



Christmas celebrations at the Sisters house in Briuchovychi, January 2023 - UKRAINE / LVIV
The catechist sisters of St. Anna could celebrate the joy of St. Nicholas and Christmas with their refugees in their home. ACN benefactors donations funded a car for the catechist Sisters of St. Anna in Briuchovychi, Lviv, to keep going... and smiling!

One year on ACN's support for Ukraine

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Thank you!

Pontifical Foundation

Aid to the Church in Need | ACN International

Bischof-Kindermann-Str. 23 | D-61462 Königstein/Ts. | GERMANY

www.acninternational.org

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Warriors of Peace and Prayer!

Capuchin brothers at a checkpoint in July 2022, during a pilgrimage to Ostropol, Lubar, Ukraine

ACN supported the people of Ukraine in this time of crisis very effectively. Given the exceptionally close and longstanding relationship that ACN has built up along the years with our partners in the Ukraine, after the outbreak of the full scale war on February 24th, we were in the position to give almost immediate support through the Church networks throughout the country. Our Head of Section for Ukraine is in constant contact with the bishops, priests, religious sisters, listening closely to their needs and pro-active to respond to the situation as it has evolved. Two trips have been organized during the year 2022, in April and in November.

In 2022, Ukraine was the country receiving the largest share of ACN help worldwide. In this way, ACN benefactors' generosity has reached Ukrainians all over the country in this hour of trial, quickly and effectively, materially but also spiritually. They are also aware of and grateful for our prayers.

OVERVIEW: Total help in figures

As of: 27th January 2023

By January 2023, ACN had approved **292 projects** amounting to over **9,5 million euros** year-to-date. The first phase projects were approved when the invasion took on full force in February, as a first direct emergency response. They were aimed at supporting the Catholic Church of both rites in the whole of the Ukraine to stand and attend the faithful as the war broke out and extended.

Since outbreak of the war ACN benefactors reacted with an outpouring of their hearts. Here are some preliminary figures of who and what their generosity achieved. At least:

- **7,447 diocesan priests, religious sisters and brothers, and diocesan staff** – supported with emergency existential aid. Of which 5,661 were recipients of immediate emergency assistance distributed to the dioceses and religious orders at the on-set of the war, in early March 2022, from all dioceses of Ukraine:

- ✓ 17 dioceses of the UGCC - Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine
 - ✓ 7 dioceses of the RCC - Roman Catholic Church, Latin rite in Ukraine
- The rest received the aid in a second phase of intensified support.
- **2,274 refugee beneficiaries** were directly supported with humanitarian aid
 - **1,712 children and youth** (almost all refugees or in war affected areas) received pastoral care in the form of holiday camps, youth pastoral activities
 - **738 seminarians** at least were supported in their formation or subsistence, as some of the seminaries had been involved in the care for refugees
 - **3,280** benefited from **formation or spiritual retreats**, including:
 - ✓ **640 religious and priests and catechists** at least - through 17 projects
 - ✓ **2,640 families, lay people involved in Church pastoral/admin** - 9 projects
 - **994 religious** (831 sisters and 163 brothers) received existence aid.
 - ACN benefactors donated to combat the winter, and cope with energy shortages with:
 - ✓ **205 generators** to maintain a consistent supply of electricity
 - ✓ **78 heaters, insulation or heating** systems to improve the situation in monasteries, parish houses and halls, seminaries and churches
 - ✓ **25 construction or renovation** projects were undertaken to improve, repair or enlarge places of worship or shelter, including **3 water or sanitation projects**
 - ✓ **3** projects were carried out to install or replace **windows**
 - **231 kitchen upgrades, portable ovens** or other household equipment was purchased to improve the capacity of the parishes, monasteries, seminaries, etc to feed and care for the displaced at their doorsteps - to feed the hungry
 - **80 cars and vans** were purchased. These vehicles are used to provide pastoral care as well as to distribute relief supplies. The recipients of the vehicles are dioceses, the Caritas organisation, seminaries, religious orders, a parish, basically all who are directly involved in providing help, pastoral and humanitarian, to the faithful especially the old and sick and the internally displaced, while also taking care of those on the front lines.
 - ACN contributed to the purchase of **130 liturgical Mass kits** for priests to be able to celebrate Holy Mass, sometimes on the move, even at the battle front.
 - **6,549 Holy Masses** were celebrated thanks to Mass stipends offered by ACN benefactors, thus also contributing to the pastoral and existential needs of Ukrainian priests of both rites

The subsistence aid and Mass Stipends have proved critical for all, as many regular pastoral care programmes have had to be discontinued at this time. Many have left or lost their homes, businesses have closed their doors, the supply situation in large parts of south-eastern Ukraine is catastrophic and the people are no longer able to support themselves, let alone their priests. It is the priests and religious who are sharing what they have with the growing number of people displaced or struggling for survival.

There are 2 phases of our help to Ukraine in this past year. The first phase as an immediate response to the full-blown invasion by Russian troops in February 2022. The second phase as on-going emergency help thereafter.

Phase 1 - ACN Emergency Aid during the first 3 months of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops

ACN Emergency Aid during the first 3 months of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops was direct aid to the dioceses, for the priests and religious people.

In February 2022 Ukraine came under intense attack by Russian shelling and invasion of troops. As a long-term priority country for the work of ACN, the response was to proactively reach out to offer our support to the priests, religious sisters and brothers of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic and the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine. It was clear that they would be on the front line of support to the population in shock, bereavement and on the move. They live, work and pray close to the people. It is this proximity and their vocation which puts them in the best position to help the suffering population.

