



# INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

# PRIEST *to* PRIEST

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## *"It changed my idea of IOCC. . ."*

The reaction on September 11 at IOCC was typical of anywhere in America. Shortly after 9:00 a.m. all else was put aside and every sinew of energy was concentrated on the need for help in response to the greatest tragedy to ever face America. Our mission: *"Respond to the call of our Lord Jesus Christ. . ."*

IOCC made phone calls throughout the day to Orthodox Parishes in lower Manhattan. Our goal: To mobilize and converge on the scene as many Orthodox clergy and laity as possible with capabilities in disaster response, medicine, triage, nursing, crisis management, post-trauma counseling, etc. An IOCC specialist in disaster work was immediately dispatched to New York City to help assess the needs for emergency aid, to work with local Orthodox parishes in NYC and to help coordinate the Church's response. An IOCC email alert went out to all Orthodox parishes in America with information about the initiatives being taken and to request contributions to support the effort. A coordination hub for the Orthodox Church's response was immediately established at St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church in lower Manhattan.

The IOCC Metropolitan Committee for NYC has assumed responsibility for on-going coordination of the Church's effort. The Committee held a meeting on the evening of September 13 at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral on 74th Street, with the IOCC specialist from Baltimore present to offer consultation on the coordination of volunteers. In attendance were clergy, church leaders and volunteers, many of whom have expertise in crisis counseling, social work and disaster management. The purpose of the meeting was to organize the IOCC-led pan-Orthodox effort to assist in the aftermath of the strikes. In addition to emergency aid, the need for trauma and pastoral counseling services to help survivors with emotional and spiritual distress, not only immediately but also during the months and even years ahead, were addressed.

In a news release, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese announced that Archbishop Demetrios, Chairman of SCOBA, had designated IOCC to help coordinate the National Orthodox Relief Centers organized by the Archdiocese to address the destruction of the World Trade Center. His Eminence said IOCC is the appropriate choice for this role since it was established for such purposes internationally by SCOBA.

Many Orthodox clergy, faithful and church leaders have experienced the work of IOCC first hand as a result of the

September 11 tragedy. The testimonials are many. The words of Father Angelo Pappas of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Portsmouth, NH, a chaplain with the Portsmouth Fire Department, speak for themselves. Father Angelo was helped by IOCC to get down to "ground zero," where he worked both as an Orthodox priest and as a firefighter in the days following the attacks. "This was an unforgettable experience. . . it changed my idea of IOCC," he said. "I didn't really know what they did — now I do. It was an honor to work through an Orthodox agency, through IOCC."

Given the myriad of organizations involved in the disaster response to the events of September 11, IOCC's role in New York will continue to focus on coordinated service delivery of the Orthodox Church to ensure the efficient and effective use of donations received to assist victims. With the support of volunteers, IOCC staff will maintain the "coordination hub" at St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church in order to facilitate the pan-Orthodox response. This response will include Orthodox volunteers making visits to firehouses in New York, an IOCC-hosted training seminar in November led by clergy/trainers brought from Oklahoma City by to assist Orthodox clergy to better support their parishes and communities during disasters, and training for Orthodox lay counselors and youth workers in the New York City area to make visitations to Orthodox youth organizations to discuss the disaster. Finally, the coordination will also include Orthodox participation in the creation of an inter-faith "WTC Resource Center" to provide referrals, grants, and services to people seeking assistance, family therapy and training for volunteers.

The work of IOCC, in the meanwhile, continues in various parts of the world. The love of the Orthodox people internationally reaches out to the victims of war, natural disaster and economic insufficiency, based exclusively on their need. It is for this that IOCC was established by SCOBA. You can help our people become aware of the mission of IOCC "... to respond to the call of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

**Fr. Jim Kyriakakis, Director of Quality Assurance**

*P.S. The enclosed prayers, which you can copy and make into convenient prayer cards on cover stock, are a small way to help your parishioners in their need for comfort during these difficult times.*

## *IOCC Sunday - November 18*

You recently received an encyclical from the SCOBA Hierarchs announcing that the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving, November 18, is IOCC Sunday throughout the parishes of all Orthodox jurisdictions in America. The encyclical was sent earlier with the thought that you might wish to include it in your November parish newsletter. You may also choose to include it in your Sunday bulletin on the 18th. Hopefully, many of our priests will read the encyclical from the pulpit at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

The purpose of the encyclical is to bring awareness to our people about the mission and work of IOCC on behalf of worldwide Orthodoxy. A specific request for contributions is not made in the encyclical. Rather, it is left to the discretion of each parish priest as to how to best encourage the support of his people for the work of IOCC. It is our hope that the spirit of compassion and love for fellow man that is inherent to Thanksgiving in America will move our Orthodox faithful to be generous in their support.

This year particularly, in the aftermath of the unprecedented tragedies of September 11, we ask you to make a special effort on IOCC Sunday to bring the mission and work of IOCC to the attention of the faithful. Perhaps in addition to reading the SCOBA encyclical, you can consider adding your own remarks based on the preceding article.

Please point out that their support is needed not only for the needs resulting from the September 11 tragedies, but also for IOCC's ongoing work internationally.

Address any questions you might have to Michael Tsakalos, Annual Giving Associate, at [mtsakalos@iocc.org](mailto:mtsakalos@iocc.org).

## *Internship Deadline - November 30*

The deadline for submitting applications for 2002 IOCC Honors Internships is November 30, 2001. If you are aware of a college student, a graduate school student or a recent college graduate in your parish who might be interested in applying for a 3 or 12 month internship with IOCC, please have them contact us as soon as possible at 877-803-4622 (toll free), or by email at [frjim@iocc.org](mailto:frjim@iocc.org). They can also get information and obtain an application form at our website, [www.iocc.org](http://www.iocc.org). Interns receive a stipend, include housing and travel costs to and from the country of assignment. During 2001 we have had three short-term (3 months) interns in Baltimore, Washington, DC and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and one long-term (12 months) intern in Moscow.

## *"This and That"*

- Has an IOCC Metropolitan Committee been organized for your area? If not and you are interested in learning how a committee can be established, contact IOCC's U.S. Program Director, Robert Pianka, at [rpianka@iocc.org](mailto:rpianka@iocc.org). Metropolitan Committees bring together parishioners of Orthodox parishes within a geographic area to generate awareness and support for the mission and work of IOCC in the United States and internationally.
- IOCC is recruiting for two positions: **Volunteer Services Coordinator** for Baltimore Headquarters, and **Project Director** for Serbia. Please refer any worthy candidates to Paul Rock, at 1-877-803-4622 (toll free) or email at [prock@iocc.org](mailto:prock@iocc.org).

*"Happy is the man who is able to love all men alike."  
St. Maximus the Confessor*

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