



Orthodox Christian
PRISON MINISTRY™



ANNUAL REPORT

2024



*The Church is a hospital and not a courtroom for souls.
She does not condemn on behalf of sins but grants remission of sins.*

St. John Chrysostom

If the Church is a hospital, OCPM is the Emergency Room

Recently, I spoke to a woman whose husband had committed a serious crime. When she learned about the crime, she was absolutely shattered and afraid. She felt she really didn't know the person she had been living with. In her crisis, she began to pray, and in the midst of her prayer, she had a vision of her husband on an operating table with his chest open to a team of doctors and nurses standing over him. To her the message was clear: the Lord was saying, "Look at what I'm working with here. This man is sick. He needs the most invasive, intense treatment."

Her husband needed to go to the spiritual Emergency Room, and we were ready to serve him, as we are always serving people in their most dire circumstances.

However, there is one major difference between OCPM and a hospital Emergency Room. In a normal hospital, there is a triage process by which doctors determine the most efficient way to help the most people. This means two things: those who are most likely to heal will be treated first, and those who are least likely to heal, those in the worst condition, will be treated last, if at all.

As the Emergency Room of the Orthodox Church, Christ asks OCPM to do just the opposite. We are called to heal first those in the worst conditions. No matter what a person has done to their community, to their families, or to themselves, no one is worth abandoning. No one is too far gone to heal.

The farther a person has gone away, the farther Christ asks us to go in search of them. "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?" (Luke 15:3-7)

At OCPM we believe in going after those who have gone astray. Your support has enabled us not only to continue serving those already in our care, already on the operating table of the Church, so to speak, but to seek out others in dire need of healing. We have invested an incredible amount of our resources in locating and maintaining relationships with our brothers and sisters in prison. In 2024, this was true more than ever, as we opened 236 case files of new people in prison seeking the Church, the highest annual increase we've ever had.

But there is still so much more to do. I ask you to continue to join us on this journey, as our Church hospital cannot be fully functioning unless Her ER is operating well.



Nicholas Petrogeorge
Executive Director



Eugenia Ordynsky
Chairman of the Board

"Your kind and edifying thoughts, corresponding with me, lighting a candle in my name and praying for me, has uplifted my spirit in the darkest and gloomiest times. What greater purpose could there be in serving the Lord than in loving your neighbors, reaching out to the lonely and letting them know they are loved?"

From a letter we received from Keith, December 2024



PRISONER SPIRITUAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

PRISONER SPIRITUAL SUPPORT MANAGERS (PSSMs)

We matched each of the **1,268 people in prison** we served last year with a Prisoner Spiritual Support Manager to maintain his or her connection to the Church through personalized letters, emails, phone calls, and in-person visitation. In 2024 our PSSMs opened **236 new case files** of people in prison seeking long-term spiritual support.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN PRISON MINISTRY

The Certificate Program in Prison Ministry provides clergy and lay volunteers that are interested in prison ministry with the necessary knowledge and experience to effectively lead and support people in prison. Join OCPM and St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary to be trained by the most experienced leaders in Orthodox prison ministry in the United States. courses, Bible studies, and spiritual reflections to people in prison.

ADVOCACY

OCPM advocates for correctional facilities around the country to recognize the Orthodox faith, so that priests can enter prisons and administer the Holy Sacraments and services. Nevertheless, OCPM ministered to people in **817 correctional facilities** last year.

CLERGY CONNECTIONS

For many years, establishing long term, face-to-face clergy visitation for people in prison has been at the heart of OCPM's mission. Last year, our PSSMs coordinated **97 Orthodox clergy** to visit those in prison, offering the Holy Sacraments and ongoing pastoral counseling.

THE JOURNEY & OTHER PUBLICATIONS

We publish and freely distribute The Journey, a monthly newsletter of Orthodox Christian reflections and personal encouragement. We also publish our own books and icons, which have been designed for use in prison and are printed to meet the stringent rules of prison mailing rooms. Last year, we sent **88,089 spiritual books, study courses, Bible studies, and spiritual reflections** to people in prison.

