

2011
ANNUAL REPORT



FELLOWSHIP of ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS UNITED to SERVE

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FOCUS

NORTH  AMERICA

In 2011 FOCUS North America provided over:



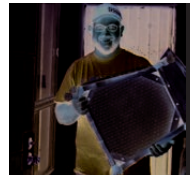
50,000 hot, nutritious meals

70,000 articles of clothing



190,000 food pantry items

\$200,000 in household goods



and a LOT of love!

FOCUS North America
PO Box 871578 Kansas City MO 64187-1578
www.focusnorthamerica.org

FOOD OCCUPATION CLOTHING UNDERSTANDING SHELTER

AS WE REFLECT ON THE PAST YEAR in this annual report, we begin by acknowledging the realities of life in America in 2011: A staggering 46 million people living below the poverty line and the highest poverty rate—15%—in nearly twenty years. And yet, despite the dire numbers, we have never despaired. The steadfast support of our donors allowed FOCUS to increase our outreach to the growing numbers of those in need. In 2011, in 21 cities across America, our staff and volunteers provided hope and sustainable assistance. Through our centers and our short-term volunteer projects, we have answered Christ's call to serve the poor in underserved communities—providing hundreds of thousands of hot meals, articles of clothing, pantry items, furniture, household goods, and home repair.

FOCUS' new partnerships with food banks across the nation allowed us to grow exponentially in 2011. In Orange County, California alone, FOCUS was able to provide 91,000 food items to the poor last year. Our food bank partner provides FOCUS with perishable food free of charge and charges a mere 6 cents per pound for non-perishable

food. That means that for every dollar donated, a family of four can be fed three meals in one day. With that kind of return on investment, we know that FOCUS Orange County will only continue to grow its outreach in the community.

In Pittsburgh, FOCUS' reach is expanding through the development of an innovative medical assistance program to provide preventive medicine, dentistry, and mental health services free of charge. Seventy-five Orthodox health professionals have joined in our effort to bring medical assistance to residents of the Hill District, an underserved community in inner city Pittsburgh. We're particularly gladdened to be able to offer mental health services as part of this initiative—services that are vitally needed and often unavailable to the uninsured.

These are just two of the many program highlights from across America, and every single day. In the following pages, we invite you to read about a few of the programs, stories and people that are helping to build and define this crucial ministry. May God continue to bless this mighty work and your participation in it!

Blessed is the
man who considers
the poor! The LORD
delivers him in the
day of trouble.

PSALM 41:1



NICHOLAS CHAKOS
Executive Director



CHARLES R. AJALAT
Chairman of the Board

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011

Assets

Cash	\$ 318,507
Receivables	39,908
Prepaid expenses	6,062
Investments	9,095
Property and equipment	10,292
Other assets	6,870

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 390,734

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$ 19,272

TOTAL LIABILITIES 19,272

Net assets	
Unrestricted	203,834
Temporarily restricted	167,628

TOTAL NET ASSETS 371,462

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS \$ 390,734



Nicholas Chakos Joins FOCUS North America as Executive Director

"Together with all those across the country who support FOCUS, I am excited to build upon the tremendous accomplishments that have been achieved these past three years, serving the homeless and the working poor here in America."

NICHOLAS CHAKOS

CONTACT US

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CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2011

REVENUES	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Contributions	\$ 752,228	\$ 124,115	\$ 876,343
In-kind contributions	649,802	-	649,802
Registration fees	31,822	-	31,822
Investment income	872	-	872
Event income	94,191	-	94,191
Other income	29,115	-	29,115
Net assets released from restrictions	46,965	(46,965)	-0-
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 1,604,995	\$77,150	\$1,682, 145
Expenses			
Program services	\$ 1,293,093	-	\$1,293,093
Management and general	212,098	-	212,098
Fundraising	128,663	-	128,663
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,633,854	-	1,633,854
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS	(28,859)	\$ 77,150	48,291
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	232,693	90,478	323,171
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 203,834	\$ 167,628	\$ 371,462



94% of public donations go directly to programs

The FOCUS Board of Directors generously contribute to cover the majority of the organization's administrative and fundraising costs.

FOR TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS, Gordon had a successful career as a mechanical engineer in the aerospace industry in St. Louis, Missouri. But just three years shy of retirement, he was abruptly let go. “After years of glowing reviews and awards, my supervisors suddenly said that my position was no longer available to me,” Gordon said.

