

VESTNIK



Fund for Assistance to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
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The mission of the Fund for Assistance is to support the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, specifically, the moral-spiritual education of youth, aid to its clergy and distribution of emergency relief to its missions.



Opyoke Family



Haiti



Jordanville boys



Matushka Hannah

How You Put Food on a Deacon's Table

A deacon's family struggles are relieved thanks to our donors



It was all really good news for the Opyoke family: promotions for both deacon Fr. Thomas (Holy Myrrhbearers Mission in Harrisonburg, VA) and matushka Elizabeth, a down payment on a new house and best of all – a second baby.

And then the problems started: Matushka had to be hospitalized seven times during her pregnancy and was put on a liquid diet. Later they found out she had long-time complications from Crohn's disease in her teen years.

By giving her a promotion, her employer somehow robbed Matushka of the paid leave she had spent three years saving up and left her ineligible for short-term disability.

In the meantime, because of Matushka's condition, their son was born prematurely, and had to spend two weeks in the hospital with breathing problems.

Matushka had an operation to remove the obstruction in her bowels and nearly bled to death during the operation.

“We had lost half of our income...”

On top of that, because of Matushka’s employer’s negligence, the family was out of half the family income during a most difficult time of illness and a new baby.

*Today everyone is healthy –
glory be to God!*

The hospital stays, sickness, a mortgage, and childcare payments, student loans and car payments had left the family in a deep financial hole.

Even though the two parents both work full-time, they were struggling every month.

“It came to the point where I try not to eat much, so I can save the food for my wife and kids,” said Fr. Thomas to FFA.

But then thanks to your generosity, we were able to collect over \$14K for the Opyoke family.

“Words cannot express how relieved we are. Thank you for donations, prayers and continued support to the Fund for Assistance!” said Fr. Thomas.

See the heart-wrenching video “Fr. Thomas says Thank You!” on our Facebook and YouTube channel. He recorded it for you.



Fr. Thomas Opyoke thanks you for bringing relief to his family in a moment of need.

Update: Just as Matushka Elizabeth’s debts were paid off, Fr. Thomas had to undergo an operation, and totaled his car in the snow. Please pray for the family who are going through a difficult time!

Haiti: Fr. Gregoire's Last Wish

Priest asks you to keep supporting his **SCHOOL**

On November 16, 2015, Priest Gregoire Legoute, one of the two elders of the Orthodox Mission in Haiti, died of a massive stroke. He was only 54 years old. May his memory be eternal!

A few weeks before his untimely death, Fr Gregoire sent FFA an email. He was a modest man and never asked for help for himself. This time was no different.

His last request to us was to conduct an appeal to raise money for Foyer d'Amour, the school for mentally and physically handicapped students that he and matushka Rose founded over 20 years ago.

Foyer d'Amour is Fr Gregoire's labor of love. Wishing to fulfill God's commandment to care for the "little ones" (Matthew 18:10), the couple cared tremendously for the most vulnerable people in their country.

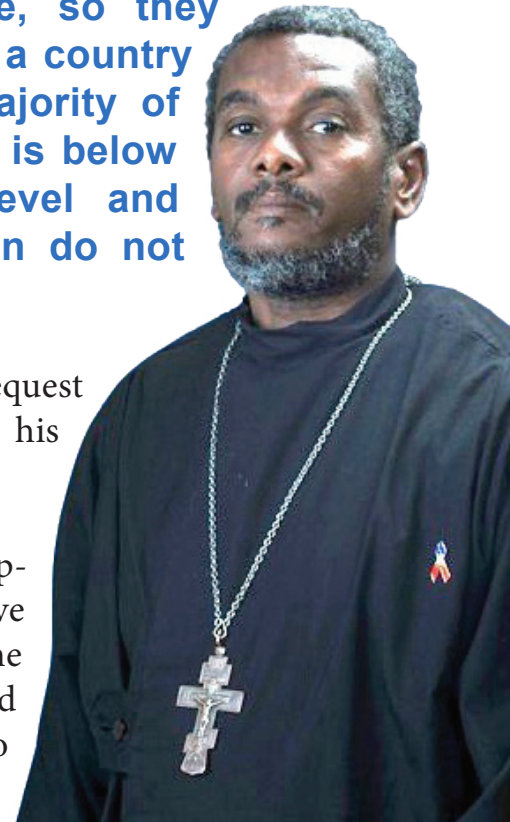
There are around 300 students at the school.

