
Poland: the Church's contribution to Ukraine. Reception of refugees and humanitarian aid

The Polish Church “is organising the delivery of aid to Ukraine while also providing support to refugees in parishes, convents, spiritual retreat centres and private homes”, the Secretary General of the Polish Bishops, Mgr. Artur Miziński, said today, as he presented the data on the aid provided to “our Ukrainian brothers and sisters” who had to flee their homeland because of the Russian invasion. The prelate explained that “from 24 February to 31 March, 95% of Polish parishes have been engaged in supporting the refugees”. Most of the parishes provided financial support, 74% of them provided material aid to refugees and to those Ukrainians who remained in their country, while 45% of the parishes offered reception and beds to the Ukrainians who arrived in Poland to flee the war. Caritas Poland Director, Fr. Marcin Iżycki, informed that the money raised for Ukraine by the organisation he heads exceeded 100 million zloty (about 20 million euros) as of the end of March. As of 31 March, 282,000 beds were offered by various groups linked to diocesan and parish Caritas centres, with more than 125,000 Ukrainian children and almost 100,000 elderly people accommodated. Polish parishes are providing refugees not only with accommodation, but also with medical, psychological and therapeutic support, as well as legal and logistical help. Many female and male congregations present on the Polish territory are also contributing to the initiatives in support of refugees. From 24 February to 31 March, congregation members have provided refugees with over 2 million hot meals and with assistance in their job search.

Anna T. Kowalewska