



**ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN YOUTH MOVEMENT (OCYM)**  
**DIOCESE OF UK, EUROPE & AFRICA**  
**Annual Report 2025-2026**

*“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)*

The Diocesan Orthodox Christian Youth Movement (OCYM-UK EU AFR), now in its 14th year, continues its active Christian witness through worship, study, and service, shaping young minds within contemporary society. This report summarises the impactful activities and achievements of the OCYM for 2025-2026 accounting year, a year marked by significant engagement across the diocese, fostering spiritual growth, community building, and impactful initiatives through the dedication of its members, clergy, and leadership.

**Diocesan Leadership**

HE Abraham Mar Stephanos serves as the OCYM President and on 23 June 2025, His Eminence appointed Fr. Happy Jacob as the Vice President of OCYM as per E-165/AMS/2025 with effect from 01 July 2025. Fr. Jeeson P. Wilson will be relieved from his responsibilities as Vice President of the OCYM. This report thank Fr. Jeeson P Wilson and take this opportunity to thank him wholeheartedly for his valuable and faithful service in this role. His pastoral care, support to zonal leadership, and consistent involvement in diocesan youth initiatives have been a great blessing to our youth and to the Diocese at large.

**Financial Summary**

The OCYM finance team has meticulously managed the finances for OCYM for the past financial year. Mr. Alvin Abraham serves as the Treasurer and the following table summarises the finance position for financial year 2025-26 as of 31 March 2026.

**Income & Expense as of 31st March 2026**

Income	Amount	Expenses	Amount
Opening Balance:			
Cash at Bank	£2,951.62		
AURA 2025	£9,050.00	AURA 2025	£11,315.00
FC 2025	£2,126.00	FC 2025	£1,295.54
Zonal Events	£400.00	Diocese Support ( FC 2025)	£500.00
Interest Earned	£27.43	Zonal Events	£254.05
Egypt Pilgrimage	£3,500.00	Media & Subscriptions	£155.88
AOYC 2026	£600.00	AOYC 2026	£2,250.00
Prayer Rope- Sale	£45.00		
		Closing Balance:	
		Cash at Bank	£2,884.58
		Cash in Hand	£45.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£18,700.05</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£18,700.05</b>

## **Diocese Programs:**

### **Family Conference**

The Diocese Annual Youth and Family Conference took place at the University of Nottingham from 21st–23rd August 2025 with the theme Good Soil, St Mark 04:20. The key dignitaries who were part of the conference included:

- HE Zachariah Mar Nicholovos (Metropolitan - North-East America Diocese)
- HE Zachariah Mar Severios (Metropolitan - Idukki Diocese)
- Rev. Fr. Abbey George
- Rev. Fr. Daniel Mathai
- HE Abraham Mar Stephanos Metropolitan

The conference welcomed participants from across the UK, Europe, and Africa Diocese, including children, youth, and adults. Vicars from across the diocese generously supported the event, assisting in various aspects of organisation and coordination. Separate sessions were held for adults, children, youth, and families, led by the dignitaries. These sessions were inspiring, enlightening, and thought-provoking, offering spiritual guidance and practical insights for daily life.

OCYM volunteers under the leadership of Fr. Happy Jacob and Rajin V Poullose played an active role throughout the conference, being part of the Committee, assisting with registration processes and supporting various activities for the successful organisation of the event.

An OCYM faith stall was also set up, attracting significant interest and generating successful revenue through the sale of faith-related items, including religious portraits, prayer ropes, and many other items. OCYM was successful in supporting Diocese by donating £500 from the profits generated from the stall. Ms. Cucki Thomas and Mr. Melvin played a key role in managing the stalls for OCYM.

### **AURA 2025**

The OCYM Bi-Annual Leadership Conference, AURA 2025, took place at the Pioneer Centre in Cleobury Mortimer, Kidderminster, from 10th–12th October 2025.

The conference was graced by the presence of the OCYM President and Metropolitan of Kunnamakulam, HG Dr Geevarghese Mar Yulios Metropolitan, alongside H.E Abraham Mar Stephanos, Fr. Mathew Varghese, Diocese Secretary, Fr. Happy Jacob, OCYM Vice President and Fr. Aswin Eapen, Europe Zone President. Over 60 participants attended the event.

A variety of sessions were held throughout the conference, focusing on leadership styles and management, youth involvement in church administration, and finance management within the Church. The event provided participants with valuable opportunities to openly discuss important topics of interest through interactive sessions and open discussions with the bishops and vicars. The session also highlighted and discussed the key OCYM vision areas:

- a. Orthodox witness through Liturgical experiences
- b. Orthodox witness through Didache (Study)
- c. Orthodox witness through Diakonia (Service)
- d. Orthodox witness through Emmaus Journey
- e. Orthodox witness through Pilgrimage

We were also blessed to host a session with youth representatives from the Coptic, Ethiopian, and Eritrean Orthodox Churches, creating a meaningful opportunity to share faith traditions, theology, and experiences.

