

## Supporting Ukrainian refugees

Here are some ways Catholic parishes and parishioners can help people in or fleeing Ukraine during this terrible time.

### 1. Pray

Here are just some of many prayer resources:

**The Pope's prayer** of 16 March <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2022-03/pope-francis-ukraine-war-prayer-audience.html>

**Consecration of Ukraine to Immaculate Heart of Mary** (Glasgow, video of service 25 March) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAAkPh4tSdw>

**CAFOD prayers** <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Prayer-resources/A-prayer-for-Ukraine>

**Aid to the Church in Need prayers** <https://acnuk.org/resource/prayersforukraine/>

**Christian Aid prayers** <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/pray/prayer-ukraine>

**Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees** – prayer resources on refugees, migration and sanctuary [http://www.sfar.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/God-With-Us-Booklet\\_Final-compressed.pdf](http://www.sfar.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/God-With-Us-Booklet_Final-compressed.pdf)

### 2. Give

SCIAF emergency appeal <https://www.sciaf.org.uk/get-involved/appeals/741-ukraine-emergency-appeal>

### 3. Act

#### **Sponsorship scheme – homes for Ukraine**

Currently, the UK Government sponsorship scheme requires that matches must be made between refugees and individual sponsors. The Scottish Government is acting as a super-sponsor for 3,000 refugees immediately, and in the longer term for at least 10% of the total number coming to the UK. They will provide temporary accommodation in welcome hubs in Glasgow and Edinburgh airports and Cairnryan, giving hot meals, translation services and trauma support for those who have just arrived, whilst longer-term provision is arranged via local councils.

If your parish or parishioners would like to offer accommodation, the first step is to visit the website and register interest at <https://www.homesforukraine.org.uk/> It is really important to consider this carefully and realistically. You might want to look at this [comprehensive toolkit for sponsors](#)

If your parish has vacant housing that may be of use, you can offer it via the sponsorship scheme. The local authority will assess accommodation suitability, organise disclosure checks etc. **There are a lot of practicalities to consider before deciding to do this.** Scottish

Faiths Action for Refugees has written a very useful briefing on things for faith communities to consider before offering to sponsor refugees [http://www.sfar.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Homes-for-Ukraine-briefing-on-sponsoring-for-faith-groups\\_final.pdf](http://www.sfar.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Homes-for-Ukraine-briefing-on-sponsoring-for-faith-groups_final.pdf)

Please also look at the useful Church of Scotland guidance for manse, which gives practical advice about key issues such as insurance, terms of occupancy, accommodation standards etc <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/the-church-response-to-the-ukraine-crisis/homes-for-ukraine-use-of-manse-for-accommodation-of-refugees>

To keep up to date with the sponsorship scheme, visit UK Government Homes for Ukraine scheme [Homes for Ukraine FAQ page](#)

Scottish Government news updates <https://www.gov.scot/ukraine/>

The latest guidance on what local councils will do is at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/super-sponsor-scheme-and-homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-local-authorities/>

### **Training for PPs and volunteers**

Introductory training (online) on the role a church can play in welcoming Ukrainians is provided by [Welcome Churches](#). Dates are available throughout April.

### **Community welcome and befriending**

The parish community can support people in so many ways beyond simply providing accommodation. Integration involves every area of life: setting up bank accounts, finding employment, finding your way around, children settling in school, learning a language, helping with homework, building friendships, recreation, etc. Can you reach out to people in your parish and offer practical or emotional support?

### **Work ecumenically and collectively**

Perhaps other churches or groups in your area are already planning to sponsor arriving refugees. Can you help them or members of their congregations by offering welcome, practical support or fundraising?

### **Language and translation**

Arriving refugees may not have strong skills in English. Perhaps you have (or can build) good links with the existing local Ukrainian community, if there is one, to offer informal translation and to help refugees settle in.

### **Remember the needs of all refugees in our communities**

Most Scottish communities will have settled refugees or recent arrivals living in their midst, and their needs are important too. Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees have lots of suggestions about things we can do to help all refugees and asylum seekers

<http://www.sfar.org.uk/7-things-you-can-do-to-respond-to-the-situation-in-ukraine/> .

Some things you could do include:

- Advocate for a more humane approach to asylum seekers and refugees  
<https://togetherwithrefugees.org.uk/>
- Join the Faithful Welcome project to connect with and include refugees and asylum seekers in your area <http://www.sfar.org.uk/faithful-welcome-2/>
- Support asylum seekers when they become destitute due to government policy (e.g. through Refugee Survival Trust <https://www.rst.org.uk/> or Scottish Refugee Council <https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/>)