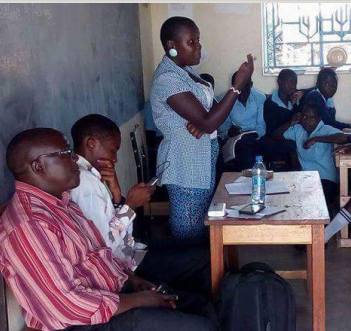


Doors Remain Open.
Will You Walk Through Them?

If you have been feeling a call to mission service, this is the time to start planning! Here are just a few of our upcoming virtual and in-person mission-team opportunities. More virtual teams may be scheduled. Visit www.ocmc.org for the most up-to-date list of teams.



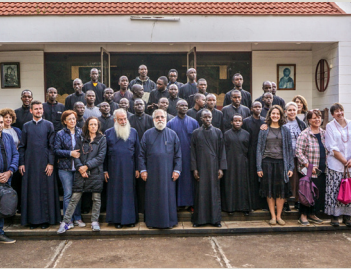
Nigeria: Sept 10, 2021 | Sept 17, 2021
Two **virtual** teams will minister in the Metropolis of Nigeria. One will help prepare catechists in their role of teaching, and the other will offer a retreat to representatives from a number of parishes.

Colombia: Sept 26, 2021
Join a **virtual** teaching team in Cerete that will build on the foundation of previous outreaches by offering lessons on the Ten Commandments. *Spanish speakers are needed.*



Guatemala: March 5-14, 2022
Provide health care and education alongside OCMC missionaries in the remote Mayan village of Aguacate.

Albania: June 15-30, 2022
Lead a youth summer camp at the Children's Home of Hope. Program includes lessons, activities, and excursions, while providing a visible witness of love and faith.



Indonesia: June 21-July 3, 2022
Share God's love and Orthodox approaches to spirituality, prayer, and family life as part of a youth and family focused ministry in Singaraja, Bali.

Exact dates of these mission trips are subject to change. Find the full list of upcoming mission team opportunities, and details on how you can join or support a team, at: www.ocmc.org/how-we-serve/orthodox-mission-teams



Thaddaeus,
Apostle of the 70

Celebrated on August 21.
Thaddaeus was a Jew from Edessa in northern Greece. He heard Christ's teachings in Jerusalem and became one of the Seventy. After Christ's Ascension, he returned to his hometown, preached the Gospel, and later evangelized in Mesopotamia and Syria. His life was ended in martyrdom.

Troparion for the Holy Apostle Thaddaeus

O Holy Apostle Thaddeus, intercede to our merciful God, that He may grant our souls forgiveness of sins.



God bless you for your faithfulness and generosity!

2021 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

MISSION

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



With your help, young people in Albania are rediscovering their Orthodox heritage

“ALL YOUR CHILDREN SHALL BE TAUGHT BY THE LORD”

Your support of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center is changing lives in a land that once tried to stamp out the faith completely.

For decades, in Communist Albania, a war was waged on God. Priests, nuns, and ordinary believers were martyred, churches were destroyed, and generations were propagandized with the most aggressive atheism.

Communism finally fell in 1992, and today, many Albanians are hungry to learn more about the risen Christ. Thanks to your prayers and financial support, Orthodox children and other

young people in Albania are being shown Christ's love for them with the help of dedicated OCMC Missionaries.

Presbytera Alexandra Ritsi told us about an Albanian boy named Petro she met at an OCMC-sponsored youth camp where 1/3 of the participants were non-Christian. Petro said he felt a tug on his heart when he heard the story of St. Thomas. He admitted that sometimes he has trouble believing, too. He

says that now he will remember Thomas and pray to God that his faith remains strong.

There are so many stories like Petro's we could tell you, because your love is changing the lives of young people all over Albania!

The outreach you make possible includes camps like the one Petro attended. Then there's the Children's Home of Hope, where OCMC Missionary Anastasia Pamela Barksdale works with orphans and children from poor

Continued on page 3

MY NEXT GIFT TO SUPPORT ORTHODOX MISSIONS

Yes, Fr. Martin! You can count on me to continue sharing the Gospel through my support of OCMC Mission Teams! 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!

