

## On Being Prepared *continued from front cover*

It is in this spirit that IOCC approaches preparedness for parishes and individuals. With purposefully developed preparedness plans, communities are stronger and more resilient in the face of unforeseen circumstances.

The United States has seen a dramatic increase in natural and human-caused disasters. Therefore, it is our sacred responsibility to exercise concern for one another and to have intentionally designed plans for life's unexpected events. After all, it's "better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have it."

*Archdeacon Paul Zaharas  
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*If you wish to  
contribute a  
reflection to the  
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Priest to Priest,  
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# PRIEST *to* PRIEST

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR ORTHODOX CLERGY

2023 Issue 3



## On Being Prepared

*A Reflection by Archdeacon Paul Zaharas*

When I was a child, I was taught the axiom, "better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have it." I can recall numerous examples, but perhaps the most vivid were the many occasions of leaving the house on a cool day and being reminded to take a sweater or sweatshirt along. After all, if I got warm, my mother would remind me, I could always tie it around my waist. As I've grown older, I've recognized the wisdom in having things "just in case," and I've tried to incorporate that principle into daily life...not only in regard to outerwear, but education, friendships, patience, and more.

However, I've also recognized that "better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have it" must be applied with discernment and discretion. Take for example a hiker who is putting items into his backpack ahead of a week-long trek into the wilderness. A tent, sleeping bag, raincoat, and sufficient food and water are essential items that should be included. On the other hand, although an espresso machine and hair dryer may be nice to have, they will only add unnecessary weight to the pack and make his journey all the more difficult and exhausting.

And so it is with being prepared for emergencies and disasters. Without question we believe that God will provide for us in our times of need. We "consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin" as pointed out in the Gospel of Matthew. However, Holy Scripture also teaches us to be prudent regarding tangible necessities of our earthly existence. Within this balance we, as Orthodox Christians, can think about preparedness for ourselves, our families, and our communities.

While we rarely, if ever, believe that disasters can happen to us, the reality is that none of us are immune to traumas of various kinds. For this reason, it is important for us to take prudent measures to prepare, so that we are not left scrambling in the chaos of emergencies.

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