

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

COLLECTION FOR THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The handwritten plea from a Catholic sister in Tajikistan for school supplies and food stood out from most other requests sent to the Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The religious sister's lack of computer access to submit her grant application signaled the raw material poverty in this central Asian nation, the poorest to emerge from the former Soviet Union.

The ministry of these sisters in Tajikistan demonstrates why the USCCB established the Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe 30 years ago at the urging of Pope St. John Paul II. He knew that economies crushed by communism would take decades to recover—and that an ideology that denied the value of human souls had caused spiritual poverty that ran far deeper than the financial distress.

The spiritual and social needs in these 28 nations of the former Soviet Union and its satellites are now greater than at any time since the Berlin Wall fell. The Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine in February 2023 has wrought death, devastation, and displacement in Ukraine and sent millions of refugees into surrounding countries. But thanks to the generosity of supporters in dioceses throughout the United States, the Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, through the annual national collection, is providing crucial assistance to Church-related ministries that aid Ukrainian war victims. Daring to look beyond today's horrors, some of these ministries are helping Ukrainians plan for rebuilding their society when the war ends.

In this report you'll read how Catholic universities in Eastern Europe are preparing some of today's college students for leadership in post-war reconstruction and healing. Your gifts are also enabling a retreat center in western Ukraine to shelter hundreds of displaced persons. Across the border in Lublin, Poland—where the future Pope St. John Paul II taught for decades—your gifts are helping a parish that was founded for Ukrainian migrants 30 years ago to minister to today's refugees.

At a precarious time in world history, you are making a difference with your gifts to the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. In solidarity with the suffering Church, your gifts to the collection are doing tremendous good. They are invested in local Church-related projects that help families and individuals survive crises, overcome trauma, and thrive spiritually. Your generosity is saving lives, bringing comfort, and laying foundations for a better tomorrow. Thank you for all you have given and for your continuing prayers. I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Jeffrey M. Monforton
Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit
Chairman, USCCB Subcommittee on Aid to the Church in Central and Eastern Europe

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THE USCCB COLLECTION FOR THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IS A CRUCIAL SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR

ministries in and around Ukraine that provide spiritual and social assistance to displaced persons and refugees from the war. The collection also continues to assist the Catholic Church in 27 other countries that suffered under communist oppression, helping them to rebuild churches, run Catholic schools, and evangelize among people whose parents and grandparents risked prison or worse if they spoke of their faith. On these pages, three projects—of the 329 funded in 2023 by \$8.7 million from the collection—show the Catholic Church working to shelter war victims, help them heal spiritually and emotionally from trauma, and prepare them to rebuild a shattered nation. A fourth featured project offers a glimpse of the many ministries supported by gifts to this collection in lands that rarely make international headlines—where Catholics make up a miniscule minority but nevertheless care for their neighbors in need.

UKRAINE

When nearly 800 Ukrainians fleeing Russian bombs sought refuge, they were welcomed into a Catholic retreat house operated by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Archeparchy of Lviv. With a grant from the Subcommittee on the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, this retreat center provided a safe and clean environment for adults as well as nearly 300 children, including two babies who were born in the shelter. In addition to providing for these families' basic needs, the grant also underwrote healing retreats offered free of charge to traumatized Ukrainians, whether or

not they live at this retreat center. These sessions, led by a priest and psychologist, included three days and four nights of lodging and meals for 200 people.

POLAND

In 1993, when the Archeparchy of Przemyśl-Warsaw established the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Greek Catholic Parish for Ukrainian immigrants in Lublin, they never dreamed that it would become a central place of solace for war refugees. Just 62 miles from the Ukrainian border, Lublin is a cultural center and academic



hub that has attracted thousands of Ukrainians who have lost everything. Yet few social services are available to them, and they face language barriers and discrimination. A grant funded through the collection supports a retreat and evangelization program for teenage refugees. Intended to lead them to encounter Jesus in the sacraments, it also provides opportunities for trauma counseling, creates community with other refugees, and helps them acquire skills to build new lives.

CROATIA

Catholic universities across Eastern Europe—as well as the University of Notre Dame in the United States—are helping college students from Ukraine and neighboring countries learn skills both for building personal resilience and for helping society recover from war. Beginning in the summer of 2023, the Catholic University of Croatia, the Catholic Universities Partnership in post-Soviet Europe, the Ukrainian Catholic University, and the Nanovic Institute of the University of Notre Dame have organized a program called Practicing Resilience—Preparing for Recovery. With funds received through the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe to cover travel, accommodations, and program expenses, the summer 2023 course was offered free of charge to 40 students—about half of them Ukrainian. It brought lecturers

from Notre Dame and five Catholic universities around Europe—including those in Croatia and Ukraine—to speak on personal recovery from trauma and teach how communities and nations rebuild after war. Students analyzed contemporary examples of spiritual resilience and the differences among individual forgiveness, political amnesty, official apologies, and communal efforts at reconciliation. In addition to lectures and coursework, the students had many opportunities to gather for daily Mass, recreation, and cultural activities. Building on this model of success, another summer school was planned for 2024.

