



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES NEWS & NEEDS

CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS EDITION 2014

IOCC PROVIDES MEDICAL LIFELINE FOR PEOPLE OF GREECE

The 52,000 residents of Chios rely on the remote Greek island's sole hospital to help them stay healthy, but austerity measures put into effect by the Greek government have dramatically cut funding and crippled the medical institution's ability to function. Doctors and medical staff struggle daily to care for patients without essential medical supplies like surgical gloves, syringes, vials for blood samples and suture needles that the hospital can no longer afford to supply. IOCC responded to the urgent need with more than \$740,000 in medical supplies delivered to Skylitsion General Hospital of Chios. The government-run hospital serves the medical needs of young and old living on Chios and the neighboring islands of Psara and Oinousses.

Shortages in medical supplies are plaguing public hospitals across Greece and threaten access to quality health care that some of the most vulnerable Greeks – the elderly, chronically ill patients, and the poor – are dependent upon for their well-being. Since 2012, IOCC has distributed more than \$8.5 million in medical supplies and equipment to public hospitals in greater Athens, Thessaloniki, northern Greece, Peloponnese, Crete, and the Ionian and Aegean islands, as well as to free clinics



Despina Katsivelaki/IOCC

With support from The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, AHEPA, the Pancretan Association of America and the Jaharis Family Foundation, Inc., IOCC has delivered more than \$8.5 million in medical assistance to Greece.

across Greece. IOCC continues to respond to Greece's deepening crisis with direct assistance and in support of Apostoli, the social service agency of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Athens. Responding to the country's health care crisis is part of a

larger, multifaceted relief effort by IOCC that includes supplying fresh food to provide for the nutritional needs of poverty-stricken Greeks, and delivering aid to institutions caring for people with disabilities, orphans, and the elderly.

FRESH HOPE FOR GREECE'S FAMILIES



Your Gifts for Greece
Doubled by a Challenge
Grant from the Jaharis
Family Foundation, Inc.

iocc.org/GiveForGreece

Despina Katsivelaki/IOCC

IOCC's fresh food initiative gives Greece's most vulnerable families the opportunity to purchase locally sourced fruits, vegetables and milk at supermarkets using a fresh food card. The program is also helping to sustain 500 Greek farming families who are providing the fresh produce and milk being offered to the program participants.

Admitting that he needs help isn't easy for Nick, an unemployed construction worker from a modest neighborhood in Athens. The unemployment benefits he received for one year have stopped. His wife is also out of work, and their family savings have been drained. Nick's situation is all too common among the working class in Greece where unemployment is nearly 28 percent and the jobless rate for construction workers has surpassed 50 percent. Hard-working people who never relied on social servic-

es must now seek out basic necessities for their families. Nick's family rely on dry food parcels provided by IOCC and relief partner, Apostoli, the humanitarian arm of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Athens, to help them from going hungry.

A new program offers fresh hope for Greece's struggling families. Since last fall, more than 5,500 people have access to fresh food to supplement the donated dry food parcels. Selected families are provided with fresh food cards that they can use to purchase up to 10

Euros' worth of fresh fruits, vegetables and milk weekly at participating supermarkets. The fresh food items are sourced locally, also helping to sustain 500 farming families across the country and in turn, benefit the Greek economy. The fresh food initiative, initially funded by the Hellenic Initiative and private donors, has also received support from The Jaharis Family Foundation, Inc. Contributions made to IOCC to support hunger relief efforts and other aid to Greece will be matched by the Foundation up to one million dollars.

International Orthodox Christian Charities, Inc. (IOCC) is the official humanitarian relief agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.

IOCC, in the spirit of Christ's love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond.



This special edition of *News & Needs* is edited by Mark Hodde and Rada Tierney.



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EASING THE ECONOMIC WOES FOR GREECE'S FAMILIES

Each day the streets of Athens become more crowded with families newly evicted from their homes due to job loss and the inability to pay their bills. As Greece's escalating economic woes drive more and more families into a desperate struggle to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table, IOCC in cooperation with Apostoli, the social service agency of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Athens, is putting your support to work securing food aid packages for impoverished families and jobs for the unemployed. The job shortage is especially dire for young workers under 25 with more than half without a job according to EU statistics. IOCC is supporting Apostoli's efforts to employ young people for jobs collecting, sorting and packaging food items from donation centers set up in 213 participating super-

markets in Greece.

From a warehouse space donated by the Greek army, the hired workers assemble 180,000 pounds of dry food into parcels containing monthly rations of flour, rice, beans, milk and canned tomatoes to feed a family of four. The food aid packages are then delivered each month to parishes across the greater Athens metropolitan area where they are distributed by the parish priest to 7,000 families living in poverty. IOCC Executive Director, Constantine Triantafilou, who has witnessed the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Greece during his



Katrina Bastlelou/Apostoli

field visits, says, "IOCC opens its heart and hand to the people of Greece during these difficult times and we encourage those in Greece who can help their neighbors to work with the Church to do so."



STAMPING OUT PODOCONIOSIS

Abraham was only six when his feet and legs began to swell. Walking became too painful and he couldn't go to school or play with his friends. He had podocniosis, or podo for short, caused by walking barefoot on certain kinds of volcanic soil in Ethiopia. After years of trying to find a cure for Abraham's condition, his family brought him to a podo clinic near the capital city of Addis Ababa. Abraham received foot treatments and custom made boots. He also learned that washing your feet and wearing shoes could prevent podo. Now a teen, Abraham has healed and can play soccer like other children. More than one million Ethiopians suffer from this debilitating disease and

another 11 million are at risk. Since 2009, IOCC in collaboration with medical epidemiologist Dr. Gail Davey, has developed a scalable model to address this neglected disease with a prevention and treatment program launched in Debre Markos. With support from the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society and TOMS Shoes, IOCC has expanded to six clinic sites, and has helped more than 91,000 children and adults in Ethiopia by providing shoes, treatment and foot care supplies with the aim of eradicating the disease in the region.

Scan to watch podo video now!



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN EMERGENCY NETWORK GROWS TO 100 MEMBERS

Nineteen New "Frontliners" Trained with Support from Leadership 100



When seven people were killed and 13 injured during a shooting rampage in Isla Vista, California, on May 23, Fr. Jon-Stephen Hedges, who serves as a volunteer chaplain with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department and a member of the IOCC Frontline, consoled families as he performed the difficult task of notifying them of the loss of their loved ones. The tragedy in Isla Vista underscored the need for an Orthodox Christian response in times of

disaster and emergencies. Since 2001, a volunteer network of highly trained, credentialed and experienced Orthodox clergy and laity known as the IOCC Emergency Response Network, or Frontline, has been on the front lines, providing pastoral counseling and emergency relief support to disaster survivors in the United States. A recent training of 19 new IOCC Frontliners in Chicago now brings the total to more than 100 Orthodox Christians trained to

respond natural and manmade disasters across the country.

Underwritten by a two-year grant from the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, the training is part of an IOCC initiative to develop a volunteer network that provides a regional response capacity to disasters in the United States, and to better coordinate with local, state and federal disaster response agencies.

School and Hygiene Kits Are Needed!



Help a child in need. Find easy to follow kit assembly directions at iocc.org/kits

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Your monthly gift ensures relief and assistance to those who need it most.

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