



Orthodox Christian Laity

2023 SUMMER NEWSLETTER & SPECIAL APPEAL

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

David Oancea

Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL) launched several important initiatives in 2023.

“Orthodoxy In Action” Presentations

OCL sponsored four *Orthodoxy In Action* presentations via Zoom which may be viewed on OCL's YouTube Channel (<https://bit.ly/OCL-Youtube>).

(1) At the first presentation on January 29, George Matsoukas (OCL Executive Director Emeritus and Board Member) represented OCL and related his experiences at the **International Orthodox Theological Association (IOTA) Mega Conference** held in Volos, Greece, from January 12-14, 2023.

(2) On February 26, Ken Liu, Executive Director of **Orthodox Youth and Young Adult Ministries (OYM)** (<https://theoym.org/>), focused on the work of the official youth agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. OYM empowers partners and works with parents, lay and ordained ministry leaders – at a jurisdictional, regional, and local level – as they seek to bring young people into an ever-deepening sense of the importance of Faith in one's life. Join OYM's Mailing List: <https://theoym.org/newsletter/>.

(3) On March 26, Victor Ghauri, one of the founders of the **Orthodox Church in Pakistan**, spoke of his enthusiasm and progress in producing a tri-lingual Gospel book for the Orthodox Church in Pakistan and his dream of establishing an Orthodox Gospel Society.

(4) On April 30, attendees participated in a two-part program. *Part 1:* Presentation by Kyra Limberakis (COO) and Michael Sider-Rose (CEO) of **Orthodox Volunteer Corps (OVC)** (<https://orthodoxvolunteercorps.org/>). A new agency of the Assembly of Bishops, OVC is developing and equipping the next generation of Orthodox young adults through front-line service, intensive training, formation in community, and immersion in the Church. *Part 2:* Mother

Elizabeth (Klipa-Bacha) of **Christmas Monastery School and New Tikhvin Skete of the Holy Mother of God** (<https://bit.ly/3pxhBFw>) presented her work in Palm Coast, Florida with the development of a hometown and virtual global-influencing Orthodox Christian Monastery and School. Mother Elizabeth is an Orthodox Christian Nun, a multi-state licensed nurse, lifetime missionary, and a professional volunteer trainer and supervisor.

Inter-Orthodox Parish Association (IPA) Project

On June 28, 2023, the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA (AOB) formally launched the IPA Project. Prior to the launch, the OCL Board met with Reverend Father Nicholas Anton, AOB Director of Operations, to discuss how OCL may collaborate with the AOB in this grassroots effort. Fr. Anton enthusiastically explained that **Inter-Parish Associations promote communication, camaraderie, and cooperation across Orthodox Christian parishes of all jurisdictions in a given geographical area.** They are local (ie. the city/town level) and include both clergy and laity. Their purpose is to break down barriers across Orthodox Christian jurisdictions and, as a unified Orthodox Christian community, witness Christ's love in local society. OCL will tap its network of resources: supporters, newsletter subscribers, website and social media to promote the program and help raise funding for a project manager. Visit assemblyofbishops.org/ipa to learn how to initiate an IPA in your community!

A Declaration for Orthodox Christian Unity in America

Since the Declaration's publication and dissemination in July 2022 (<https://bit.ly/OCLOP12>), Orthodox Christian Laity has continued to focus on the vital importance of Orthodox Christian administrative unity in America. The ongoing campaign to secure signatures on *A Declaration for Orthodox Christian Unity in America* continues (sign here: bit.ly/DeclarationUnity).

Looking Ahead: WELCOME TO CHICAGO! 36th Annual Meeting and Conference

The OCL Board will hold the 36th Annual Meeting and Conference in Chicago, Illinois, at Sts. Peter & Paul Greek Orthodox Church, 1401 Wagner Road, Glenview, IL 60025 (<https://ssppglenview.org/>), the weekend of **October 20-21, 2023**. Mark your calendar! **Fr. Bohdan Hladio**, an Orthodox priest and former Chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (Ecumenical Patriarchate), is the featured speaker who will make a presentation on "Orthodox Unity, Evangelism, and the Problem of Universal Jurisdiction." The full program will be posted at <https://ocl.org/events/>.

A SPECIAL "THANK YOU" APPEAL

We've enclosed OCL's most recent Occasional Paper ("Orthodox Unity, Evangelism, and the Problem of Universal Jurisdiction") as our informative gift to you. The Paper is Fr. Bohdan Hladio's summary of his talk at the IOTA Conference in Greece. We appreciate your spiritual, physical and financial support. Your contributions make OCL's projects and activities possible. We welcome your comments (email: ocladmin@ocl.org).

Yours in Christ,



William P. Souvall, Acting President



George D. Karcazes, Secretary