



220 Mason Manatee Way
St. Augustine, FL 32086

INSIDE ►
**Your new issue of *Mission*,
with stories of how *YOU* are making disciples of all nations!**

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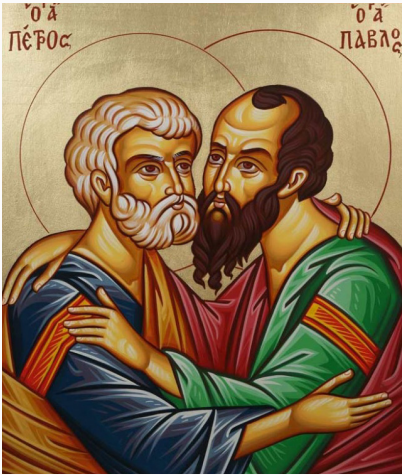




We're Saving Your Place in the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Society

Your generous partnership with OCMC proves sharing the Orthodox Faith is important to you. You're helping the Body of Christ grow and transform thousands of lives, and we appreciate it!

One way we can acknowledge you is by inviting you to join the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Society. Society members make recurring monthly gifts to sustain the outreach ministry of the OCMC. In return for accepting our invitation, we'll send you a Sts. Cyril and Methodius icon magnet and a window sticker with our thanks. To join, simply check the box on the enclosed reply form, or visit ocmc.org. Thank you!



Peter was a fisherman from Bethsaida in Galilee, brother of Andrew the First-Called. He was called Simon, but was renamed Peter by Christ Himself. He was with Christ from the earliest days of His earthly ministry, and although he denied Christ three times before His Crucifixion, he was forgiven and went on to preach the Good News in Judea, Antioch, Rome, and elsewhere. Paul was an educated man from Tarsus who persecuted the early Church until Christ Himself called his name on the road to Damascus. Paul preached throughout the Mediterranean world, and more than a dozen of his Epistles are in the New Testament. The Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, one of the most important dates on the Church calendar, commemorates the martyrdom of these two great Saints in Rome during the reign of Emperor Nero.

Kontakion of Apostles Peter and Paul in the Second Tone

O Lord, receive unto the enjoyment of Your good things and Your rest, the steadfast preachers of Godly words, the pinnacle of Your Disciples. Receive their pain and death above every sacrifice, for You alone know the hearts of men.

MISSION

Reports from around the world for supporters and friends of Orthodox Christian Mission Center



Orthodox Seminary Prepares Priests in Africa



Your generous support of OCMC is transforming Africa ... and the world!

If there has been one institution that has been vital to the spread of the Holy Orthodox Church in Africa, it might just be the Makarios III Seminary (officially called the Orthodox Patriarchal School Archbishop of Cyprus Makarios III) in Nairobi, Kenya.

Since its founding in 1981, many dozens of students have studied there, not only from Kenya, but

from countries across Africa. Today, priests who trained at the Seminary are shepherding flocks all over the vast African continent. His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mount Kenya is also a Makarios III graduate.

Here's something else you should know about the Seminary: it trains these young men for the priesthood at little or no cost. The

Seminary depends on donations from Orthodox believers to keep its doors open — and for several years, much of those funds have come from you, through your generous support of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center!

Supporting the Seminary is a key part of OCMC's commitment to theological training. By giving as freely and lovingly as you

Continued on page 3

MY NEXT GIFT TO SUPPORT ORTHODOX MISSIONS

Yes, Fr. Martin! You can count on me to continue my support of theological training and all the vital work of the OCMC. **Here is my gift of:**

☐ \$XX1 ☐ \$XX2 ☐ \$XX3 ☐ \$_____

☐ I want to join the Sts. Cyril & Methodius Society with a monthly gift of: \$_____

To give online visit www.ocmc.org/donate. Thank you!



God bless you for your faithfulness and generosity!

Your gift is tax deductible. Please make your check payable to OCMC and send it to 220 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086. Please remember OCMC in your estate planning. 2019 SUMMER NEWSLETTER



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MISSION CENTER SUMMER 2019

GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.
— MATTHEW 28:19

You're Following the Footsteps of Sts. Peter and Paul



Rev. Fr. Martin Ritsi
Executive Director

Theological training — the preparation of priests and lay people for positions of leadership in the Church — is a cornerstone of mission work. That's why it's so important to the Orthodox Christian Mission Center, and why we have dedicated this special issue of MISSION to share the ways you're making it happen through your support of OCMC.

There's a reason we scheduled this special issue right after the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul. The Bible is clear that these two great apostles were concerned, not just with their own evangelism, but also with but with preparing and equipping others to lead and teach the growing Church. You're part of this same apostolic mission today, and your reach extends to every corner of the earth.

