

Pastoral Letter

Edinburgh, 27 March 2022

My dear friends,

I know that all of you will have been as shocked and saddened as I was by the invasion of Ukraine last month. I know also that you will be keeping in your prayers not only all those who have already lost their lives, but also those who have lost loved ones and those who have been driven from their homes.

One of the consequences of this unjustified invasion is that millions of Ukrainians are now on the move across Europe and we, therefore, face an unprecedented refugee crisis. As Ukrainian families begin to arrive in Scotland, I want you to know that I have urged the Scottish Government to use its resources to house and financially support these refugees, and that the Archdiocese is working with local government agencies to help in any way that we can.

I know you will warmly welcome and support the Ukrainian families that come to live in our communities. But there are also several other ways in which you can help.

Fr Vasyl Kren, the priest attached to our Ukrainian parish in Edinburgh, says that he is extremely grateful for everyone's generosity but that, for now, there is no more space there to take gifts of clothes, bedding, and food. The most effective way, then, to help our Ukrainian friends right now is to contribute to SCIAF's appeal for Ukraine.

This is because SCIAF forms part of Caritas Internationalis, the great international charity of the Catholic Church. Caritas is present in Ukraine, in Poland, and in other countries affected, and by responding to SCIAF's Ukraine appeal, you can help our Ukrainian brothers and sisters in all the countries where they find themselves stranded in vast numbers, chiefly in Poland and the other Western European countries bordering on Ukraine.

SCIAF's main work, helping the poor of Africa, the Americas and Asia, will continue through the Lenten Wee Box campaign and through the collection at the end of today's mass. But SCIAF is also collecting specifically on behalf of Ukraine.

I urge you, therefore, to support the people of Ukraine, without forgetting our friends who still rely upon us elsewhere.

May the Lord bless you abundantly for your goodness and generosity.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+Leo Cushley

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh