

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

More details to come



**INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX
 CHRISTIAN CHARITIES**
Respond. Rebuild. Uplift.

IOCC Upcoming Events

More details at www.iocc.org/events.

- **Bergenfield, NJ** – November 19, 2011
3rd Annual Wine Tasting
St. Anthony Orthodox Church
- **Tucson, AZ** – November 19, 2011
IOCC Dinner
Holy Resurrection Antiochian Church
- **South Central, PA** – November 19, 2011
IOCC/OCMC Event
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation
- **Akron, OH** – November 20, 2011
IOCC Sunday Dinner
St. George Antiochian Church
- **Indianapolis, IN** – November 20, 2011
IOCC Luncheon
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
- **Grand Rapids, MI** – November 20, 2011
IOCC Sunday Vespers and Dinner
St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church
- **Baltimore, MD** – December 11, 2011
IOCC St. Nicholas Christmas Dinner
Liberatore's Restaurant
- **Cambridge, MA** – December 18, 2011
IOCC Luncheon
St. Mary Orthodox Church
- **Cherry Hill, NJ** – January 15, 2012
75th Novogodny Ball
Crowne Plaza Hotel – Philadelphia



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

PRIEST to PRIEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 3 WINTER 2011

Dear Fellow Laborers
 in the Lord's Vineyard:

I heard on the news this morning that the "Occupy Wall Street" movement has begun to erect tents in downtown Manhattan in anticipation of the rapidly approaching cold weather. Despite the warnings of the civil authorities not to do so, these protesters are sending the message that they are here for the long haul.

Recently an Orthodox priest and his wife were discussing this phenomenon with a small group of college-educated 20-somethings. One young man supported the protesters and asserted, "Well, after all, Jesus was a communist. In the Book of Acts it says that the earliest followers of Jesus held everything in common. Each one gave what he could, and everyone had what he needed." A young woman observed, "Jesus was always on the side of the poor, the weak, the sick and the vulnerable." There was general agreement that Jesus Himself may have inspired and supported the protesters.

The priest listened quietly, but he finally replied, "Is it not possible that we could equally say that Jesus was the ultimate oligarch? After all, He created everything in the first place, and He continues to be the Lord of all." That statement provided some food for thought, but it was really the priest's wife who made the most trenchant observation. She said, "Yes, Jesus owns everything, but He also shares everything, even His broken body and spilled blood." Silence.

At the end of every Divine Liturgy in our church the celebrant stands behind the ambon and prays, "Every good endowment and every perfect give is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights." (James 1:17) In this season of Thanksgiving and in anticipation of God's greatest gift – the Incarnation of His Only-Begotten Son – we would all do well to be Eucharistic, or full of thanks, for everything God does for us. Whether we are politically with the Tea Party or the 99 percenters, spiritually as Orthodox Christians we receive, we offer, and we share all of God's blessings.



His Beatitude Archbishop Alexios of Gaza brings a calming influence to local schoolchildren who live in isolation with their families in the Gaza Strip.

In this issue of *Priest-to-Priest*, IOCC's work in Gaza will be the focus, but that program is just one way that our mutual work expresses the physical side of being spiritual. We can be full of thanksgiving through our sharing of Christ's gifts, and we can help Christ "take on flesh" in our own lives and in the lives of those whose need only Christ can fill. If the Occupy Wall Street supporters can be in it for the long term, surely God's people can join together in service from now until eternity! Thank you for helping IOCC in this work of bringing real help and real hope to our brothers and sisters in need in Gaza and throughout the world.

Your Brother in Christ,

Fr. Michael Ellias

+Fr. Michael Ellias



**2011-2012 IOCC
 PRAYER JOURNAL**

The children of your parish can learn important facts about their Orthodox faith, how IOCC is helping people around the world, and what two NBA stars and "Humanitarian Heroes" are doing to serve others through our free *My Prayer Journal*. To order in bulk, please contact the Department of Religious Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America at 1-800-566-1088.

"Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." — *Hebrews 13:21*

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Baltimore, Maryland 21204 • USA

INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES



FATHERS: PLEASE DISPLAY THE INSIDE POSTER IN YOUR PARISH

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR ORTHODOX CLERGY

From the clergy of the IOCC Board of Directors:

Very Rev. Michael Ellias, Rev. Luke Palumbis, Very Rev. Michael Rosco, Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky

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ASSISTANCE EASES STRUGGLE FOR FAMILIES IN GAZA

Thousands of Palestinian families have been living in isolation since the 2000 closing of the Gaza Strip, struggling to survive without jobs, basic food items and adequate housing. Many of the men, like 34-year-old Hatem, work any odd jobs available but rarely bring in enough to feed, clothe and shelter their families. Hatem's ramshackle home in the Rafah district of Gaza has been pieced together with scraps of sheet metal, plastic and fencing to shield his wife and five children against the elements.

Responding to your desire to help those in need, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) through an award from the US Agency for International Development, implemented the distribution of aid packages to over 2,900 families in the Gaza Strip. The short-term aid packages distributed through IOCC's Winter Relief project provided families in need with vital food staples such as canned meat, rice, sugar, and tea as well as basic household necessities like laundry detergent, dish soap, towels, and pillows. Your ongoing support through IOCC, which has been providing assistance to the people of Gaza since 2005, is needed to continue our efforts to bring relief to isolated families living in this war torn region.



Two of Hatem's children watch passersby from the entrance to their humble home in Rafah. A lack of construction materials in the region forces families to construct shelter from whatever is available on the streets of Gaza.



A man from the Al Zeitoun section of Gaza heads home to his family with "Winter Relief" aid packages loaded on his only means of transportation, a donkey cart. Many of the men in this region have been without work for years and must rely on the compassion of supporters like you to help their families survive through the coming winter.



Paul Jeffrey/ACT

Assistance Provided To Families Living In The Gaza Strip Includes:

- Basic food staples
- Bedding
- Household cleaning supplies
- School kits for children

YOUR KINDNESS IS BRINGING RELIEF TO THE DAILY STRUGGLES OF GAZA FAMILIES IN NEED!

INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

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