First East - In a first instance urgent attention was given to deliver emergency grants to Eastern Ukraine and enable them to remain operational (and transfer the funds while it was still possible). ACN benefactors reacted to our Ukraine emergency campaign which soon reached over 1 M €. The first emergency grants could be channelled directly through the Church for all religious sisters, brothers and priests of both the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, UGCC, and the Roman Catholic Church, RCC (no other agency).

The first package of emergency help approved on 2nd March 2022 consisted of 24 projects for a total of 1.3 M € for all jurisdictions of the Catholic Church in the country¹. Of these:

- 9 projects for a total of 865,000 € reached beneficiaries in the Eastern Dioceses/ Eparchies/ Exarchates. Funds were made available and paid out as soon as possible. The main cities where this immediate help was sent were: Kyiv, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhya, Odessa, the region of Donetsk. ACN offered and granted support to the 4 exarchates of the UGCC and the 2 dioceses of the RCC directly under immediate attack. These were: KHARKIV, DONETSK, ODESA, KRYM and KHARKIV-ZAPORIZHZHYA and ODESA-SIMFEROPOL (with KRYM), respectively.
- The remaining projects were for the West of Ukraine not directly in the war zone. In Western Ukraine we did not help each priest and religious with a grant per person, rather with an emergency contribution to the bishop for the most pressing needs.

¹ See ACN feature in IPIC: Ukraine: ACN helps the eparchy (diocese) of Kamianets-Podilskyi in its mission "Thanks to your help my children can sleep in beds, far from the sounds of war". A displaced mother talks about the aid she has received from the local Church

Note: ACN Emergency help for the region in eastern Ukraine affected by armed conflict included help for the annexed region of Crimea. Since 2014 ACN has given more than 350,000€ to help both the Greek Catholic and Latin Catholic communities survive despite being cut off from the rest of the Ukraine with 33 projects. This included:

- Emergency and pastoral help for the Exarchate of Donetsk and the extraordinary activity of priests.
- Support for military chaplains and their mission in eastern Ukraine.
- Emergency and pastoral aid to refugees of Luhansk and Donetsk conflict areas, Kyiv-Zhytomyr

Phase 2 - Priorities of ACN on-going emergency help

After the first emergency packages were granted to all dioceses and exarchates of the country to ensure subsistence aid to the priests and religious throughout the country, ACN entered a second phase of aid². Here we have spent a further **8.2 M €**.

The priorities in phase 2 were established by listening to the evolving needs of our project partners.

Accompanied by a small delegation from ACN, our project manager Magda Kaczmarek visited Ukraine in late April and again in November to personally meet project partners and evaluate the situation and needs on the ground. With each visit the assistance programme is reinforced and new areas of help are strengthened as the needs but also the response the Church can offer is better understood.

The goal was established as twofold:

1. to support the Church where it identified a need for equipment, vehicles, infrastructure and direct aid to help them to take in the displaced and care materially and pastorally for a flock on the move, traumatised, in dangerous conditions and in a complex context.
2. to also keep a focus on continued care for the carers, who were adapting and intensifying their availability to the influx of displaced, hungry, cold, tired, and scared people (mostly women with children, sick and old persons), while themselves undergoing shortages, disruption, even destruction of premises and livelihoods.

In this second phase of help we have and continue to support individual initiatives for parishes, monasteries, seminaries with the 'extraordinary aid' to help the displaced and families in particularly great need.

Some project examples:

- Purchase of household appliances for 55 convents that are taking in IDPs
- Extraordinary aid for the Order of St. Paul the First Hermit at Kamyanets Podilskyi Monastery during the war (providing for 60 IDPs for 1 month)
- Extraordinary aid for the Sisters of the Holy Family during the war (taking in 160 IDPs for some months at Hoshiv Monastery)
- Extraordinary aid for the Eparchy of Chernivtsi to help provide for war IDPs
- Extraordinary aid for 10 parishes to help provide for war IDPs in the Archdiocese of Ivano-Frankivsk
- Extraordinary aid to provide for war IDPs at the Catholic grammar school of the Archeparchy of Ivano-Frankivsk
- Support for the pastoral work of the patriarchal curia during the war - Mass kits for the celebration of the liturgy

² Besides the 1.3 M € emergency help in March, we granted in phase 2 additional emergency help for the coming winter at the end of 2022. The total for pure 'emergency' grants reaches therefore more than 2 M €. This amount doesn't include the help to the IDPs in Church structures, ca. 1 M € to date.

- We also provided emergency help for the Diocesan institutions in Western part of Ukraine like Lviv and Ternopil

Mgr. Vasylij Tuchapets, Greek Catholic Bishop of Kharkiv, explained to ACN the importance of remaining with the people, how the war has affected pastoral work, and the needs in eastern Ukraine. On the first day of the invasion, Bishop Vasylij woke up at 5.00 a.m. to the sound of explosions as the Russians began bombing Kharkiv. On the way to the cathedral, he saw people in panic, many trying to get to the station with their luggage. City transport was not functioning and there were long queues at petrol stations. His first instruction that day was that all priests should remain in their parishes, close to the faithful entrusted to them. At the same time, the safety of their families required care and attention since most Greek Catholic diocesan clergy have wives and children.

