

The Holy Priesthood continued from front cover

A simple "thank you for your service" offers meaningful encouragement. Sending laminated, pocket-sized icons to an active-duty Chaplain and enabling him to distribute these icons, is a small gesture and tangible support.

Likewise, praying for those who serve—and are served—through IOCC is equally vital. Raising awareness and bearing witness encourages the IOCC mission. Offering donations certainly supports their work.

Though few may be called to serve directly, we are all invited to participate in these ministries through our prayers, witness, and generous hearts. Let us open our vision and embrace these ministries, that we may support those who serve in Christ's name—for our good and for the glory of God.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Fr. William J. Bartz

Captain, Chaplain Corps, US Navy (Retired)



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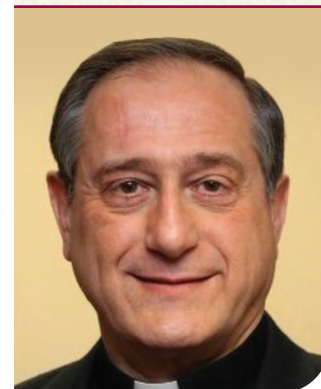
If you wish to contribute a reflection to the next issue of *Priest to Priest*, please email asiegel@iocc.org



PRIEST *to* PRIEST

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2025 Issue 4



The Holy Priesthood: A Sacred Ministry of Servant-Leadership

A Reflection by Rev. Fr. William J. Bartz

The Holy Priesthood is a sacred ministry established by our Lord Jesus Christ through His Holy Apostles to shepherd His people. Through Apostolic Succession, Priests are ordained to serve as icons of Christ, mediating His grace through the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church. As spiritual fathers, Priests are entrusted with preaching the Gospel, celebrating the Divine Mysteries, offering pastoral care, and guiding the faithful in the path of holiness.

This high calling places the Priest in the unique and humbling role of Servant-Leader—one who leads by serving. In the parish setting, the Priest leads his community by providing the Holy Sacraments, healing, reconciliation, pastoral care, vision, witness, and guidance. He coordinates and cultivates the talents of the faithful, inspiring them, individually and collectively, toward *theosis*—union with God.

Some Priests are called to specialized ministries, such as Military Chaplaincy. In this role, the Priest continues to serve as a Servant-Leader but outside the traditional boundaries of a parish. He ministers to military service members in pluralistic settings and oftentimes in diverse environments—on land, at sea, in the air, or in isolated areas. This ministry requires sacrifice, adaptability, and deep resilience. It is not a path for every Priest, just as military life is not suitable for everyone.

Another form of specialized ministry is service through International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). Serving as IOCC Frontliners, these clergy members offer emotional and spiritual care to communities in need after disaster. This work often includes social outreach, creating a sacred space in unfamiliar surroundings, and offering Christ's presence in tangible ways. Clergy serving in this role must have flexibility, a spirit of sacrifice, and a heart attuned to global suffering and hope.

It is important to remember that while these specialized ministries may not be for every Priest, every parish Priest can lead his community in supporting them—through prayer, encouragement, and action. Praying for those in military service and the Chaplains who minister to them is powerful.

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INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

PRAYER JOURNAL

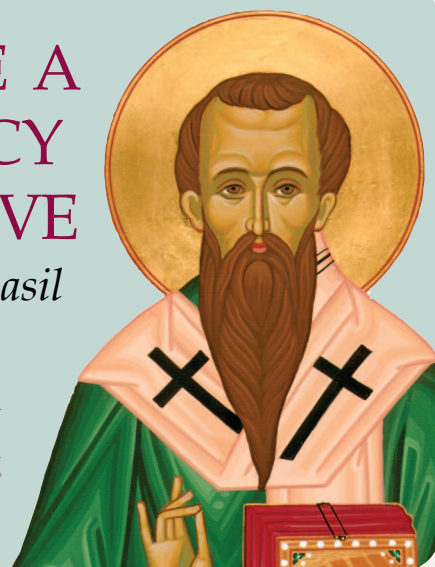
IOCC's Prayer Journal is a resource for young people that offers a glimpse into the lives of children and families we're helping around the world.



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IOCC Sunday

November 23, 2025

On this day, we celebrate IOCC's global work and the ways you sustain it: providing food, water, shelter, medicine, economic opportunity, and disaster response at home and abroad. Here's how you can take action:

- **Encourage Your Parish to Participate:** Talk with your priest about the IOCC Sunday Encyclical, include materials in the Sunday bulletin, or take a special collection for IOCC.
- **Get Youth Involved:** Organize an emergency kit drive in your parish to help assemble them.
- **Use IOCC's Prayer Journal** in Sunday School lessons prior to and on IOCC Sunday.
- **Host an IOCC Fundraiser!** Check out iocc.org/DIY for ideas.
- **Set Up an Information Table** in your parish. Contact an Outreach Coordinator (410.243.9820; outreach@iocc.org) to learn how.
- **Make a Donation.** Please consider a gift to support IOCC's worldwide humanitarian work.

Get started at ioccsunday.org