Visit theocpm.org/church to learn more about how your parish can get involved.

CHURCH PROGRAMS

EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY: RECEIVING THE ANCIENT FAITH BEHIND BARS

Early Christian History is a class curriculum, designed to be shared in a local jail or prison with people of all faith backgrounds. The curriculum has been specifically created for the prison audience and will cover material most people in prison have never heard before, their first point of contact with Orthodox Christianity. Last year, **20 people in prison received their graduate certificates** for Early Christian History. For parishes who discern a calling to teach this course, OCPM provides coaching and in-person training to equip each parish to serve in the facility nearest them.

POSTCARDS, LETTERS, AND HOLIDAY CARDS

Show those in prison they are not forgotten by sending cards or simple letters all year long. OCPM has created several ready-made toolkits and templates (available at theocpm.org/volunteer) for your church to download and get involved right away. In 2024, **28 churches** sent postcards to our brothers and sisters behind bars.

PRISON MINISTRY SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Download our print-ready lesson (available at theocpm.org/volunteer) for your Sunday School classroom or children's ministry program to learn more about prison ministry and participate in an activity to design a postcard to send to people in prison near you.

OCPM ADVOCATES

The OCPM Advocates are a team of Orthodox Christians across the country committed to helping their church stay in the know about new offerings and opportunities from OCPM on a national scale and what this can mean for their parish prison ministry at the local level. **84 OCPM Advocates** represented their church in 2024, and more continue to join our team.

STORYBOOK CONNECTIONS™

For the **93 Orthodox parishes** that participated in an OCPM Church Program last year, Storybook Connections™ was an easy way to have a huge impact on our brothers and sisters behind bars. OCPM facilitates a partnership between a parish and a prison or jail nearest them to bring children's books and recording equipment, so a parent behind bars can read a book out loud and send the book and the recording to their child at home. In 2024, OCPM sent **90 books** to families with a loved one incarcerated.

CORRESPONDENCE PENPAL MINISTRY

OCPM trains and certifies correspondence partners to "visit-by-mail", building friendships by exchanging personalized letters with someone in prison over a long period of time together. **63 penpals** corresponded in 2024.

FINANCIALS

2024 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Year Ended December 31, 2024

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents \$616,511

Total Assets **\$616,511**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities **\$1,981**

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions 539,312

Net Assets With Donor Restrictions 75,218

Total Net Assets **\$614,530**

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$616,511**

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended December 31, 2024

REVENUE

Contributions without Donor Restrictions \$716,462

Contributions with Donor Restrictions 100,000

Program Service Revenue 19,600

Bookstore Revenue 2,697

Interest Revenue 12,737

Total Revenue **\$851,496**

EXPENSES

Total Expenses **\$875,507**

Change In Net Assets **\$(24,011)**

NET ASSETS

Beginning 638,541

Ending **\$614,530**

OUR LEADERSHIP

HIERARCHICAL LIAISON

*His Eminence,
Metropolitan Constantine
of Denver*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nicholas Petrogeorge

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Eugenia Ordynsky, Esq., *Chairman*

Nicholas J. Furriss, *Vice Chairman*

Eric Namee, Esq., *Treasurer*

Christian Finger, *Secretary*

Eric Grant, Esq.

Dr. Carla Thomas

Rev. Fr. John Johnson

Larry Fitterer, Esq.

Darin DeBolt

Maggie Wissink

Julie Skouteris



ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL
ORTHODOX BISHOPS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry is the national prison ministry of the Orthodox Church and
an agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.*

LEARN MORE

theocpm.org

347.868.6957

FOLLOW US



@theOCPM



@theOCPM



@The_OCPM

FOR DONATIONS AND GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

276 5th Avenue, Ste. 704-3183
New York, NY 10001

FOR THOSE IN PRISON WISHING TO CORRESPOND WITH US

276 5th Avenue, Ste. 704-3036
New York, NY 10001



Orthodox ChristianTM
PRISON MINISTRY

AN AGENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF BISHOPS

276 5th Avenue
Suite 704 - 3183
New York, NY 10001

