

## PRESS RELEASE

March 21st, 2022

## CARITAS POLAND FOR UKRAINE

### **Caritas: 83 mln zloty aid for Ukraine**

**Thanks to the collected funds, Caritas Poland continues to support Caritas-Spes and Caritas Ukraine and sends humanitarian transports to Ukraine. Caritas Poland provides ongoing aid to the Ukrainian refugees in Poland. Over 130 Caritas centers are providing close to 47 thousand meals a day. This form of aid has already been distributed to over 438 thousand people. The organization is preparing for long-term work in connection with the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.**

Three weeks have passed since the war in Ukraine began. Caritas Poland has been helping the victims of this conflict from the very first moments of the Russian invasion on Ukraine. Caritas-Spes and Caritas Ukraine have received over 500 000 zloty, which have helped in providing the most urgent help.

– Support from Caritas has helped people, who had to leave their homes escaping the war, providing them with basic goods: food, water, hygiene products, clothes, blankets, pillows and linen. In some parts of Ukraine, these basic items are no longer available and humanitarian aid is extremely important at this moment – confirms Myroslava Andrushchenko from Caritas Ukraina.

Caritas in Poland has also been organizing humanitarian transports to Ukraine. Since the beginning of the war, local diocesan Caritas's have sent nearly 500 trucks and vehicles, which transported 7300 tons of aid. Apart from food, hygiene products and medical goods, these were also power generators, cleaning products, sleeping bags, blankets and flashlights. The value of these transports is nearly 35 million zloty.

– The international structure of the Caritas network has been a great support at this time of crisis. Currently, there are over a dozen people from various Caritas organizations, who are supporting our humanitarian activities. Among them are representatives of Caritas Switzerland, the British CAFOD, Catholic Relief Services from the USA and other partners. Their work is focused on capacity building in our organization, establishing transportation channels, increasing the efficiency of humanitarian work and joint coordination of aid – adds Ireneusz Krause, deputy director of Caritas Poland.

### **On the border and in the country**

In Poland, Caritas is answering the challenges connected with the largest wave of refugees in Europe since the Second World War. Every day, dozens or hundreds of thousands of people are crossing the Polish border. In 26 help points help is provided by 1200 Caritas volunteers and female orders xxx. During these three weeks, they have supported over 80 thousand people, by providing warm meals, water and food supplies, as well as other essential goods such as thermoses, sleeping bags etc. Where possible, like at the train station in Przemyśl, Caritas has created a space just for women with young children, to rest after their difficult road.

From the border, many refugees travel further on in Poland. In the 210 centers, local Caritas organizations have supported 8,6 thousand people, among that over 4,7 thousand children. They are also supporting nearly 30 thousand refugees who have been taken in by individual Polish families. Over

130 Caritas points have been distributing nearly 47 thousand meals a day - a form of support that has reached over 438 thousand people. Nearly 69 thousand refugees have received food packages, and Caritas Poland has started the project "Package for Ukraine", thanks to which inhabitants of the war-torn country and Ukrainians who have found refuge in Poland, will receive dedicated food packages. Altogether, 200 thousand such packages will be distributed.

– The package cannot weigh more than 18 kg and its dimensions cannot exceed 41x38x64 cm. They should contain the products listed on our website – [caritas.pl/paczkaUkrainy](https://caritas.pl/paczkaUkrainy). The packages can be brought to parishes and Caritas points. The list contains mainly food and hygiene articles. It's important that the package not be sealed – it will be closed by a Caritas employee or volunteer, after checking its contents – underlines Fr. Marcin Iżycki, director of Caritas Poland. InPost is the logistic partner of the incentive, while the cardboard packaging is sponsored by the company Mondi.

### **For sick Ukrainian children and citizens of other countries**

The range of aid provided by Caritas Poland in connection with the war in Ukraine is very broad and includes as many aspects of life, as the tragedy on our eastern border has ruined. Caritas Poland and local diocesan Caritas have prepared around 2,5 thousand places for bigger and smaller groups of Ukrainian orphans and children from foster families. Over 800 children and guardians have already been accommodated in holiday resorts, retreat houses and clergy houses.

– Many of these children have disabilities – says Monika Figiel from Caritas Poland. – Currently, all the evacuated groups of children have been transported in cooperation with the Polish Ministry of Family and Social Policy. The largest group of children has been accommodated in the Diocese of Opole, Diocese of Bielsko-Żywiec, the Archdiocese of Czestochowa and the Catholic Archdiocese of Kraków. The Archdiocese of Warmia has found accommodation for a number of small children with oncological needs in their child hospice. Many smaller groups of children (10 or 20-person groups, with mothers or guardians) have been living in clergy hospitality homes in dioceses all around Poland. Many of the most severely sick children are also being prepared for relocation to specialized Caritas centers in Europe – adds Monika Figiel.

Apart from Ukrainians, citizens of many other countries, who had been residing in Ukraine the moment the war began, have also come to Poland. They too receive aid from Caritas.

