

---

## **Ukraine: refugees, cold reception in the UK. Mgr. Arnold to SIR, “refugees are our brothers and sisters”**

“Ukrainian refugees are our brothers and sisters. The UK Government, together with other European governments, must meet their needs for food and housing. Some progress has been made in the granting of visas. But bureaucratic delays in their distribution are unacceptable in the face of such obvious suffering, and since we do have the means to help these people, there is no excuse for us not to do that”. Bishop John Arnold, head of the Diocese of Salford, near Manchester, and a member of the Department for International Affairs of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, said this in an interview with SIR news agency about the reception of Ukrainian refugees in the UK these days. Indeed, the UK Home Office was heavily criticised for granting only 50 visas to Ukrainians who had applied for asylum since the start of the conflict. There are reports from the over 11,000 refugees who are applying for asylum that the online system often stops working and even requires documents to be sent by mail. Hundreds of war victims, many of whom with relatives in the UK, were also asked to go to Paris or Brussels because Calais could not provide the assistance they needed. “We are all shocked by the tragic situation of these people, many of whom are sick and elderly”, Bishop John Arnold added.

Valentina Bombelli