

Reverend and dear Father,
Dear Deacon,
Dear Parish Life Coordinator,



With the passing of each hour, the situation facing our suffering brothers and sister in Ukraine becomes more dire. Their tragic plight cries out to our world for help!

Archbishop Borys Gudziak, leader the Archeparchy of Philadelphia, who shepherds ten Ukrainian Catholic parishes in the territory of the Diocese of Scranton, recently shared that there are three things U.S. Catholics can do to help Ukraine: Pray, stay informed and talk about Ukraine, and provide help.

I am most grateful to you and your people who have already given generously to the annual Collection to Aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, which has been designated solely for the support of people of Ukraine. I am also grateful for your solidarity with the Ukrainian people, shown by the Ukrainian flags that you are flying and the colors of that flag that you are using to illuminate many of our Church buildings. But I am most edified and grateful for the many opportunities for prayer for our suffering brothers and sisters that you have arranged in your parishes.

I encourage you to continue to keep the plight of the Ukrainian people in the forefront of our own faithful parishioners. If you and your people wish to continue to provide financial support, you are encouraged to collect donations at any time in your parish and forward them to the Diocese of Scranton. Your gifts will, in turn, be forwarded to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which is providing direct aid to the Ukrainian Church. The Diocese of Scranton website also has a dedicated landing page focused on Ukraine that includes a list of other respected Catholic organizations which are accepting donations to respond to the needs of the Ukrainian people.

Finally, while many of you are already conducting weekly Holy Hours, providing opportunities to pray the rosary and celebrating special Masses for peace in Ukraine, **I ask that all of the parishes of the Diocese of Scranton join me for a special Holy Hour of Prayer for the People of Ukraine on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.** during which we will lift our voices and hearts to God and pray for peace and the well-being of our brothers and sisters.

If, for some reason, you are not able to schedule a Holy Hour at this time, please arrange to schedule a time for prayer at an appropriate time during the week. The Holy Hour that I will lead at Saint Peter's Cathedral will be broadcast live on CTV and our diocesan website. You are also most welcome to reproduce the attachment for inclusion in your parish bulletins, social media pages and websites.

Thank you for your efforts as we stand in union with our brothers and sisters and especially the children of Ukraine and pray for an end to the tragic war that has been so brutally inflicted upon their innocent lives.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

† *Joseph C. Bambera*

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.

Bishop of Scranton