



NEWS & NEEDS

INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

SUMMER 2019



Floods followed heavy spring rains across the Midwest this year, where IOCC responded with teams to help families deal with the aftermath.

The Work Doesn't Stop

Ongoing Disaster Recovery Across the US

"You break down in tears every time you talk about it. All those things you worked so hard to acquire were there in ruins," Catie told IOCC.

Catie, her husband Chris, their three children, and Chris's mother fled their home on March 16 as floodwaters rose in Pacific Junction, Iowa. They wouldn't see the house again for nearly a month—and even then, they could only reach it by boat.

What they saw was devastating. More than 12 feet of water had inundated the house, ruining the finished basement and standing four feet deep in the upper level. "There wasn't much left to save," Catie recalled.

Living in close quarters in a travel trailer—the only shelter available—the family was unsure what to do next. Then a friend told them to contact the IOCC teams working in the area, and IOCC

scheduled an assessment to determine first steps. Once the floodwaters had receded, the arduous work of mucking out began. An IOCC Emergency Action Team deployed to Chris and Catie's home to remove waterlogged furniture, flooring, walls, and possessions. The couple worked alongside them.

"All the volunteers were so positive, so conscious of us," Catie said. "Even after we'd told them we had everything out that we needed, they always asked us about things they thought might have emotional value, might be something we'd want. They were great."

Restoration has begun, although it will be a long process to completely rebuild. But Catie and Chris are determined. "Once we got everything out, started tearing into the walls, it became a matter of rebuilding," Catie said. "This is our forever home, and we're going to make it our forever home again."

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FROM THE
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

It's summer once again, which brings about hurricane season. As IOCC prepares for any response needed this season, inside this issue of *News & Needs*, you will read a story of how our US Program team has responded to the flooding in the Midwest already this year. We also remember that our work with people in need across the world continues—no matter the time of year.

That's why IOCC's consistent work to help people around the world is so important. Those who have survived conflict, natural disasters, and slow moving crises make your gifts crucial in supporting them to reclaim a sense of normalcy.

As you read in these pages about the work we are doing together, here in the United States and across the world, please pray for the people we serve. Thank you for the part you play in fulfilling IOCC's mission.

In Christ,

Constantine M. Triantafilou
Executive Director & CEO

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Catie and Chris's story is one shared by thousands of our neighbors who are still working to rebuild their lives. This year's Midwest floods are among the latest disasters to hit the US in recent years, causing billions of dollars in damages.

Disaster response starts with preparation and continues, in many cases, for years with the work of recovery. IOCC teams are there for both early response and longer-term efforts to help communities rebuild. Whether it's the parishes that train for emergencies and open their doors through IOCC's Orthodox Homefront as shelters or distribution centers; or the Orthodox Frontline, a group of highly trained, credentialed, and experienced Orthodox clergy and laity that provide emotional and spiritual care; or IOCC's Emergency Action and Home Build Teams, IOCC and its volunteers remain committed to helping families and communities prepare for disaster and respond. The work doesn't stop.

To join an IOCC Home Build Team, visit iocc.org/homebuild.



Chris and Catie worked alongside the IOCC team to muck out their Iowa home once floodwaters had receded. Now they're rebuilding.

International Orthodox Christian Charities, Inc. (IOCC), is the official humanitarian relief and development agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America and a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance, and advocacy.

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.



ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL
ORTHODOX BISHOPS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Women Beekeepers in Albania Tackle Challenges Together

Growing Businesses Learn as Group, Build for Future



Women beekeepers trained with specialists to help them improve their colonies' health and productivity.

Building on the learning of recent years, members of a women's beekeeping association in rural Shpati, Albania, continued training in late 2018.

A grant from IOCC has helped Diakonia Agapes (the social, development, and relief office of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania) organize and fund additional learning opportunities for this group of women from seven villages across Shpati. Beekeeping is a local tradition and source of income there, and the women manage between 4 and 30 beehives each. Many have faced challenges maintaining their colonies' productivity.

Because the beekeepers live and work in isolated areas, the chance to learn as a group and develop connections with other women farmers is valuable. Association members swap stories and learn from each other; membership also offers access to resources. The association received equipment to help members prepare products for market, and the women learned in workshops to collect propolis, a bee product with commercial potential.

In trainings with apiarists, the women also learned practical ways to improve honey harvests, care for their bees' health, and make beebread to feed the insects in winter. They can now produce beebread themselves, without relying on outside sources. This saves on expenses and also means the women can potentially sell beebread to other beekeepers.

At the same time, Diakonia Agapes has gained significant experience working with IOCC through this project, improving the local Orthodox Church's expertise in spearheading development initiatives. Improving livelihoods for the women beekeepers will help strengthen their communities as they continue learning and growing together.



Members of the women beekeepers' association received supplies to help them expand sales of the honey and propolis their bees produce.



IOCC partners with the World Food Program in Lebanon to provide snacks to primary-school students, helping improve attendance and school performance.

Five Million School Snacks Support Nutrition, Education

Milestone in Lebanon Represents Bright Futures for Students

An apple or a banana, a serving of peanuts or a carton of milk make up a small snack pack. Five million of those filling, healthful snacks have helped students in Lebanon get the most from their education.

Partnering with the World Food Program in Lebanon, IOCC offers snacks to over 22,700 Lebanese and refugee primary-school students each month at 39 public schools across the country. The program, which started in 2016, recently reached the five million snacks mark.

Providing food at school is a recognized way to help students and families, improving both students' health and their ability to excel. Snacks both during the school year and at nutrition-focused summer camps help ensure that students are not learning on an empty stomach, so it's easier for them to concentrate—and of course, fruit and protein help address nutritional needs.

Offering schoolchildren regular snacks alleviates some household food expenses for their parents, encouraging enrollment and attendance, and ultimately helping these youngsters pursue an education and invest in their own success.

SAVE THE DATE



IOCC
Sunday

A DAY OF SHARING

November 24, 2019

JOIN AN IOCC HOME BUILD TEAM!

As a home build volunteer, you can help families rebuild and recover after disaster.

- July 8-13..... Houston, TX
- July 15-20..... Houston, TX
- August 12-17 Houston, TX

Learn more at
iocc.org/homebuild