One evening after Mass the bishop was leaving the cathedral when he was approached by a group of local young men, who he had never seen in church. "Thank you for staying with us", they said. The very presence of someone praying for them lifts people's spirits, says Bishop Vasylij: "One should not be afraid, and the Lord will bless. If a priest runs away, everyone loses."

ACN aid projects in this second phase, concretely can be clustered into the following areas of support, for which we will elaborate some project examples below:

1. Tending to the needs of the people – subsistence aid for IDPs
2. Generators, heating, kitchen upgrades, new windows and equipment to keep warm, to keep serving
3. Emergency support for priests and religious
4. Vehicles for mobility - to keep reaching out
5. Looking after seminarians
6. Formation and spiritual retreats - to recharge empty batteries
7. Children and youth, summer camps and pastoral activities - a break from the war, to keep learning and keep the joy
8. Support to the sisters and their mission – Mothers to all!
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1) Tending to the needs of the people - subsistence aid for IDPs

We have had at least 17 projects directly aimed at providing humanitarian aid to an estimated 2,274 displaced and vulnerable people. These people and families on the move because of the war take refuge in the parishes, monasteries, seminaries and other facilities provided by the Church to support them. The IDPs often stay for a short period of time, maybe one to three months as they are temporarily displaced or on their way to the border, so they stay with or call at various Church facilities throughout the West of Ukraine for help, where they know they will receive shelter and care. Mostly they are passing through.

Concretely, one such project was special help in caring for refugees in the parish of St. Archangel Michael in Tyvriv as a result of the war, with 20,000 € grant ACN benefactors cared

for 50 direct beneficiaries during 2 months, as of mid-October 2022³. We already supported the Oblate fathers for the construction of the monastery in Tyvriv (30 km south of Vynnytsya) with 102,000€ between 2011 and 2014. For one person a day they need between 7 -10 €. Currently, the funds intended for the further renovation of the monastery have been spent on the care of the refugees, as these expenses were of course unexpected.

Magda explains: “These are internally displaced persons, whole families, sometimes including men. Many of them no longer have a home because they have lost everything. Often the people have been asked to leave their houses, because the Ukrainian soldiers could not provide security for them.

“In Tyvriv, the Oblates normally have their retreat house, but at the moment they only care for the internally displaced people. For the Oblates it is an opportunity to live out charity in action but also to evangelise these people, because indeed they like to come to pray, especially to pray the rosary!”



UKRAINE / KAMYANETS-PODILSKYI-LAT 22/007

Special help in caring for refugees in the parish of St. Archangel Michael of Oblates community in Tyvriv as a result of the war.

With the photos and receipts, we received a short note from o. Krzysztof Machelski OMI:
 “We sincerely thank you for your help. (...) May the example of the poor people we help, help us all to cherish what is most important: a deep relationship with God, - something no rocket or occupation can destroy. With prayer!”

³ project in the RC Diocese of KAMYANETS-PODILSKYI

2) Generators, Heating, Kitchen upgrades, new Windows, equipment - to keep warm, to keep serving

- 19 projects were to purchase of 205 generators to enable monasteries, dioceses, refugee shelters, parishes and seminaries to provide access to or improve their power supply
- 17 projects for heating systems or insulation improvements ahead of the winter
- 3 projects to enable new kitchen installations necessary to cook for the influx of displaced
- 3 projects were for new windows

Faced with the shortages of electricity and gas, many projects for concrete and immediate solutions to battle the cold and help the people survive the winter were a key part of our aid. Thanks to ACN benefactors, the Church in Ukraine was able to purchase generators, heating insulation or to change to different heating systems, new windows, ovens and equipment to keep the people and the carers warm, and fed, as all were faced with increased energy needs.

Due to the war, the rapid increase in natural gas prices, the destruction of logistics routes in Ukraine for the delivery of products, and the increased risks of limiting supplies means prices have risen sharply both in Ukraine, not just around the world, not just the conflict zone. The energy crisis has affected everyone. Many seminaries, convents and parishes have limited electricity or water, and the temperatures in winter are extremely low, reaching -20°C.



Heating for the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate in Boryslav. Insulation material.
Sr Teresa Nowosiadło writes "my warmest greetings from Ukraine, and once again I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness and help shown to us.(...) We have a warm and very pleasant home. You are welcome to join us for a cup of tea, by the way. With the gift of grateful prayers!"

For example, the rector of the seminary of Ternopil, Fr Ivan Rymar, asked for help to switch from natural gas to combustible pellets, made of compressed wood chips, a more reliable fuel source. The seminary already produces pellets, and thanks to the help provided by ACN it can significantly reduce the cost of heating the seminary. The project is in the Diocese of TERNOPIL-ZBORIV and it provided 62,500€ for new wood heating system for the seminary. The rector wrote to us [“our sincere gratitude to you and all the benefactors of "ACN" for continuing to stay with us in this dramatic time of war that is raging in Ukraine \(...\) In advance, we are sincerely grateful for your help, which will be a good investment in enabling the Seminary to continue to function and use much cheaper and more reliable sources for heating the premises. We keep you in our prayers.”](#)



Heating for the houses of the Missionary Benedictines in Ukraine, an Oasis for the displaced
With this project Sr. Jana was able to purchase 20 radiators for 11 houses at an average cost of 180€ each to provide heating for the Sisters and their protégés

Thanks to project in the Diocese of KAMYANETS-PODILSKYI, the John Paul II Christian Centre in Vinnytsya got a generator. With 15,000€ ACN benefactors are helping the ‘habitless’ Sisters of the Angels, struggling to keep the children they care for warm during this war.

