittsburgh
- **GARDEN GROVE, CA**
IOCC Family Day, Aug. 28, St. Luke's Antiochian Orthodox Church, Garden Grove, CA



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

PRIEST to PRIEST

VOLUME 6, NO. 2 SUMMER 2005

'My peace I give to you'

On St. Thomas Sunday, we heard the resurrected Christ greeting his disciples with the words, "Peace be with you." Shalom. It is an echo of his words to them, recorded in John 14:27, prior to his Passion. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." At this time of year, as we bask in the glow of Pascha, we are mindful of the peace that only Jesus can give, and also of the peace that we must strive for here on earth.

Elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." There are many ways that we can be peacemakers and encourage our parishioners to be peacemakers. What's more, the Orthodox Church has unique gifts to bring to this area of human existence — an acquaintance with the horrors of war, its saints who have worked for peace, and a belief in the power of forgiveness.

In a world that groans under the weight of war, we as Christians must be vigilant in our pursuit of peace. IOCC is one manifestation of how the Orthodox Church is working for peace in countries that have been torn apart by war. I never cease to be amazed, as a member of the IOCC Board of Directors, at how IOCC is able to sow the seeds of peace through its work in places like the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus, Africa, Asia and beyond.

Let me tell you about just a couple examples. In the former Yugoslavia, 10 years since the end of the Bosnian war, IOCC is bringing students of different ethnic and religious backgrounds together through the wonders of computer and Internet technology. This "Connecting Kids" project is making friends out of young people who previously viewed each other at a distance through the lens of animosity and distrust.

In the West Bank, at a pivotal time in the history of the Holy Land, IOCC will be training hundreds of Palestinian women and young people in public health, grassroots democracy building and civic leadership through computer technology, small groups and library resources.

In these and many other ways, IOCC is fostering the spirit of peace and fulfilling the call of Christ to be peacemakers. I ask for your continuing support of this vital work that is being done on your behalf around the world. Thank you.

Very Rev. Robert Kondratick
Fr. Robert Kondratick

Second IOCC study trip planned

"Witnessing the sacred ministry of IOCC in Bosnia brought me to tears." "The work of IOCC is our Orthodox theology in action." "The loving and tender hand of IOCC is undeniably felt throughout the Balkans." These are just a few comments from priests who joined in the 2004 IOCC study trip to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Now IOCC is returning to the former Yugoslavia with its second study trip, giving you an opportunity to see IOCC's humanitarian programs first hand.

Come along as we travel to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia-Montenegro and witness the ways that your support of IOCC is helping people recover from war. The study trip, scheduled for Aug. 29-Sept. 7, will include visits to Belgrade, Banja Luka and other IOCC project sites, as well as a scheduled audience with His Holiness Patriarch Pavle. Estimated cost is \$2,700, and final payment is due by June 24. For more information, visit the IOCC Web site at www.iocc.org/studytrip or contact Dan Christopoulos at (952) 930-3286.

Addressing AIDS in Romania

IOCC and the Romanian Orthodox Church are joining together to help Romania address the growing threat of AIDS and family violence.

On April 19, IOCC and the Church formalized a partnership to develop and spread a faith-based message of AIDS prevention and nondiscrimination, empowering young people and adults alike with better awareness and methods of prevention, updating religious curricula to address social and health concerns, and training clergy and lay people to more effectively care for and assist people living with HIV/AIDS.

The three-year, \$5.4 million project includes \$2 million in support from the U.S. Agency for International Development and \$3.4 million in support from IOCC and the Romanian Orthodox Church. IOCC's contribution was bolstered by the generous support of Romanian Orthodox Christians in the U.S. Romania has the highest level of HIV-positive children in Europe.

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A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR ORTHODOX CLERGY

from the Church Relations Committee of the IOCC Board of Directors
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Chairman, Very Rev. Michael Ellias
Very Rev. Robert S. Kondratick, Rev. Nicholas C. Triantafilou

IOCC PROGRAMS COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY

A Q U I C K O V E R V I E W - J U N E 2 0 0 5

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

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Gojko's family is one of 90 that have returned to Sanski Most municipality in northwest Bosnia-Herzegovina since the 1992-1995 war. Like other villagers, Gojko, 40, works as a farmer and struggles to make ends meet. A corn harvester he received from IOCC, one of 14 tractor attachments distributed in his village, makes it possible for him to increase production and thereby support his family. He is "repaying" the gift by helping his neighbors during the corn harvest. Through agriculture revitalization programs such as these, IOCC is contributing to reconciliation and economic security in Bosnia.

Ethiopia

"It is hard to imagine Ethiopia without coffee," said Ato Assefa, a participant in IOCC's HIV/AIDS program in Ethiopia. "The coffee ceremony is a forum for discussions ranging from the personal to the political." In his community, where Ato Assefa was the first person to disclose publicly his HIV-positive status, he uses the Ethiopian coffee ceremony, a common feature of Ethiopian culture, to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. Ato Assefa receives a stipend from IOCC and organizes the awareness programs in collaboration with a local health officer.

Jerusalem/West Bank

Khitam, 45, of Beita, the West Bank, has three daughters and a 20-year-old disabled son. In 2004, her 49-year-old husband was diagnosed with a brain tumor, but the family cannot afford the necessary cancer treatment. That same year, Khitam was trained in public health education and honey production through IOCC-led workshops. The skills she learned she uses to train other women and earn extra income for her family's medical and education expenses. She is one of hundreds of rural Palestinian women that IOCC has trained in this way, empowering them with marketable skills and new leadership roles that benefit their families and communities.

Lebanon

Thirteen-year-old Rana and her 8-year-old brother, Ali, are students at Al Shiyyah Public School in Beirut, one of 181 public schools being served by IOCC's nutrition and education program in Lebanon. As they speak, their eyes tell a sad story of neglect. "I like going to school," Rana said, "but last year, we had to stay in the streets, my brother and I, because we had no money or food." Now, thanks to the intervention of school officials and IOCC, the children have a place to stay and at least one healthy meal a day.

Republic of Georgia

Giga, 6, is a first-grader at Poti School No. 4 in western Georgia. His family lives in great need and, as his teacher said, cannot even afford basic groceries. Giga felt embarrassed going to class without school supplies. That all changed when he received a "Gift of the Heart" school kit from IOCC. It gave him a feeling of self-worth and hope, as well as the chance to pursue his favorite hobby — drawing. The project was made possible by school kits assembled by Orthodox Christians. To learn more about the "Gift of the Heart" initiative, please visit www.iocc.org/kits.

Serbia-Montenegro (Kosovo)

Living in certain parts of Kosovo is a daily struggle because of lack of security, mobility and proper shelter. But with the help of the local partner "Majka 9 Jugovica," IOCC is providing more than a thousand displaced families, including some staying in a shelter in Gracanica, with a one-month supply of supplementary food and hygiene items. IOCC's support of a soup kitchen in Prekovac will provide immediate, life-sustaining assistance to elderly and other poor people in the Novo Brdo region, and cover the operational costs of the soup kitchen for six months.

Southeast Asia

Erlidayani, a young mother of two, including a 19-day-old baby, was home on Dec. 26, 2004, when the tsunami hit: "I raced to the second floor of the house with my two daughters, and as I turned to look back down the stairs, I saw my mother washed away amidst the debris. My husband and I could do nothing to save her. Our house and all we owned have been swept away, and now we are trying to decide if we will apply for relocation and return, or if we will walk away from all we knew and start again." Erlidayani and her children received help at a medical clinic in the village of Sibreh being supported by IOCC.

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