



Statement of Right Reverend Kenneth Nowakowski, Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy (Diocese) of the Holy Family of London, marking the third month of Russia's full scale invasion of Ukraine

London 24th May 2022: Today marks the **third month** of Russia's full scale invasion of Ukraine, an escalation of the ongoing war that Russia has been openly waging against Ukraine for the past eight years. Ukraine has become a familiar site on the map of Europe. The names of cities until recently known to few people outside of Ukraine, have become the focus of daily news reports—cities like Mariupol (the city of Mary), Bucha, Kyiv, Lviv and Kharkiv. Many of these cities and towns have witnessed horrific and brutal war crimes, the deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure—residential homes, hospitals, schools, churches, museums, theatres, bridges, etc. We have seen the displacement of **more than 15 million people**, including the more than 5 million who crossed into countries of Central and Western Europe seeking shelter and help. The average Ukrainian displaced person is a young mother of one or two children whose husband has remained in Ukraine to defend their homeland.

In these past three months we have seen an outpouring of **support from the people of the United Kingdom**. Tens of thousands have opened their homes to provide a safe haven to Ukraine's displaced people. With the help of so many NGOs and private sector businesses, Her Majesty's Government has developed various programs to assist those who have already arrived and will be arriving in the UK.

We have seen how the people of the UK have stood for peace in Ukraine, and showed their outrage and support through many acts of solidarity, be it in the display of the now familiar yellow and blue colours of the Ukrainian flag, in marches through our cities, in the sending of much needed humanitarian aid to Ukraine and its closest neighbours. The initial shock and disbelief that we experienced in those first few days after the invasion has turned into resolve **to stand with those brave men and women** who are defending not only their own country's independence, but the ideals of liberty and democracy of the entire free world

People of faith continue to support Ukraine with prayers to the Almighty, that He might open the eyes of those who have allowed evil to take hold of their hearts, so that they might be horrified by their actions. We continue to pray for a just and lasting peace for Ukraine. We pray for those who have lost their lives, for the wounded, for those tortured and abused, physically, mentally, spiritually. By divine grace and with the assistance of all people of good will, Russia's openly stated goal to destroy Ukrainian statehood and "resolve the Ukrainian question once and for all" **must end in failure**. The alternative is simply too horrible to imagine. Evil must not prevail.

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