



IOCC SUNDAY | NOVEMBER 23, 2025

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” – Galatians 5:13

To the Most Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics, and
Devout Faithful of the Holy Orthodox Churches in the United States:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the United States, Orthodox Christians gather on the Sunday before Thanksgiving to give thanks to God for His blessings and for the privilege of serving Christ by serving those in need. The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States observes this day as Humanitarian Relief Sunday, a day of Christian service that the Agency of the Assembly, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), uses to raise awareness for and promote engagement with its worldwide humanitarian efforts.

Through IOCC, we can humbly reflect the great mercy that Christ shows us. For over 30 years, IOCC has offered practical assistance to people facing conflict, famine, natural disasters, and economic hardship so that they may live with dignity, respect, and hope. Today, in a world which continues to see crises develop and needs arise – this work is as critical as ever.

Through the faithful generosity of people like you, IOCC is able to respond to diverse needs, offering practical assistance in both the short term and the long term, as communities around the globe strive to meet these challenges. Cleaning and rebuilding after U.S. disasters; giving nutritious meals and emotional care to those in Gaza; providing livelihood support for Ukrainian refugees; supplying equipment to help small businesses in Greece flourish amid economic hardship; improving the conditions of schools in Uganda through new construction and repair projects; feeding infants and school students in Lebanon – these are just a few examples of the work that IOCC does in the spirit of Christ’s love.

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As an agency of the Assembly, IOCC represents all our Orthodox jurisdictions, affirming our unity in Christ as His body. St. John's first epistle encourages us to "love not in word or in speech, but in truth and in action." And through IOCC, we can serve our neighbors in practical, tangible ways; we can take part in the Lord's directive to feed, clothe, and serve one another. As we come together to thank God for His goodness, let us recommit ourselves to serving those facing great hardship, whoever and wherever they may be!

This blessed Nativity season, may the Lord shine His mercy upon you and your loved ones, and may His love fill your homes and hearts to overflowing!

With paternal blessings and love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Metropolitan Nicolae".

+ Metropolitan NICOLAE of the
Romanian Orthodox Metropolia of the Americas
*Liaison for IOCC from the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox
Bishops of the United States of America*