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.



Go and make disciples of all nations. — MATTHEW 28:19

VIRTUAL MISSION TEAMS
CONTINUE TO SERVE!
ARE YOU INTERESTED?
see page 4!

Sharing a Message of Hope ...



Rev. Fr. Martin Ritsi
Executive Director

Thank you for your faithfulness to OCMC during the last 18 months. It's because your support never wavered that we were able to continue preparing missionaries for service, commission them, and send them abroad just as soon as doors started reopening.

Glory to God for making this possible!

God-willing, OCMC Mission Teams continue to serve virtually, sharing Christ's Good News of hope, love, and new life with a hungry world!

Has God been preparing you to be sent as a long-term missionary? If so, please contact our missionary department to discuss the possibilities. If God is calling you to be part of a mission team in 2022 or to join a virtual team in the coming months, I hope you'll check out the opportunities listed on page 4. And even if you're not called to be a missionary or join a mission team, here's something great you can do from home: form or join a team and take part in this year's Trek4Missions! You'll find more information in the article to the right.

Webcams and screens have their place, but there's no substitute for sharing God's love and our beautiful Orthodox faith face-to-face. Please pray that our teams will be able to do this again soon!

In Christ,

Fr. Martin Ritsi

Fr. Martin



Join Us on the 2021 Virtual Trek4Missions

I loved the sense of community that came with the Trek4Missions. It's one thing when you, as an individual, are passionate about missions and have a heart for sharing the Gospel with others. It's another when you unite with others with that same passion and heart."

— Elaine, Team Sverige 2020



To register or find out more, visit <http://www.ocmc.org/Trek4Missions> today!

Future Generations of Believers Will Thank You!

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:21). You've already shown your heart is with OCMC as we go into the world sharing a message of hope. But did you know that with just a few minutes' work, you can continue to sustain that work, even after you're gone?



Making a charitable gift through your will or estate plans isn't just for the wealthy, and it isn't hard to do. In fact, it may be one of the most satisfying decisions you make all year. To find out more, go to ocmc.org, click "Donate" in the upper right, and select "Leave a Legacy." Or call 1-877-463-6784 to speak with us in person. Thank you!

You're Helping Build for the Future in Guatemala

One of the most amazing examples of how God is using your support of OCMC to spread the Orthodox Faith and transform lives can be found in the highlands of western Guatemala.

In 2010, Fr. Andres Giron led thousands of indigenous Mayan people into Orthodoxy. Now under the care of His Eminence Athenagoras, Metropolitan of Mexico, the vibrant and growing Orthodox Christian communities of Guatemala have welcomed many OCMC long-term Missionaries and visiting Mission Teams.

Fr. Andres fell asleep in the Lord in 2014, but your support of OCMC is helping fulfill a key part of the vision shared by Fr. Andres and His Eminence Athenagoras. "[The] dream was to have a permanent seminary and catechetical training center where young men could be prepared for ordination, and men and women could be trained and sent as catechists and lay missionaries to the growing communities," explains Fr. John Chakos, OCMC Missionary to Guatemala.

And now, with your help, the Ss. Peter and Paul Seminary and Mission Training Center is under construction in Huehuetenango! "What a blessing to receive this support from our OCMC donors, to see local Guatemalans build for the future of the Orthodox Church in Guatemala and Central America," Fr. John says. Thank you for remembering your brothers and sisters in Christ in Guatemala in your prayers, and for your generous support of OCMC!



Your generosity is helping build a center where a new generation of clergy and lay leaders can be trained to bring people to Christ and His Church in Central America.

"All Your Children Shall be Taught by the Lord"... continued from page 1

or unstable families, and the Protagonist School in Tirana, where OCMC Missionary Presbyteria Georgia Gilman Bendo is Principal, and where many children participate in afterschool faith groups. And there are other examples, too. All are under the leadership of His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios and the Church's children's office, which is overseen by OCMC Missionaries Nathan and Gabriela Hoppe.

Through your great faithfulness to the young people of Albania, you are helping bring to pass the words of the Prophet Isaiah, "All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children" (Is. 54:13). Thank you so much for your love, your prayers, and your unfailing generosity!