Since 2017, the kindergarten in the Christian Centre was run by the Sisters of the Angels on the premises of the Capuchin Divine Mercy Parish. After the invasion, the sisters had to close the kindergarten for two months but they opened a room at the Vinnytsya centre where they care for traumatised children with their mothers. Since mid-April, the kindergarten re-opened again for 90 children. A third of them are traumatised children from Donetsk, Luhansk, Mariupol and Kharkiv. Since the electricity is cut for 6-8 hours a day, a generator is crucial, but with parents barely able to contribute to the running costs, they could not afford the 14,800€ for a 50 KW generator. In her request to us Sr. Irena Maszczycka CSA explains:

[“After the massive rocket attack on 10 November 2022, experts estimate that 50% of Ukraine's energy system was destroyed. Since then, there have been scheduled and emergency power cuts. This happens four times a day. The situation is also complicated by the cold weather. Therefore, we kindly ask you to support us in purchasing a power](#)

[generator.](#)” The children need a space to develop, receive an education and grow. Every month the team and the children celebrate Holy Mass, every week they have religious education and every day they learn to pray and live according to Christian values.

Only a third of the children are from Catholic families. They have created an atmosphere of trust and dialogue with the Orthodox brothers, the majority in the area.

The Sisters of the Angels are a congregation of women without habit whose mission is to reach where priests or religious sisters cannot. One of their main tasks is to educate children in the spirit of Christian values. There are 12 sisters in 5 institutions across Ukraine.



Here Mons. Pavlo Honcharuk, Bishop of the RC diocese of KHARKIV-ZAPORIZHZHYA
50 portable stoves for the parishes of the Archdiocese of Kharkiv-Zaporizhzhya during the war.

There is also a need for new kitchen equipment, portable stoves and washing machines and other equipment to cater to the volumes of people who need to be fed and sheltered. We have also undertaken to support at least 3 projects to install new windows ahead of the winter for two churches and one parish hall, to keep the cold at bay and the people inside warm.

With just one project for example benefactors of ACN supplied 50 **portable stoves** for the parishes of the Latin Archdiocese of Kharkiv-Zaporizhzhya during the war. Concern over the bitter winter cold led the bishop of Kharkiv-Zaporizhzhya to ask ACN for help to purchase 50 wooden stove ovens to serve the people of his parishes (10,850€ project in the Diocese of KHARKIV-ZAPORIZHZHYA): [“Winter is \(...\) going to be a big challenge to warm homes and cook food, because not everybody has access to electricity or gas. Many people have come to us asking for help”](#), Bishop Pavlo Honcharuk tells ACN. [“We are going through an extremely difficult period in Ukraine. Once again, we are very grateful for your help. We are also grateful](#)

for the prayers and the support we receive from so many people during the war. May God reward all the benefactors of your organisation abundantly, one-hundred-fold!”



LVIV-LAT - New windows for the parish center of the Church of the Annunciation in Bilshivtsi. The 6,000€ grant paid for 38 new windows (12 for bedrooms and 26 larger ones for the offices, communal and dining areas). This sanctuary is an important place for the Archdiocese of Lviv for diocesan pilgrimages. Many women's and men's communities come here for retreats. They urgently needed new windows to keep the cold out.

3) Priests and Religious emergency help

ACN from the start approved an emergency package to directly support the priests and religious in every diocese to withstand the challenges that the crisis situation would impose on them. These handouts are for their survival but so that they may also reach out to those around them, which they very much do! Some priests, religious sisters and brothers run orphanages, homes for the elderly or shelters for single mothers etc, these people can continue to receive help through them. In Kharkiv Zaporizhzhya for example, we know the Church has two houses for single mothers. All of the inhabitants moved for some months in another house, but they now returned. A second emergency package for subsistence to priests and religious went to reinforce our support and allow them to reach further as the number of dependants on them increased.

The funds are transferred to the Dioceses/ Eparchies/ Exarchates and the Bishop evaluates priorities on the ground, distributing according to the need and capacity through the Church structures. Although many refugees emigrated, the number of people staying in the cities, in their homes or internally displaced or taking refuge in Church buildings is great. The priests, sisters, brothers, they take care of the spiritual life of people, provide shelter and support both spiritual and humanitarian help

Words of gratitude: All the bishops and priests in Ukraine are very grateful for the help provided by ACN. Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, the Apostolic Nuncio to Ukraine expressed this gratitude to ACN benefactors for their generosity and prayers in a short video sent to us at Christmas, saying: “We don’t know how we will live this Christmas, how we will survive Christmas, it will be a difficult time, but the help and the charity that we are receiving from

all over the world means Christmas every day.

“And we are especially grateful for your prayers, because these prayers reach God, our Father. This is the most important help that we are receiving from you.”

In another video messages sent to ACN, Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk, of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, also sent a thank you message. “Let me convey to you the best wishes and thanks from Ukraine, amidst the cold. No electricity, no heating. But with God, who is coming to be again born among us. May God’s presence be our hope, be our faith and be the source of our life in today’s circumstances of war in Ukraine!”.

