catholic mission
Reach out. Give life.

Part of the global network of Pontifical Mission Societies

For immediate release

Thursday, 26 November 2026

Cardinal Bychok Calls for Prayers for the People of Ukraine Ahead of Christmas

Cardinal Mykola Bychok has called for prayers for the people of Ukraine and for families grieving loved ones as the country approaches its fifth Christmas since Russia launched its full-scale invasion.

Speaking at Catholic Mission's Mass of Remembrance on 19 November, Cardinal Bychok of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy in Australia asked those gathered to remember the families living with the loss of loved ones.

"In a particular way, we pray for the people of Ukraine, where countless families continue to grieve the loss of loved ones amid the tragedy of war. We remember fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, grandparents and friends whose absence leaves an ache in the hearts of those who remain."

Cardinal Bychok also called for peace in Ukraine, the Holy Land and around the world.

"Let us pray for peace in Ukraine, the Holy Land, and throughout the world, that the Prince of Peace may heal the wounds of war, console those who mourn, protect the innocent and guide all nations along the path of justice and reconciliation."

As Advent begins, Catholic Mission is inviting its friends and supporters to join in prayer for peace and, through its Christmas Appeal, give generously to help Ukrainians seeking safety, shelter, and hope amid the ongoing conflict.

UNHCR estimates that 10.8 million people inside Ukraine need humanitarian assistance and protection, while nearly 5.2 million refugees from Ukraine remain across Europe. In parts of Ukraine, winter temperatures can fall to minus 20 degrees Celsius, and power cuts can leave families without heating.

Since 2022, Catholic Mission has partnered with Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Europe to accompany Ukrainians uprooted by war, supporting both refugees in neighbouring countries and people internally displaced within Ukraine. This year's Christmas Appeal will help provide emergency shelter, hot meals, and longer-term support as people rebuild their lives.

Catholic Mission National Director Peter Gates said Advent was a time to pause, reflect and pray for peace and offer practical help to people living through war and displacement.

“During Advent, as we prepare to welcome Christ, we reflect on hope, peace, joy and love. This year, I invite you to make prayer for the people of Ukraine and other people suffering due to conflict part of your Advent preparations. Let us pray for peace, for comfort for those who are grieving, and for hope for families spending Christmas far from home.”

To support Catholic Mission’s Christmas Appeal, visit https://cm.org.au/shelter

ENDS

For further information:

Astrid Delayre
Senior Communications Officer

Tel: 0458 489 877

Email:
media@catholicmission.org.au

Website:
catholicmission.org.au

About Catholic Mission

Catholic Mission is the Australian agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies – the Catholic Church’s global organisation dedicated to continuing Jesus Christ’s mission in the world: that all may have life to the full. Catholic Mission contributes funding and project support to critical church-run initiatives in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America. These include spiritual formation, pastoral care, education, health, sanitation, and agricultural programs. Here in Australia, we form people to go out and be missionary in their professional and personal lives; to pray, advocate and act for those on the margins. Catholic Mission has offices in 27 Australian dioceses.