The three-day conference was an enlightening and thought-provoking experience, bringing together 60+ youth leaders from different parishes across the diocese to share their success stories, discuss challenges they face, and collaboratively explore practical solutions for their respective church OCYM units. The camp ended with a English Eucharist by H.E. Dr Geevarghese Mar Yulios Metropolitan.

### **Jingle Fest 2025**

We organized our diocesan level Christmas carol competition for the second consecutive year during the 2025 Christmas season. The event was organized by a committed team led by Ms. Cucki Thomas, Mr. Manu John, and Mr. Jobin Prince, with the valuable support of the Zonal Coordinators, Mr. Melvin Aby and Mr. Melvin Mathew, across the Diocese.

Recorded carol performances from 11 parishes across the diocese were shared through social media platforms, fostering a spirit of joy, unity, and festive celebration among the faithful.

Mar Elia Orthodox Congregation, Georgia was awarded the Best Song category, while St. Peter's & St. Paul's Orthodox Church, Drogheda received the Online Voting Prize. We extend our sincere congratulations to the winners and express our heartfelt appreciation to all participants for their enthusiastic involvement, which contributed significantly to the success of this event.

### **Podcasts**

The Diocese OCYM expanded its digital reach in 2025 with the release of "Journey to the Manger – Season 2" during the Nativity Lent. The podcasts, featuring 25 days of short messages by His Eminence Abraham Mar Stephanos, significantly boosted our social media presence and followers. We extend our gratitude to His Eminence for his contributions and to the Digital Media Team for their efforts in publishing the content across various platforms.

### **Grent Lent Prayer**

Throughout the fifty days of the Great Lent, the OCYM members joined the online lent prayer services conducted via Zoom. These services were hosted and led by various OCYM units across the Diocese, with each unit contributing prayer readings and reflections. The reflections were subsequently shared through social media platforms, extending the spiritual benefits of the initiative to a wider audience.

We express our sincere gratitude to the participating priests, OCYM units, and the Digital Media Team for their dedicated contributions. Special appreciation is extended to Mr. Jobin George, Spirituality Team Lead, for his exemplary organisation and effective management of these prayer services.

### **Zonal and Auxiliary Teams**

With the consistent support of the Zonal Coordinators and Zonal Presidents, OCYM has witnessed active engagement from members across all zones. The Zonal Coordinators have been instrumental in fostering strong coordination with Unit Secretaries, ensuring the effective implementation and promotion of various initiatives aimed at the development of OCYM. Furthermore, the notable growth in OCYM membership during the year has significantly enhanced participation, leading to the successful conduct of diverse events across multiple zones.

## **1. UK - North Zone**

The North Zone organized a Lenten Pilgrimage on 28 March 2026 at St. Athanasius Monastery, Scarborough, with the guidance and support of Fr. Happy Jacob, OCYM Vice President and Fr. Tiji Thankachen, OCYM UK- North Zone President. The pilgrimage was attended by 18 participants and proved to be a spiritually enriching experience marked by prayer, reflection, and fellowship. The organisers also gratefully acknowledge St. Luke IOC, North Yorkshire for sponsoring the meals, which contributed to the smooth and successful conduct of the event.

## **2. UK - Central Zone**

OCYM Central Zone has remained actively engaged throughout the year, supported by the strong leadership of the Zonal President and the Unit Secretaries. A major highlight of the year was OLIVE 2025 (Orthodox Living in Virtue & Essence), the Central Zone's inaugural one-day conference, held under the theme "Be Transformed & Renewed." The conference was led by Rev. Fr. Geevarghese J. Tharakan and hosted by OCYM South Wales. The event brought together approximately 100 youth from across the Diocese and proved to be a spiritually enriching occasion marked by learning, reflection, and fellowship.

## **3. UK - South Zone**

The South Zone continued to actively support OCYM London's initiative of engaging with fellow Oriental Orthodox Churches. A key highlight of this effort was the event Henosis, held at St. Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church (SGIOC), London, in November 2025. The gathering welcomed members from the Coptic, Eritrean, and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches, fostering dialogue, fellowship, and mutual understanding among Oriental Orthodox youth. In addition, Rev. Fr. Nitin Prasad Koshy conducted a series of sessions on the Nicene Creed and Christology, along with Bible study classes, thereby contributing to the spiritual growth and theological awareness of the participants.

## **4. Ireland Zone**

Ireland Zone hosted its first-ever one-day regional conference on October 18, 2025 at St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church, Dublin. This conference brought together more than 100 registered participants from across Ireland. The conference featured enriching sessions led by Rev. Fr. Anish K. Sam and Rev. Fr. Stanly David James, who served as the resource persons for the day. The event was attended by Mr. Rajin V Poulose, General Secretary and Mr. Alvin Abraham, OCYM Treasurer.