The RC Archbishop of Lviv, Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki, and the Greek Catholic auxiliary bishop Volodymyr Hrutza from the Archdiocese of Lviv, also expressed their “sincere thanks to all ACN benefactors” and ask that they “continue to provide aid to Ukraine, especially in the winter season”.

4) Vehicles for Mobility - to keep reaching out

Vehicles have been a growing and vital need since the war began in February 2022, especially for priests who are on the move, most often those at the forefront of the aid delivered to those displaced or isolated by the war. They are those reaching to the people to deliver the sacraments and pastoral support, but also they will be the ones fetching and delivering basic necessities. They are often the only ones willing to do the hard trips along dangerous roads.

ACN has approved projects for the purchase of 80 vehicles, mainly cars, a few minibuses, for parishes, seminaries or monasteries. They are life-saving!



LVIV - Car for the RC parish of St. Maria Magdalena in Lviv during the war
Fr. Dawid Omiecinski filled the boot of the new car with presents to distribute for Christmas

The parish car was destroyed in an accident at the beginning of May. At the time, Fr. Omiecinski was on a mission campaign collecting humanitarian aid distributed by a parish in Poland. In his parish of St. Maria Magdalena, many refugees found accommodation with parishioners or rented flats. These are middle-aged and elderly people. They need taking care of. It is difficult to estimate a number, because there is a flow of comings and goings, but he estimates 30 people at any one time. In view of the war, many of the parishioners, elderly people or families where husbands or sons are fighting in the war in eastern Ukraine, also need humanitarian aid and pastoral visits. That is about 300 people in the parish. Many who stayed at home lost their jobs when the war broke out and can only get food, chemicals, hygiene products from charitable organisations, and these need collecting. The vehicle, and the parish priest serves all these groups.

The project in the RC diocese of KAMYANETS-PODILSKYI was a vehicle request from the Pallottine Fathers. They look after two Catholic parishes Bilohirja and Yampol in Western Ukraine, and minister pastorally to the faithful in the surrounding area as well as a children's home in Bilohirja, run by religious sisters. Since the war began their work multiplied as they gave shelter to ca. 500 refugees in the parish. Currently 17 remain.

Father Pawel Goraj, the parish priest explains: „[These are women and children who have fled the horrors of the war. Ministering to these people demands a great deal of time and personal commitment on our part. We are serving these people in a variety of different ways, which also involve frequent car journeys with them.](#)“

He has also been involved as a chaplain with the Christian ambulance service. Father Goraj also regularly drives to the war regions to help the people there with the most basic necessities. When driving home from one of these expeditions a short time ago, his car was struck by another driver and had to be written-off, leaving him in urgent need of a car sturdy enough to cope with the poor road conditions and the heavy loads he often carries. That is when ACN could help.



**Distribution of humanitarian aid by the Basilian Fathers in Kherson.
ODESA-UCR Car for the Basilians in Kherson during the war.**

5) Looking after Seminarians

Up until the start of the war and even now the support for candidates for the priesthood in Ukraine remains one of the top priorities for ACN⁴. Without its shepherds the Church would not be able to carry out its task:

- ACN has supported the building or rebuilding of all the seminaries in Ukraine.
- To date, ACN has supported all the seminarians in the country – in the six Greek Catholic and five Latin Catholic seminaries (three diocesan ones and two *Redemptoris Mater* seminaries). We regularly support over 900 seminarians from both rites⁵.



Seminarian helping out at St Josaphat's seminary in Ivano-Frankivsk during the war

In the last year, we continued our support even though at times classes were suspended and as in the case of the Ivano-Frankivsk seminarians for example, seminarians switched their lessons for helping care for the IDPs taking shelter in their seminary. Now lessons have mostly resumed, and it is vital that the future shepherds continue to receive the best possible formation. In 2022, almost 800 seminarians received support from ACN grants.

6) Places of Worship, places of Shelter

ACN committed in the past year to 25 construction, reconstruction projects, despite or because of the war:

- 6 projects for refugee centres in monasteries
- 6 Church construction or rehabilitation projects, including one new roof for St. Ludwig church in Kryve Ozero, Odesa

⁴ The Catholic Church in Ukraine was described as a “martyr Church” in 2005 during an exuberant procession of 226 seminarians through Lviv, which went right through the city, was a moment of exuberant joy by Major Archbishop Lubomyr Husar, the then head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Indeed it has flourished after decades of persecution for the faith, during and after which ACN stood firmly by them.

⁵ In the last ten years ACN has contributed over 6.5 Mio € towards the training of seminarians in 11 seminaries.

- 4 parish houses or centres in need of reconstruction
- 3 monastery renovation projects for sisters in Odesa, Simferopol and Potelych
- 3 projects for water supply, drainage or sanitary facilities for monasteries, including the Albertines in Lviv and water supply systems for two houses of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Most Pure Heart of Mary in Lviv and a water pump to draw water from the well in Yarmolyntsi, both of these houses have taken in IDPs.
- 1 renovation of the Youth Centre of St. Josaphat Parish in Tukholka after a fire
- 1 project for the renovation and refurnishing of the Seminary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Vorzel, Roman Catholic Diocese of Kyiv-Zhytomyr, partially destroyed and looted during the war. Seminarians have returned to continue their studies.
- 1 project for the final works for the St. Luke's Outpatient Clinic of the Archdiocese of Ivano Frankivsk. This was an exceptional project, given that the outpatient department provides free medical care to internally displaced persons and wounded soldiers, and given that hospitals in western Ukraine are filled beyond capacity

Of the reconstruction projects, for example we approved the renovation of the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross as a result of a missile attack in Berezdivtsi, or the renovation of the Seminary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Vorzel, damaged and pillaged by invading Russian troops at the beginning of the war. However, we also have a number of churches and Parish houses in need of urgent repair, some of them damaged by the Russian missiles⁶.