With the economy in a deep recession, the news could not have come at a worse time. In order to make ends meet, Gordon took what minimum wage jobs he could find. As a result, he said his “self-image took a lethal blow.”

Through a friend, Gordon heard that the FOCUS Center near his home was offering warm meals on Sunday evenings. Disheartened about his situation and embarrassed—he had never needed assistance before—he reluctantly agreed to accompany his friend. Upon arriving at the FOCUS Center, his reluctance quickly faded.

“They welcomed me like a friend,” he said of the FOCUS staff and volunteers. “They treated each of us with respect and without judgment.”

“I can say without hesitation that this opportunity to teach and serve is a direct result of the prayers and support that I received from FOCUS.”

Gordon observed that the kindness of the FOCUS staff and volunteers was contagious.

“I gradually noticed everyone becoming kinder to one another. Guys sat around the tables talking to each other about the latest sports game or current event.”

Gordon continued going to the meal every Sunday. He was encouraged by the support he was receiving from FOCUS, but still struggling to find consistent employment.



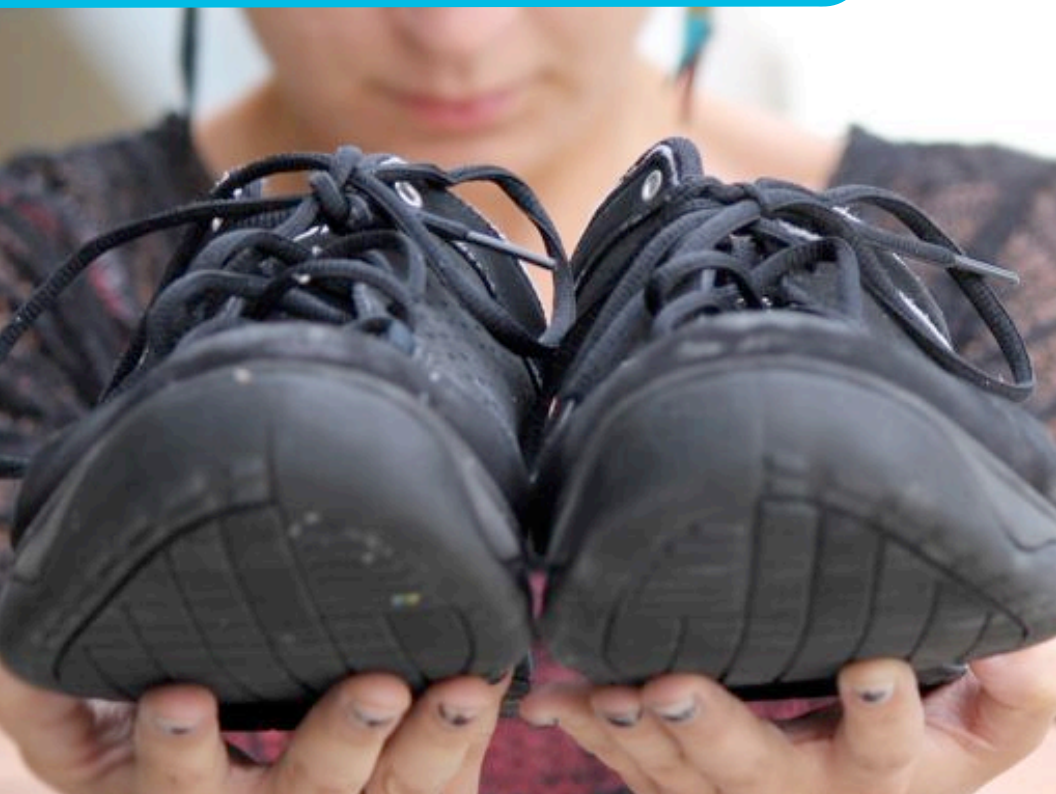
One Sunday evening, when the FOCUS meal was wrapping up, the FOCUS Center director, Eric Shanburn, announced that a prayer would be said for anyone with specific needs. Gordon was quick to ask for prayers for employment. He left the center that evening encouraged to know that FOCUS staff and volunteers would be praying for him.

A few weeks later, he followed a lead and applied for a job he had never considered before: a teaching position in engineering at a vocational college.

“I knew the information backward and forward, but had never professionally taught before.” After one short interview, he was hired.