Most of them would have been on the street had it not been for the Legoutes and your generous help.

Even today, the students you support are fed and clothed here and taught a trade, so they can survive in a country where the majority of the population is below the poverty level and half of children do not attend school.

Fr Gregoire's last request to us was to help his school.

Thank you for helping the school thrive throughout the years. Please find it in your heart to continue!



Your generosity allowed Fr. Gregoire and Matushka Rose to care for those forgotten by Haitian society - the physically and mentally handicapped.

Jordanville “Summer boys” then and now

Proof that the future of the Church is in your hands

Sometimes, even a small donation can become a solid investment into the future. Because of your generosity over the years, several generations of well-known priests, clergymen, laymen, and church singers, - who today form the foundation of ROCOR - have attended the Jordanville Summer Boys’ camp.

Summer Boys of the Past

When FFA president Mark Selawry was 16 years old, he, too, was a summer boy at the monastery. At that time, Fr. Luke Murianka was head of the camp. In the evenings, he would read a chapter out of the Bible or the Lives of Saints, and discussed it with the boys.

“Spending the summer of 1982 as a summer boy at Jordanville was one of the most memorable and meaningful experiences I ever had, and shaped me profoundly as an Orthodox Christian,” said Mark.

Protodeacon Paul Wolkow (St. Seraphim Church in Sea Cliff, NY), spent 3 summers at the camp: “The church became our second home,” he said. “We learned the Church rubrics, singing, reading, the peculiarities of a hierarchal liturgy, but most importantly – self discipline. Our amusements were healthy and wholesome: difficult and engaging physical labor. The brotherhood tried giving us all kinds of obediences: we worked in the apiary, the vegetable garden, in the fields, the trapeza, and made prosphora in the monastery bakery.”



A summer in Jordanville (1982) inspired Mark Selawry to serve our Church as FFA president.



Fr. Paul was inspired to give his life to the Church during his stay in Jordanville as a summer boy.

Summer Boys of Today

Not all families can afford to send their sons for three weeks to Jordanville. And then FFA donors would come to the rescue. It is thanks to kind-hearted people like you, that so many boys acquired a taste for a truly Christian – and some for a monastic or clerical life.

Your generosity in 2015 allowed 16 young men and boys from different areas of the U.S., Canada, and Spain to attend the summer camp. In recent years, the camp has been headed by



You are helping the Church acquire new dedicated members.

Priest Ephraim Willmarth, a recent Holy Trinity seminary graduate.



The boys worked at different obediences, and did a lot for the monastery: they cleaned up the burned-down apiary, cleared overgrowth around the monastery lake, helped with making incense, cooked for the brotherhood, and more.

“You gave me the opportunity to talk to and learn from the wonderful people at the monastery. They taught me a great deal and helped me achieve some of the inner peace that they have,” said Ilya Besancon from Washington, DC.

Of course, there was always time for outdoor activities: volleyball, ping-pong, swimming and fishing. Every week, the boys held Lenten barbeques.

If you wish to give the boys in your life 3 weeks of wholesome work, spiritual development and rest away from the world, remember that your gift to the Summer Boys’ camp given through the FFA would be an investment into the future, and the education of young Orthodox men, who are so needed by our Church.

Tatiana Veselkina

Matushka Hannah Romeo has reposed in the Lord

In March 2015 we asked you to help the Romeo family, so that Priest Demetrio could continue his full-time work at his parish the only Orthodox School in Florida. The family had been planning to continue being the main benefactors of their parish, thanks to Matushka Hanna, who was making enough to support

the small family. Cancer changed all that. But thanks to your generosity, Fr. Demetrio's full-time service at his parish continued for almost a full year. Matushka Hannah Romeo (St. Luke the Blessed Surgeon Church in Coconut Creek, FL) reposed in the Lord on January 12 after a long battle with cancer. She was 52.



Before her untimely death, Matushka Hanna, together with Fr. Demetrio and their parishioners, wanted to thank you for what you've done for them.

Our Promise

Your money – your decision: 100% of all donations directly fund the cause indicated by the donor.
Stay updated on how your kindness supports the Church you love: subscribe to our email newsletter on our website:
fundforassistance.org



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