From January 1st, 2025, OCYM Ireland commenced our spiritual, virtual series, titled "Henosis". This series involves a monthly virtual session conducted by a different Irish church each month. During Christmas 2025, OCYM Ireland had the privilege of coordinating our annual charity initiative, *Food for the Soul*. "Walk by Faith" was a spiritually enriching hike along the scenic Howth Cliff Walk, bringing together participants from across the region. The event combined physical activity with spiritual reflection, creating a meaningful and refreshing experience for all involved

## **5. Europe Zone**

Under the leadership of the Zonal President and the Zonal Secretaries, a range of leadership and student outreach programmes were carefully planned and implemented to strengthen engagement across mainland Europe. The Europe team made dedicated efforts to connect with students arriving for higher studies, organising various events and initiatives to support their integration into the OCYM community.

Congregations within the European sector organised multiple programmes aimed at engaging OCYM members, supporting them in their student life, and ensuring their continued connection with the Church. A systematic approach was adopted to personally reach out to students across different countries through individual communication, regular follow-ups, and sustained pastoral engagement. Students were further encouraged to identify and connect with fellow members within their regions, thereby fostering a growing and supportive network.

In regions where regular Holy Qurbana is conducted, student contact details were shared with local vicars and priests to ensure ongoing pastoral care. In areas without regular clergy presence, separate monthly or bi-monthly online prayer gatherings were organised to sustain spiritual life and community fellowship.

The “Roots and Routes” photography competition saw global engagement from approximately 35 members across nine countries, with Clara Mangalath (Hamburg, Germany) and Aleena (Malta) securing top honours. Strategic outreach led to the historic commencement of Holy Qurbana in Latvia and Lithuania. Furthermore, Poland established its first official OCYM unit, significantly expanding pastoral presence and structured fellowship across the region.

The Weekly Evening Prayer Initiative conducted every Saturday under the Spirituality Team, along with the Student hospitality team, continued to serve as a cornerstone of spiritual nourishment. Led by Mr. Jobin George, Dn. Mammen Joseph, and Rev. Fr. Aswin Varghese Eappen, these gatherings included prayer, Scripture readings, and reflections. These gatherings provide a platform for students to participate in prayer, engage in open discussions, and seek spiritual guidance.

Additionally, the Theoria online prayer and meditation gathering, held on 29 January at the conclusion of the Nineveh Lent, witnessed the participation of students across Europe. The event was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Happy Jacob, Vice President of the Diocesan OCYM.

## **6. Africa**

Africa Zone under the leadership of Aaron Koshy and Nihal successfully revived its youth ministry through the "Ignite" program on June 22, 2015. The event gathered 40 youth from the African Zone for a day of spiritual renewal and fellowship. The gathering was enriched by the wisdom of H.E. Abraham Mar Stephanos and Rev. Fr. Jobin Mammen Cherian, who inspired attendees toward faith and responsibility.

In addition, the youth played a vital role in organizing the Easter celebrations. This year’s Easter week was especially significant, as our parish hosted Thirumeni H.E Dr. Yuhanon Mar Chrysostomos for the first time in 11 years. His presence during the holy season made the celebration profoundly memorable, and the youth’s contributions ensured its success.

## **7. Student Hospitality**

The Hospitality Team has continued playing a significant role in connecting incoming students and young working professionals to their nearest churches or Orthodox communities, spanning more than 25 countries across the Diocese. The team actively utilises Instagram and Facebook as primary communication channels to engage with students and facilitate connections. These platforms serve as a space to share insights about various countries where students are based, while also highlighting the emotional and spiritual journeys experienced when transitioning to a new environment. Additionally, events and initiatives are promoted through these channels. Through these efforts, the team has

identified and connected Orthodox students across more than 25 countries, fostering a sense of community within the Diocese.

As part of a student-led initiative, the Hospitality Team organised a diocesan-level virtual choir titled “Rahmthā.” This initiative resulted in the production of three music videos for Hosanna, Good Friday, and Easter, bringing together students from across the Diocese. The project showcased the strength of the growing network and promoted collaboration among students and youth.

## 8. Digital Team

The Digital Media Team significantly enhanced the diocese's visibility through strategic content creation and collaborative outreach. Key achievements included comprehensive digital branding and video production for major events like AURA 2025, Evoke 25, and Jingle Fest, as well as the successful execution of seasonal spiritual campaigns such as daily Metropolitan video messages during Christmas and reflections throughout Great Lent. By providing creative support for zonal conferences like Henosis, Olive, and Rooho, and facilitating initiatives like the Rahmtha choir performances, the team fostered a unified digital presence across the UK, Europe, and Africa. This period of growth, driven by structured social media planning and strong coordination with parish-level volunteers, has established a robust foundation for the ministry to continue inspiring and uniting the OCYM community through purposeful digital engagement.

## Conclusion

The 2025-2026 year has been a period of growth and achievement for OCYM. We are grateful for the dedication of our members, the guidance of our clergy, and the support of our parishes. We look forward to continuing our mission of empowering Orthodox Christian youth in the year ahead. May we continue this good work and maintain a strong foundation for our youth in the diocese.

Report Presented by:

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