His students are mostly young men in their twenties from urban neighborhoods. He says the position allows him to serve as a positive role model, encouraging the young men to succeed in the engineering field. Says Gordon, “I can say without hesitation that this opportunity to teach and serve is a direct result of the prayers and support that I received from FOCUS.”

At his first performance review, Gordon received a salary increase. But he says the greatest reward isn't the pay; it's the ability to use his new job to help his students create new beginnings and opportunities in their own lives.



IN OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR, Lauren's brother, John, died of cancer in Minnesota. She was overcome with sorrow and had difficulty accepting his loss.

One afternoon John's wife asked Lauren if she would donate his clothes to a shelter. "She said it was something he would've wanted," Lauren shared. She picked up the clothes but couldn't bring herself to donate them. "I couldn't let them go," she said.

For three weeks the clothes sat in bags in the backseat of her car. As she drove she would occasionally look in the rearview mirror and see an old pair of John's shoes, sitting on top of one of the bags. The sight of the shoes brought her some small comfort.

Eventually she found the strength to part with the clothes. She brought them to the FOCUS Center in Minneapolis.

“I was sobbing the whole time I was there,” she recalls.

Weeks later, Lauren’s church volunteered to provide a Christmas meal at the FOCUS Center. Lauren baked cookies and came to volunteer. “We were asked to sit and visit with the people who came in,” she said. Still grieving, she preferred to sit alone at the back of the room.

*“But I do have one blessing,” he continued.
He lifted the tablecloth and proudly
displayed his shoes to Lauren*

As the meal was served, an older gentleman sat down with a warm plate of food at a table near her. Suddenly, he turned to her and said, “I’m going to be homeless next week. I don’t want to be, but I’m going to be.”

Taken aback, Lauren didn’t know what to say. She listened quietly.

“But I do have one blessing,” he continued. He lifted the tablecloth and proudly displayed his shoes to Lauren. She recognized them immediately. “So I’m sad but I’m happy,” he said.

In that moment, Lauren understood precisely what he meant. She got up from her chair and joined the man at his table. As he ate, they talked to each other, sharing stories from their lives. Periodically she would glance down at the shoes on his feet.

After the meal Lauren put her new friend in touch with FOCUS Center Director Vera Proctor, making sure he was given names and addresses of where he might find housing.

Lauren says she hasn’t been able to forget that evening. She recalls the appreciation of the people served, the fellowship, and the opportunity to serve. But most of all, she thinks of the blessing of a donated pair of shoes and of the joy that Christ offers, even in the midst of sorrow.

FOUNDED WITH A MISSION to provide food, occupation, clothing, understanding, and shelter to those in need, FOCUS sometimes has the opportunity to impact lives in other, unexpected ways. During the 2011 football season, FOCUS received an out of the ordinary request. Knowing that Pittsburgh Steelers player Troy Polamalu, and his wife Theodora are avid supporters of FOCUS, the following letter was sent to FOCUS staff:

“My cousin’s son was diagnosed at the age of three with Muscular Dystrophy with a life expectancy of age 18 – 20. His name is Cody and he is now 15...He is confined to a wheelchair and spends most of his time playing video games and watching TV. One of the things he loves most in life is the football season, more specifically the Steelers. His favorite player is Troy Polamalu. He gets excited whenever he gets a present with a Steelers logo on it and dreams of attending a real game.”

“It’s been his dream to meet Troy Polamalu for as long as we can remember.”

FOCUS could not help but be moved by Cody’s story. Unsure whether Theodora Polamalu would be able to help—she receives countless similar fan requests—FOCUS forwarded the letter to her.

Within five minutes, Theodora sent this reply: “I will respond.”

By the end of the day, all arrangements had been made: Cody and his parents would enjoy box seats with the Polamalu family at the December 4th Steelers game.

Cody’s mother, Penny, said Cody didn’t believe her when she told him. “He was like, ‘no way’, ‘it can’t be true!’”

Not only were Cody and his parents treated to box seats, but they also were invited to a pre-game party with the Polamalu family. The greatest moment for Cody came after the game, when he was escorted to



NFL star Troy Polamalu poses with Cody outside the Pittsburgh Steelers' locker room.

the locker room to meet the entire Steelers team, including his hero, Troy Polamalu.

“The players were so wonderful,” said Penny. “They all signed a football and took pictures with him.”

