



Empowering Our Youth to Share the Faith

Missionary Dana Bates Introduces Youth Ministry Model in East Africa

We are proud to announce the deployment of Dana Bates, a seasoned youth ministry specialist, to East Africa. Bates, whose mission is to implement a transformative youth ministry model known as IMPACT, brings with him the hope and vision of cultivating flourishing Orthodox communities.

His Eminence Jeronimos, Metropolitan of Kampala and all Uganda, expressed enthusiastic gratitude after hearing Bates' presentation, stating, "We have been praying for support to further develop our active youth ministry, and the program that Dana has created is like a gift of gold."

The recent mission trip to Kenya and Uganda, led by our Missionary Director Fr. Rob Spaliatsos and Development Director Dan Christopoulos, was comprehensive. Over ten days, the team visited seven dioceses and six hierarchs, exploring the implementation of Bates' model. This innovative service-learning program, rooted in

Orthodox theology, emphasizes sharing the love of Christ with others.

Engaging youth in such transformative service ensures not only their spiritual growth but also the vibrancy of the communities they serve. Bates elaborates, "St. Gregory Nazianzus tells us that God is pleased by acts of mercy and not the performance of virtues per se. It is only through acts of mercy that the virtue of mercy is developed, and our service-learning model helps our youth do these acts of mercy to and for their neighbor in order to become more Godlike – engage in Theosis – and live the liturgy after the Liturgy."

On this journey – spanning across Nairobi, Nyeri, Kisumu, Eldoret, Kampala, Gulu, and Jinja – the team witnessed firsthand the eagerness of the local hierarchs and priests to embrace the IMPACT model. This initiative aims to support the growth of these communities, empowering them to thrive independently within their unique cultural contexts.

Reflecting on the trip, Fr. Spaliatsos expressed, "We are hopeful that after successfully introducing this model to our Orthodox brothers and sisters in East Africa, it will be embraced in other countries where [we are] supporting the Church's efforts to preach the Good News to 'all nations.'"

Make Dana's ministry possible at ocmc.org, or by scanning the QR code here.



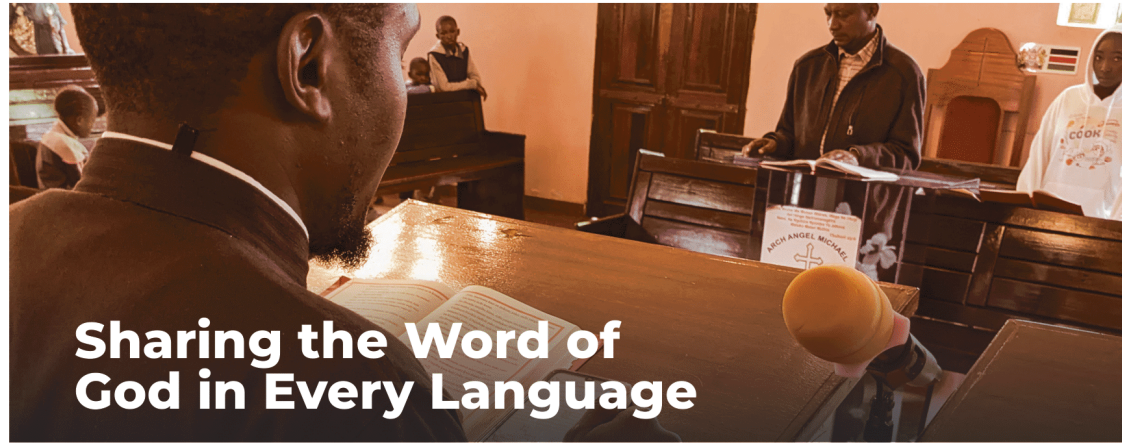
To learn more about the impact of our missionary work around the world please follow us on social media!



SUMMER 2024

MISSION

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



Sharing the Word of God in Every Language

Growth and Expansion of the Liturgical Translations Program

Liturgical Translations is now an official department of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center and will be taking a much larger role in our Orthodox Missionary outreach.

When asked about the goals of this ministry, department leader, Dr. Michael Colburn shares, "We want to equip and enable people translating into their native language to create easily accessible, accurate, and beautiful translations of the Liturgical texts for the Church so people can worship in their own language. We provide training, software, handbooks, and consulting

from preparation through to publication."

Dr. Colburn goes on to state, "The 144,000 words of the Bible take 15-40 years to translate into a language for the first time. There are over two million words in the liturgical texts! We provide translation tools and training to guide local translators in this daunting process."

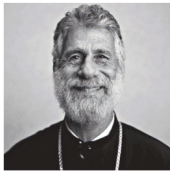
Early success in the field includes a Liturgical Translations Program Office, recently established in Nairobi, Kenya, to serve the hierarchs of East Africa under the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa.

