God’s Presence and the IOCC Clergy Chaplain

continued from front cover

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Fr. Michael Ellis
Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church | 265 W. Third Street, Mansfield, OH 44903

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I have heard those insightful and well-chosen words repeated in my head during many deployments over the years. After Hurricane Harvey struck Houston and southeast Texas, I met people in shelters and connected with their suffering. I’ve been blessed to serve the elderly as they tried to make sense of Hurricane Irma’s destruction in south Florida, and I’ve been permitted to serve those who survived devastating flooding in Iowa that washed away homes and livelihoods in an instant. But all the while, I felt unworthily privileged to stand by those same people as a witness to the fact that God had not forgotten them.

When we work on an IOCC jobsite, cutting out fallen trees or removing damaged cabinets from a flooded home, we have the unparalleled opportunity to stand out among many. While I know those suffering appreciate all the volunteers who serve them, that one “man in black”—his presence often seems different. While we’re not necessarily more important, that presence which we represent is truly unique and truly a privilege. In the midst of debris and terrible loss, the modest presence of the priest, humbly working in the background, creates a rare opportunity to remind those in deep suffering that God is present still. It isn’t helpful to tell ourselves that we’re “just a man, doing menial work,” because for many of those who have suffered and are watching, our mere presence reflects much more. We have an opportunity to witness to those who weep and mourn that God’s Presence and the IOCC Clergy Chaplain
Witnessing to God’s Love in the Midst of Disaster
Fr. Michael Ellis

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RESPONDING TO CRISIS WITH COMPASSION

COVID-19 has changed the way people connect with one another. In this crisis, people may be feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or struggling with negative feelings. But you can help change that.

IOCC consulted with experts to develop a simple initiative called IOCC Care Calls. This program uses a straightforward, phase-based script that you can download. It guides you through the process of making calls to connect with people, helping them feel cared for while they explore their feelings. It’s a great way to respond to this crisis with compassion—and making these calls will help you, as well.

IOCC’s mission is inspired by Christ’s love for all, and our work meets the highest standards of professional care. Please download the script to get started.

Will you Care Call someone today?
Download the full guide and script at iocc.org/carecall