“He was on cloud nine for months,” she said. “It’s been his dream to meet Troy Polamalu for as long as we can remember. It’s just so moving when you have a dream and it comes true. He’ll remember this forever.”

Today, Cody continues watching his favorite team on TV and talks about the experience with everyone he encounters.

Cody’s story is just one example of the thousands of lives that are encouraged, empowered, and transformed—sometimes in surprising ways—by FOCUS and its compassionate supporters, volunteers, and donors.

FOCUS North America and ReEngage

Absentee fathers are a growing national epidemic that reach across social, racial, and economic lines. Children from homes where fathers are absent are 5 times more likely to be poor. 70 percent of all juveniles in detention centers come from fatherless homes. 71 percent of all high school dropouts did not grow up with an active father.



Graduate Michael Taylor, Kansas City Mayor Sly James, and Rodney Knott

FOCUS North America is responding to the dire needs of fatherless families with a pioneering program, in partnership with ReEngage, an organization dedicated to working with absentee fathers. “There are important and necessary lessons about life that fathers have historically imparted to our children,” says Rodney

Knott, Executive Director of ReEngage. “Those lessons are not being passed on to our children, and the children are suffering.”

Program graduate Dwight Simpson has not only become more active in the life of his family but is also extending the ReEngage message throughout his community. “After coming through the program I now see the importance of my family and my community,” says Simpson, “I’m not going to give up on them.”

FOCUS and ReEngage are expanding this important work throughout the country, teaching men to be fathers and stay active in the lives of their children. The class is currently in session at FOCUS Gateway City, and FOCUS Kansas City.

Volunteer today!

FOCUS North America’s volunteer program is the largest Orthodox volunteer network in the nation and is growing exponentially. Through FOCUS, volunteers of all ages can participate in hands-on activities serving the poor. This year FOCUS is offering more than 20 short-term

service projects across America that engage volunteers in three to five days of activities such as serving meals to the homeless, assisting in family shelters, home repairs, street outreach and more.

The **Youth Equipped to Serve (YES)** program works with local Orthodox parishes and dioceses to provide a meaningful and engaging volunteer opportunity for middle school and high school students.

Since 2009, some 300 volunteers have participated in the FOCUS YES program reaching out to those in need in 20 cities across America.

YES student Georgia Kasamias explained how her eyes were opened to the reality of the poor in underserved communities. “I never really understood the nature and underlying problems of the poor and homeless in my community,” she said, “Volunteering with FOCUS helped to change my perspective on the complexities of poverty in urban cities and taught me how I can participate in making my community a better place.”

FOCUS Appalachia is a weeklong trip to the Appalachian Trail area of North Carolina. Working with Operation Inasmuch, FOCUS volunteers help to renovate the homes of disadvantaged senior citizens while learning about the Orthodox perspective on service and love for the poor. Each trip provides volunteers with activities based upon the needs of the community and the skills of the volunteers.

Volunteering through FOCUS North America is a great way to learn about poverty in the United States and to help people in a personal, practical way. FOCUS trips provide educational and hands-on activities to volunteers, allowing them to help those most in need. Check the FOCUS website often as our volunteer program is continually expanding as a part of FOCUS' mission to serve the poor in America.



Thank you for your continued involvement and support. None of our work would be possible without the sacrificial time and effort given generously by thousands of volunteers and donors throughout the country. You have actively participated in the work of FOCUS and have made a significant difference in the lives of many. Through your efforts, FOCUS has led poor and underserved families out of poverty and into sustainable housing, employment, education and much more. Thank you.

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Mrs. Theodora Polamalu
Serves the needy throughout North America with husband Troy Polamalu

Stay Involved with FOCUS North America through our Centers and Programs. Sign up for a *YES* or *Appalachia* service trip. Host a *YES* trip in your city. Gather a team from your parish to go on a *YES* or *Appalachia* trip. Volunteer at a local Center. Host a FOCUS event to raise support and awareness. Share FOCUS' work at your Parish. Connect to FOCUS through Facebook and Twitter.

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FOCUS

NORTH + AMERICA

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Giving the poor in America help and hope



This year, join with FOCUS North America as we offer hope and sustainable help to those most in need throughout our nation.

Your support enables us to provide FOOD, OCCUPATION, CLOTHING, UNDERSTANDING, and SHELTER to underserved communities in America. Remember our ministry and those we serve with your prayers and giving.

Text “FOCUS” to 52000 to give \$10!