This issue of MISSION updates you on the work you're doing, through your generosity to OCMC, in Africa, in Albania, and in Guatemala. In each case, you are helping raise up Church leaders from among the peoples of those lands. They, in turn, are creating new, authentic, and beautiful expressions of our ancient Faith that will stir the hearts and souls of their people.

I love that we have so much important information to share with you in this issue. You're doing so much good. I am deeply grateful for your generous prayers and financial partnership ... and so are so many others, in every part of the world!

In Christ,

Fr. Martin Ritsi

Fr. Martin

PS: A great way to take the next step in your partnership with OCMC, and support theological training and mission work around the globe, is by joining the Sts. Cyril & Methodius Society. We would love to welcome you to this very special group, so please read the story about it on page 4. Thanks again!

You're Training Future Priests in Albania

With your help, the Albanian Church is recovering from decades of oppression



Dr. Jeffrey Macdonald is one of a number of OCMC missionaries who have taught in Albania thanks to your generous support.

The Orthodox Faith came to Albania early in the Church's history. Today, almost 20% of the Albanian population is Orthodox, but the priesthood and diaconate are still recovering from decades of Communist dictatorship and official atheism. You are helping raise up a new generation of Church leaders in Albania.

That's because your generous giving to OCMC helps makes possible the classes offered by the Theological Academy "Resurrection of Christ" in Shen Vlash, Durres, Albania. Hundreds of students have graduated from the Academy since it was founded in 1992. Many of Albania's current bishops and priests have attended the school, which educates both men and women.

Thanks to you, several OCMC missionaries have been able to teach at the Theological Academy over the years, leading classes in Church history, patristics, English missions, and other subjects.

We estimate it costs about \$830 per student per year to provide an OCMC missionary to the Theological Academy to help train promising Albanian believers for leadership positions in the Church. Even if you never set foot in Albania yourself, you are helping rebuild the ancient Albanian Church through your partnership with OCMC!

How You're Sharing the Faith in Remote Guatemala

In a Church hungry for leaders, you're helping catechists meet a vital need

The Orthodox Church in Guatemala has about 40,000 members spread across 150 remote and mountainous parishes ... and five priests.

You read that right: Five.

Because of your support, these priests are not alone. Your generosity makes possible the training of several hundred catechists in villages and towns across Guatemala. And while these catechists — often village elders and other community leaders — cannot perform the sacraments and are themselves still learning about the Church, they are, as Fr. John Chakos says, "the backbone of the Orthodox Church" and the key to its continued growth.

With your help, the OCMC assists in the training of these catechists, helping them grow in their knowledge and love of the Lord, and equipping them to share what they learn with members of their parishes. It costs as little as \$155 to provide a catechist with the training he needs to teach the Faith in his village.

You are also helping the Guatemalan Church recruit and train qualified candidates for the holy priesthood. Thank you for your continued support of the Church in Central America!



With your support, former OCMC President Fr. John Chakos has made several mission trips to Guatemala to help train catechists to lead and teach.

Orthodox Seminary ... continued from page 1

do, you're not only helping raise up generations of Church leaders in Africa, but also making possible the Seminary's work translating liturgical texts into indigenous languages. That means you're touching thousands of lives, in hundreds of dioceses, across Africa, and sharing your Orthodox Faith with even more!

Theological training for future Church leaders is a vital pillar of Orthodox missions. Without it, the work of sharing Christ will suffer. Please continue to sustain the students of Makarios III Seminary with your prayers, and through your generous giving to OCMC. Thank you so much!



Your love and generosity reach across all of Africa, and help prepare future leaders of the Church, through your partnership with OCMC.

My Next Gift to Support Orthodox Missions

Yes, Fr. Martin! You can count on me to continue my support of theological training and all the vital work of the OCMC.

Here is my gift of:

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Mr. and Mrs. Demetri Samplopoulos
220 Mason Manatee Way
St. Augustine, FL 32086
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Thank you!

I'm making my donation by credit card.

I authorize Orthodox Christian Mission Center to charge my ...



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EXP DATE

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Amount \$_____ ☐ One Time ☐ Monthly

To keep you informed, and so that you can receive stories about the people you help with your gift, please share your email address:

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CELL PHONE

My prayer request

**Most Holy Theotokos, Ever-Virgin Mary,
Mother of God pray for us!**

OCMC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization eligible for tax-deductible contributions. As faithful stewards of your donations, we apply all funds received as designated. Please note that in the event the missionary, project, or fund you designate is over-funded or no longer applicable, your donation will be applied to the area most needed to continue the work.

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