In particular, for example, we told the story of Fr Andriy and Fr Yuriy. Although most of the fighting is taking place in the East of Ukraine, Russian forces continue attacking the west of the country. Many people, including priests, such as these who oversee the Marian shrine of Rudky, some 50 kilometres outside of Lviv, have lost everything to the war. They suffered a missile strike that set fire to their parish house. The flames destroyed the wooden dome, the rooms where Fr Andriy Pekanec lived, all the furniture and his belongings. A valuable nativity scene kept in the attic was also lost. By divine providence, that day he was celebrating the funeral of an uncle, and was saved. The attempts to put out the fire flooded the parish offices, formation classrooms and the living quarters of Fr Yuriy Vasylenko. Only the cement was left. With the 30,000eur from ACN project in the diocese of LVIV and the help of craftsmen and parishioners, work on the renovation of the vicarage is well under way.

“Usually, when it comes to the very costly reconstruction of church structures, we only begin when the fighting ceases”, says Regina Lynch, project director at ACN. “But in urgent cases such as this one in Ukraine, there are some projects that we can and should press ahead with.”

⁶ Diocese of KYIV-ZHYTOMYR project grant of 100,000 EUR



Some reconstructions will need to wait - Fr. Romuald Zagórski in front of a heavy damaged house. However ACN supported him with new Sound systems for the parish of Our Lady of Fatima in Konotop. Project in the RC diocese of KHARKIV-ZAPORIZHZHYA

7) Formation and spiritual retreats - to recharge empty batteries

Continued support for education, formation and spiritual nourishment are vital 'oxygen' and sustenance for the priests and religious exposed constantly to the challenges of those who seek consolation, aid and rest in them. Formation and spiritual retreat projects also benefit catechists, families and laity involved in Church pastoral - 'influencers' of sorts!

Last year over 870 priests and religious received help for their formation or spiritual retreats.



UKRAINE / NATIONAL 21/02875

Training grant for 2 novices of the Servants of the Immaculate Virgin Mary in Ukraine for 2022

The project for an education grant for the two novices of the Immaculate Virgin Mary (SSMI) provided 800€ to each for their Novitiate Formation during 2022. The two sisters supported have completed their studies in education, psychology and social work. The Province has 105 sisters in Ukraine, two novices and one candidate. The sisters of SSMI are also active in

catechesis, in the care of children and youth and carry out social-charitable work. The 2 novices in formation Sr. Pia and Sr. Tereza and the one candidate are very welcome and hopeful news more than worthy of our humble support, which they more than multiply!

Every year we are asked to support priestly formation and retreats. These are central to our mission as the retreats are part of the permanent spiritual formation in the life of a priest. In 2022, we supported 873 religious, priests, and catechists, via 12 such projects. Between March and October, the formation courses and retreats for the priests as well as their wives usually take place. One project for the UGCC Archeparchy of Kyiv for example went to help 137 priests with the costs of food, accommodation, handout materials necessary for the retreats and formation courses last year, thanks to the 10,000 Eur grant via the project in KYIV. This contribution is about a third more than other years as prices have already increased threefold since the war conflict started.

8) Children and youth, summer camps and pastoral activities – a break from the war, to keep learning and keep the joy

Due to the war invasion in February 2022, the whole situation of the local church has changed. Western Ukraine has become the shelter of life for many from south-eastern Ukraine. For this reason it is a priority to continue and strengthen our support for pastoral work with the children and youth. Almost all of these are taking place and reaching the young, hungry for the joy and hope of the Gospel. The community and friendships that are built in these times of sharing and prayer are extremely important to helping the people of Ukraine make sense of what they are living and keep strong in their hope, love and faith.

ACN supported projects which reached more than 1,700 children and youths, many refugees.



Youth day. RC diocese of LVIV

Pastoral formation program as part of the annual retreat in the Archdiocese of Lviv in 2022

The Church in Ukraine has long included in its pastoral work with children the summer camps, called “Vacations with God”, which take place every year thanks to ACN support. During the war the camps were not only maintained, but the number increased. We estimate that through these well over 1,700 children and youth could benefit from summer camps or pastoral programmes tailored to their needs.

Many pastoral programmes as well as spiritual retreats for the young will have catered to the

questions, void and confusion of the younger generation, trapped in the spiral of madness that has engulfed their country, and often shattered their families. These are challenging us all and only in the Gospel, the sacraments and in Christ can we hope for meaning and in the love of other lived in communion are we made stronger.

9) Caring for our Religious Sisters – mothers for all!



Fr. Mons. Stepan Sus, auxiliary bishop from UGCC Lviv Archeparchy Stefan and sisters accompany the victims from Sloboda village, Chernihiv Oblast (May 2022).

Subsistence support project for 105 Sisters of Mary Immaculate in Ukraine for 2022

In the last year over 830 religious sisters and 165 brothers received existence aid from ACN.