Their first project, led by Fr. James Hargrave, is to enter existing Swahili publications of Vespers, Matins, the Divine

continued on page 3



Go and make disciples of all nations. - MATTHEW 28:19
www.ocmc.org



A Message from Father Martin

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The primary focus of the Mission Center is to bring people into the fullness of life in Christ. We galvanize Orthodox Christians in the U.S. to support the work of Orthodox Missions around the world. Through collective action, we strengthen our community and magnify our impact – enhancing engagement, fostering faith, and igniting discipleship.

Over the years, our missionaries and ministries have played a vital role in the spiritual growth of thousands of people. In this edition of Mission, we are blessed to share how this transformative work has continued through liturgical translations, the training of future clergy, and the development of youth ministry.

Liturgical Translations

The message in the recent feast of Pentecost is abundantly clear: The Good

News of Jesus Christ should be available to all people in their native language. This is a hallmark of the Orthodox Missions approach, which aims to embrace the rich tapestry of cultures across the globe and integrate local language and customs into worship and community life.

Continuing the mandate of Pentecost, we are thrilled to announce that our Liturgical Translations Program has now become a full-fledged department of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. Through this new addition, we equip all people with the tools needed to experience the beauty of the Orthodox Liturgy in their respective languages.

Youth Ministry Development

Encouraging people to actively live their faith is one of the most important ways to ensure a vibrant expression of Orthodoxy around the world. Grounded in the theological framework of our Orthodox faith, the IMPACT Youth Ministry Model of our newest missionary, Dana Bates, does just that. Soon to be implemented in East Africa,

this model combines service-learning with our theology to ensure *Orthopraxy* – correct action – with our Orthodoxy.

Training Future Clergy

Rooted in the abundance of Christ's teachings, Orthodox Missions strive to plant seeds of faith and share the Gospel in diverse lands. In their upcoming work at St. Basil's Pastoral School in Mexico, missionaries Sub-Deacon Michael Pak and his wife Caryn will answer this call, preparing future clergy, catechists, and youth to reach more people with the life-saving Truth of the Gospel.

You are an important part of all that we do, and we cannot thank you enough for your support. Whether through prayer, giving, or service, we encourage you to answer the call to missions. Please visit ocmc.org or contact us at missions@ocmc.org to learn more about how to be a part of this transformative movement.

In Christ,

Fr. Martin Ritsi
Fr. Martin Ritsi
Executive Director

Don't miss the opportunity to embrace our Orthodox Missions movement by supporting the Trek4Missions event in August!



Run, walk, bike, or swim while raising awareness of, and support for, global Orthodox missions. **Visit ocmc.org, or scan to join today!**



Answering the Call

The Pak Family Embraces Missionary Service in Mexico

After months of preparation, Michael and Caryn Pak's journey will lead them to Mexico to begin their service as missionaries of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. Strengthened and encouraged by the prayers and financial contributions of faithful like you, they are ready to begin the next chapter of their lives – sharing the Orthodox Faith with the people of Mexico and Central America.

Throughout the process of becoming missionaries, the Pak family has engaged with Archbishop Alejo, under whom they will be serving, as well as the clergy and people of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) Diocese of Mexico. In June, Michael was ordained as a Sub-Deacon by Archbishop Alejo at the Orthodox vocations conference, where Board Member Fr. John Parker was also a guest speaker.

In Mexico, Sub-Deacon Michael will be teaching at the St. Basil's Pastoral School, which is currently under construction. The courses at St. Basil's will emphasize pastoral care, practical application of ministry, and Orthodox missions. This school will enable the ranks of clergy

to grow, which in turn, will encourage the establishment of more Orthodox parishes throughout the diocese. In addition, Caryn will be focused on her new role as Missions Catechist and Children's Ministry Director.

The Paks are an outstanding example of how those called to missionary work today help to ensure a thriving, compassionate Church for tomorrow.

Please keep the Paks in your prayers as they prepare to depart for Mexico and remember that it is you who makes this great work possible.

To make a contribution, visit ocmc.org, or scan the QR code here.



Sharing the Word of God in Every Language, cont.

Liturgy, and other sacraments into a database. From this, hierarchs will select and create an approved standard Swahili version to be made easily accessible by website and mobile app, as well as printed books.

A similar project is well under way for the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Mexico; led by Missionary Jesse Brandow, who last fall launched liturgia.mx, a website with Spanish language liturgical books and daily Divine Liturgy services with both the fixed and variable parts.

"It is very exciting to see visits to this site grow," says Brandow, who manages the Spanish liturgical website under the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Santiago of Mexico. *"Currently, the greatest number of site visitors are from Mexico, Colombia, and Guatemala. And our Liturgical Translation team is honored to assist the local leaders of the Greek Metropolis of Mexico, helping their Spanish translations to become more widely accessible across Central America."*

This technology provides a unique opportunity to share the gospel around the world – welcoming thousands of people into a transformative relationship with Christ in a way that respects their language and culture.



Support efforts like these at ocmc.org, or by scanning the QR code here.