TAJIKISTAN

The landlocked central Asian nation of Tajikistan is the poorest country to emerge from the former Soviet Union. Its residents are 98% Muslim, but a tiny Catholic community is caring for children in the capital city of Dushanbe. Realizing that Tajik students typically receive a poor education and lack basic necessities, the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará have launched an educational program to help children and teenagers excel. Funding received through the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe covers not only classes and school supplies but also uniforms and other clothing, as well as food for the students.

COLLECTION FOR THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

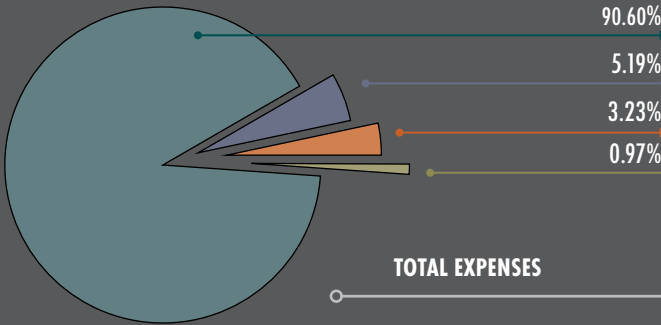
Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Other Changes in Net Assets for the Year Ending December 31, 2023.

REVENUES

National Collections Contributions	\$9,189,619
Income on Investments	\$256,566
Total Revenue (Sum)	\$9,446,185

EXPENSES

Grants and Donations*	\$8,757,016	90.60%
Program Costs	\$501,586	5.19%
Promotions and Fundraising Expenses	\$312,553	3.23%
Administrative Expenses	\$94,108	0.97%
Total Expenses	\$9,665,263	100%
Total Grants & Donations	\$8,757,016	



Changes in Net Assets from Operations	(\$219,078)
Non-Operating Activities:	
Unrealized Gain on Investments	\$3,372,576
Changes in Net Assets	\$3,153,498
Net Assets at the Beginning of the Year	\$20,803,449
Net Assets at the End of the Year	\$23,956,947

Grants approved in 2023 totaled \$8,755,833. Grants and donations in 2023 totaled \$8,757,016, which includes payments and write-offs to grants approved in 2023 and prior years.

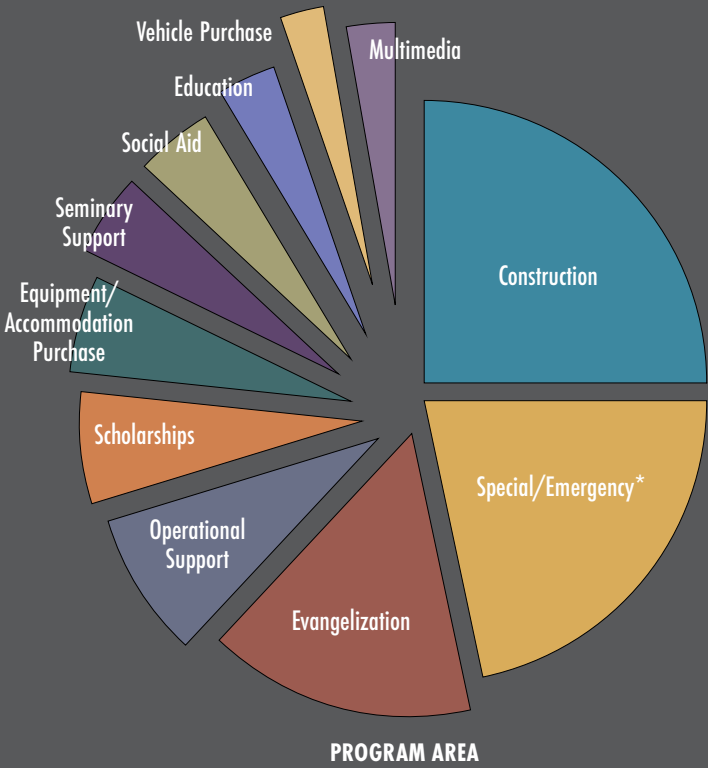
2023 DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

Total Number of Grants Approved: 329

Total Amount Approved: \$8,755,833

PROGRAM AREA	NUMBER OF GRANTS	GRANT AMOUNT	PERCENTAGE
Construction	60	\$2,201,384	25.14%
Special/Emergency*	7	\$1,890,000	21.59%
Evangelization	82	\$1,346,352	15.38%
Operational Support	31	\$720,215	8.23%
Scholarships	67	\$573,407	6.55%
Equipment/Accommodation Purchase	12	\$473,431	5.41%
Seminary Support	17	\$428,538	4.89%
Social Aid	20	\$383,579	4.38%
Education	11	\$282,916	3.23%
Vehicle Purchase	9	\$235,889	2.69%
Multimedia	13	\$220,122	2.51%
TOTAL	329	\$8,755,833	100%

*Includes grants for urgent humanitarian and pastoral responses to the crisis in Ukraine.





If you miss the collection or wish to give outside of the collection, #iGiveCatholicTogether (usccb.igivecatholictogether.org/organizations/usccb-church-in-central-and-eastern-europe) accepts funds online to support the good work of the Collection for Central and Eastern Europe.

Thank you for your support!

For more information about the USCCB's work with the **Collection for Central and Eastern Europe** and around the world, please visit www.usccb.org/ccee.

or write to:

Office of National Collections

3211 Fourth Street NE | Washington, DC 20017