Active nuns are at work everywhere, with their dedication, their commitment to the poor, the sick and the despairing, in the work of Caritas, in schools, kindergartens, homes and parishes. The work of religious sisters from all congregations deserves to be valued and recognised. Since, however, the means are often lacking for a dignified existence, ACN provides subsistence help. Especially during the pandemic ACN has often given them additional help. The support offered to the religious sisters is for their basic needs but also shared with those they serve. In this way, over the past ten years ACN has paid out nearly 2.2 million euros. This included help for contemplative nuns, whose meagre income from work is often even less than that of the active nuns.

Formation and spiritual retreats have also featured as an important area of continued support. Thanks to these ACN benefactors have cared for the carers. Magda, our Head of projects for Ukraine explains that *“the permanent formation within the religious communities is very important for the healthy development of the spirit and the psyche of the sisters”*, this is especially true in times of stress and the responsibilities towards those searching for refuge in them in these last very troubled months.

“Pastoral care is changing with the war”, notes Mgr. Vasylij Tuchapets, Greek Catholic Bishop of Kharkiv. “Many people left, but new people have also arrived, seeking help and shelter. People come to Kharkiv Cathedral every day, not only for humanitarian aid. They have questions and are looking for answers. Most of the people who come to pray now are those who started coming during the war. Sometimes, after years of living together, they ask for marriage or for baptism for their children”, he explains. Children also come to the Church, often after spending months holed up in their homes, or in basements and shelters. The sisters and animators organise games, competitions, meetings and catechism twice a week for those who are willing. For some, it is their first contact with prayer. "School classes are online for security reasons, so we will continue our meetings for children," says the bishop.

10) Shepherds and bringers of Light - Stipends to continue celebrating Holy Mass in petition, gratitude and communion

Since the beginning of the war, in the last year, ACN approved **1.2 Mio € for Mass Stipends**. Through these, benefactors have financially supported priests all over Ukraine of all Catholic denominations (UGCC, Latin Church and Ruthenians) to continue to celebrate Holy Mass and elevate this highest of prayers of gratitude and petition to God in communion with the faithful. This has enabled thousands of Holy Masses to be celebrated throughout the country, uniting the intentions of ACN benefactors with theirs.

Mass stipend requests are an indispensable form of annual support for priests. In cases of war where priests cannot receive income from their communities, with the destruction, loss and displacement of the faithful, this support is vital. Exceptionally therefore, ACN approved a second request of Mass Stipends within 2022 for many Dioceses or Exarchates and even a third or fourth such project, as was the case for Ternopil-Zboriv. Mass Stipends help to ensure that these priests are able to survive and to help others. The Greek Catholic Church ordains married men, so priests often also have a family to care for, making this support even more essential.

Also, we granted three projects (for 36,145€) to help purchase of **130 new liturgical Mass kits**. These will make sure that priests are equipped and ready to celebrate the Holy Mass for all in their churches, chapels, in homes or on the go.



Bishop Pavlo Honcharuk visiting the Ukrainian soldiers at the Russian border in October 2022. He likes to personally oversee the distribution of aid to the front. Since the start of the war the Catholic bishop of Kharkiv-Zaporizhzhya has remained with his faithful, carrying out visits to the frontlines, helping all who need it in Eastern Ukraine. ACN supports the RC diocese Kharkiv-Zaporizhzhya with emergency subsistence aid as well as the purchase of a vehicle for the curia of the diocese

OUTLOOK

The Church is staying with the people.

Thanks to ACN benefactors, we are ensuring that the Church can maintain its priests and religious and guarantee their presence in the parishes, alongside refugees, in seminaries, in the centres and homes for elderly etc. We also have a duty to support the elderly and sick priests and religious, who face the challenge of surviving.

His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Church defines tells us that the priorities of the Church going forward are pastoral and healing: “The hope of to which we are called” pastoral plan and “Healing the wounds of the nation” as he estimates widespread trauma amongst the people.

ACN's mission is aligned with the Church's pastoral priority and we will support the Church where it is in need and the faithful where they are under great suffering. We will continue to do so with the generous support of our benefactors and their prayers.

-> Please continue to pray for them. In all messages from our project partners they always **appeal for our prayers!**

Mons. Visvaldas Kulbokas, Apostolic Nuncio to Ukraine told ACN on 8th Feb. 2023:

“We feel your presence. We feel your prayers and every day we are witnessing small miracles – your prayers are very important in staying strong and we are grateful”

VIDEO LINKS - to illustrate our work with project partners in Ukraine

Children in Ukraine: <https://youtu.be/m8HgOQMx4zU>

Bishop Zmitrowicz: <https://youtu.be/plgmiNBZheg>

Thank You videos:

<https://youtu.be/B8thcLkt9QY>

<https://youtu.be/3jxuQhecAho>

https://youtu.be/V4_7A-ReU_Y

BEYOND UKRAINE

We have received very few project requests to help serve the needs of the refugees reaching the Western countries because the local Churches, governments and charitable organisations are usually able to provide the help needed.

However, a handful of projects in **Italy, France, Hungary, Greece** and **Poland** have been approved to support the purchase of a **vehicle** for the needs of the Ukrainian communities there. We also approved a project for the printing of 30,000 **New Testaments with psalms** for the evangelisation and catechesis of adult Ukrainians in Italy, as well as a summercamp for Ukrainian children in Hungary "**Joyful holidays with God**". In Poland, ACN provided financial support for the purchase of premises for the **pastoral care** of Ukrainian refugees in Opole for 30,000€⁷ thanks to our benefactors.

