

28/08/2019

US Parishes Prepare for Disaster with International Orthodox Christian Charities' Homefront Program



BALTIMORE, MD [IOCC]

Through Homefront training with IOCC, Orthodox parishes undertake disaster preparedness planning so they can help avert disasters and effectively respond in their communities when needs arise. (Photo: International Orthodox Christian Charities)

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) has expanded its Homefront program, equipping Orthodox parishes across the country to plan ahead and respond effectively when disasters arise.

The Orthodox Homefront comprises parishes that have undertaken disaster preparedness planning so they can help avert disasters and effectively respond when disasters arise. Homefront parishes are equipped to open their doors to the larger community as distribution centers or shelters, for example; they might house teams of volunteers working nearby or meet other community needs in an emergency.

Homefront training guides parishes through step-by-step preparation for and potential response to incidents that could disrupt an area or the parish's own activities. Lay leadership, in consultation with the clergy, plays a prominent role in preparation, and the Homefront connects parishes to a network of agencies involved in emergency management that includes IOCC itself. The training involves, among other activities, creating a parish preparedness plan, conducting risk assessments, evaluating vulnerabilities, and taking steps to reduce them. Over 50 parishes nationwide have completed the training so far.

"By thinking through their resources, whether that's people or facilities, Homefront parishes lay the groundwork for truly effective service when an emergency happens," said Daniel Christopoulos, IOCC's US Country Representative. "Preparing in a systematic way strengthens both the parish community at the local level and the national network that IOCC relies on to move quickly when we need to respond here at home."

The Orthodox Homefront is part of IOCC's US Program, which since 2001 has provided more than \$60 million in aid and gifts in kind, plus over 55,000 volunteer hours of service, to survivors of disasters across the United States. Parishes interested in learning more about the Homefront may contact IOCC's US field office at 952-930-3286.

To support IOCC's work with a financial gift, please contact IOCC online or by phone (877.803.4622).

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) is the humanitarian and development agency of the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of the United States of America. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has provided more than \$692 million in humanitarian relief and sustainable development programs in over 60 countries worldwide. Today, IOCC applies its expertise in humanitarian response to natural and manmade crises in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the United States, offering assistance based solely on need. Learn more at ioccc.org and follow @IOCCRelief on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

oca.org