This aid was in the form of purchasing train tickets for people fleeing Ukraine without a refugee status, or organizing transport to Poland for students from Ghana studying in Ukraine. These are just two examples from the Archdiocese of Katowice. The Caritas in Lublin has been organizing various types of aid for refugees: psychological, transitory (including sworn translators, necessary in instances of medical documents), taking pictures for documents. Psychologists and translators are also provided by other local Caritas organizations and by the Aid Center of Migrants and Refugees run by Caritas Poland in Warsaw. Caritas in Gliwice has given refugees 200 SIM cards and sent an ambulance with basic equipment to Ivano-Frankivsk.

– As of today, Caritas Poland has collected 83 million zloty, out of which 38 million comes from collections in churches and parishes and will remain in diocesan Caritas organizations for their local work. It's a record amount in the history of Caritas Poland. On my part, I would like to cordially thank all the individual contributors, volunteers, employees – all those engaged in the work that we uphold in response to the biggest humanitarian crisis in Europe since the Second World War, taking place so

close to us. I am built up by the huge scale and diversity of support for refugees in all of Poland – adds director Caritas Poland.

#### **How to help?**

- by making an online donation with a credit/debit card at [caritas.pl/ukraine](https://caritas.pl/ukraine)
- by making a bank transfer directly to the Caritas Poland bank account (details needed for the transfer are at [caritas.pl/ukraine](https://caritas.pl/ukraine))

#### **Downloads:**

##### **PHOTOS - LUBLIN AND HUMANITARIAN TRANSPORTS**

Work of Caritas volunteers in the Archdiocese of Lublin and photos of preparing humanitarian aid in logistic centers

<https://we.tl/t-S8OWfBZ9ou>

##### **PHOTOS - VARIOUS LOCATIONS OF CARITAS AID**

Caritas Hope Tents and the work of Caritas volunteers in Dorohusk, Przemyśl, Lublin and Medyka

<https://we.tl/t-vn68mZt8Cu>

##### **PHOTOS - KROŚCIENKO**

Hope Tents and the work of Caritas volunteers

<https://we.tl/t-DFnxEVgmHl>

##### **PHOTOS OD CARITAS UKRAINA / CARITAS-SPES**

Photos from various work done by Caritas Ukraine and Caritas-Spes in Ukraine – various locations (photos are captioned)

<https://we.tl/t-886DXTu1r9>

##### **VIDEOS - INTERVIEWS – CARITAS VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS (PL)**

Natasza Bogacz (Caritas Norway) – on transports by Caritas to Ukraine, mostly in Lublin

<https://we.tl/t-TZmf9qFDgc>

Hubert Kasprzak, Caritas volunteer coordinator on the border in Przemyśl – on the work of all Caritas points on the border

<https://we.tl/t-HwYQ9I3OCM>

Michał Szulc, Caritas volunteer coordinator in the Hope Tent in Przemyśl

<https://we.tl/t-ukPDckRrxu>

##### **VIDEOS – B-ROLL SHOTS OF HUMANITARIAN AID TRANSPORTS**

Preparing and loading humanitarian transports to Ukraine

<https://we.tl/t-2NuNCqgkll>

#### **VIDEOS - DOROHUSK - B-ROLL SHOTS FROM THE CARITAS HOPE TENT AND BORDER WORK**

Hope Tent in Dorohusk and work of Caritas volunteers, also on the border crossings

<https://we.tl/t-eOVg7VWZry>

#### **VIDEOS - PRZEMYŚL - B-ROLL SHOTS OF THE HOPE TENT IN PRZEMYŚL**

Hope Tent and work of Caritas volunteers

<https://we.tl/t-aGKbG1j1Jn>

#### **VIDEOS - KROŚCIENKO - B-ROLL SHOTS OF THE HOPE TENT**

Hope Tent and work of Caritas volunteers

<https://we.tl/t-qaIVqY9sre>

#### **LINK TO THE CARITAS POLAND ONLINE DRIVE WITH MEDIA MATERIAL**

An online drive has been created by Caritas Poland with all the material prepared by Caritas Poland since the beginning of the conflict (photos, video, stories).

Material on the drive is regularly updated – we encourage everyone to widely use all the material available there to communicate about the work of Caritas Poland and the situation with refugees arriving in Poland:

Link to drive: <https://bit.ly/34UITMQ>

\* All pictures and videos are the property of Caritas Poland.

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#### **ABOUT CARITAS POLAND**

*Caritas Poland is the largest charitable organization in Poland, involved in helping those who are the most in need. The organization was reopened on 10 October 1990 by the Polish Bishops' Conference, but its history goes back to the tradition of Caritas charity work from before 1950. It coordinates the work of 45 diocesan and archdiocesan Caritas in Poland, which operate nearly 1 000 professional aid institutions. Caritas Poland is an important part of Caritas Internationalis and Caritas Europe network. Caritas Poland grants immediate and long-term, material and financial aid to the unemployed, the homeless, the sick, the disabled, the elderly, orphans, children from poor families, families with many*

*children and migrants and refugees. Caritas Poland also grants humanitarian aid to the victims of war and natural disasters outside the borders of Poland.*

*Caritas supports people through people, especially its employees and volunteers who are its potential and strength. It is thanks to their engagement in the activities of Caritas that the organization is alive and effective. By accompanying people in their poverty and suffering, Caritas wants to build a relationship of trust and openness. It understands its mission not only as a duty or a job, but as service and a way of life. Get to know us better through [www.caritas.pl](http://www.caritas.pl)*

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