We are in touch with the bishops of the diaspora communities, and in Italy and France we have approved Mass Stipend grants for the Greek Catholic priests there.

The priority remains to uphold the Church within the country so that they can support those who cannot or will not flee. Within this priority, our focus is on the East where the Church is weaker, the conflict is raging, and others cannot reach.

We are continuously re-assessing the situation and in constant contact as the situation fluctuates. The greatest need is likely yet to come, once fighting subsides and reconstruction of souls and buildings and peace will call for a greater presence of the Church amongst the people of Ukraine.

⁷ Project POLAND / WROCLAW-KOSZALIN-UCR 22/00062

ANNEXE: History and context of ACN help in Ukraine

See “ACN support for Ukraine. The story of our help in Ukraine.” IPIC document from June 2022 for all the context of ACN's help to the Catholics of Ukraine and more on the Catholic Church in Ukraine.

Diocesan structure - Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), is the majority Church in western Ukraine

Map of the dioceses of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church



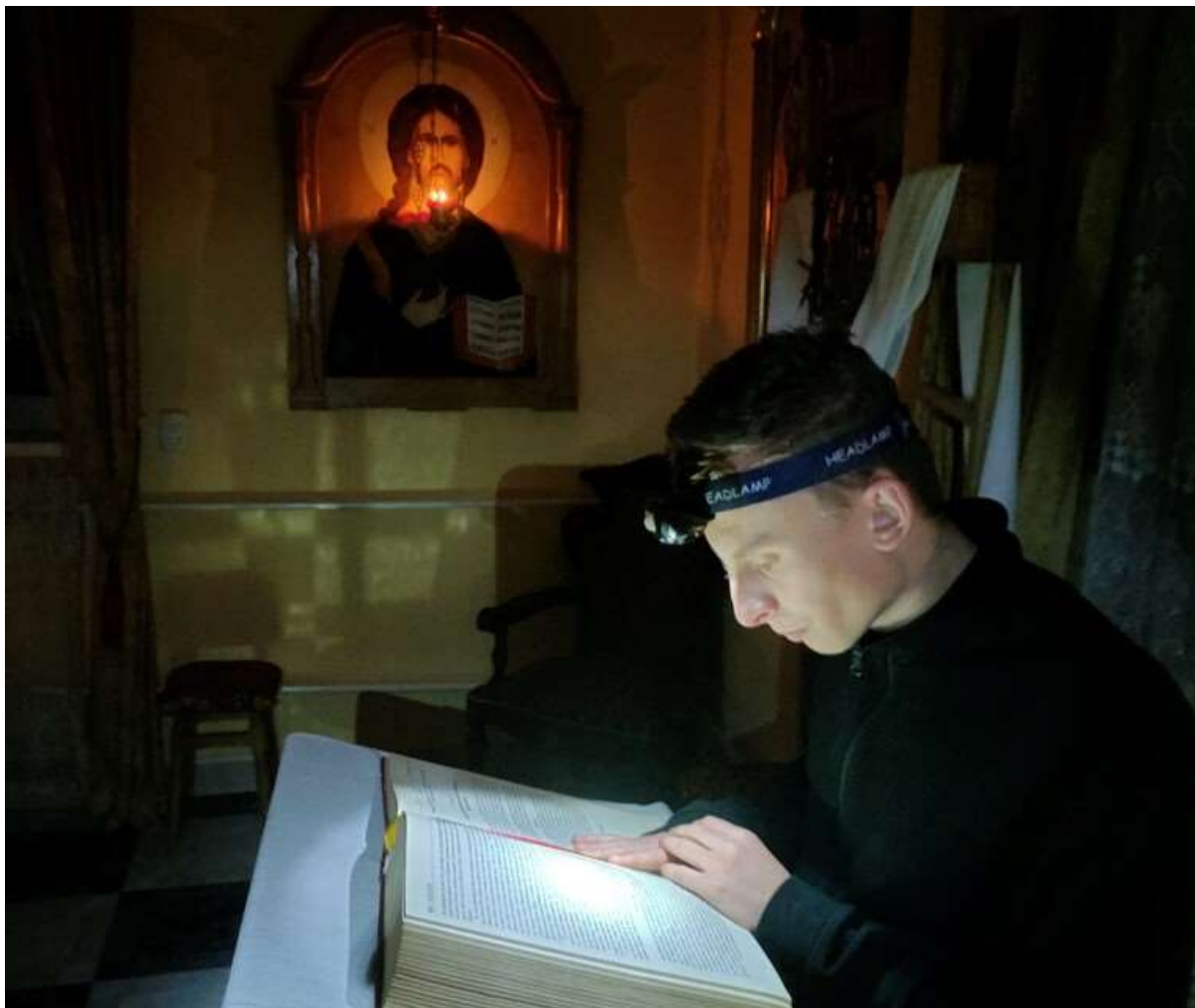
Annual Report PATRIARCHAL CURIA Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church 2019

Map of the dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine⁸



In Ukraine there is also a very small **Armenian Catholic** minority, which is cared for by the Ordinariate

⁸ Source: beckstet, CC BY-SA 3.0, wikimedia common, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datei:Map_of_Ukraine_Catholic.PNG



UKRAINE / IVANO-FRANKIVSK

Training grant for 2 novices and one brother of the Verbo Incarnato brothers in Ukraine in 2021/2022.

THANK YOU FOR NOT LEAVING THEM IN THE DARK!



Aid to the
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