



Archbishop Luke of Zaporozhye: The Turmoil That Has Befallen Our Country Reveals the Finest Examples of Mercy

Dearly beloved fathers, brothers, and sisters in Christ!

It is now a difficult time for many of our fellow citizens, when under the sounds of explosions, parents and their children are left homeless, being forced to leave their family nests and, trusting in God's will, to seek hospitality and mercy from their compatriots.

Those of us living in this world are being given an opportunity by the Lord to show our love for Him through loving our neighbor not only in words, but also in deed. The willingness to share the fate of one who is in trouble and the ability to feel the pain of others as if it is our own—these are the qualities of an Orthodox Christian. A Christian is obliged to be empathic, sensitive, and receptive to the suffering and sorrows of others. We will be asked of such deeds by the Son of Man, when He comes to judge the living and the dead.

The time of strife and turmoil that has befallen our country today has resulted in the finest examples of mercy and gives us an opportunity to rethink our attitude to one another, giving us the understanding that we are all alike, we are one people! As St. John Chrysostom witnesses: "Showing mercy is a greater good than raising the dead; for here you are doing good for Christ, and there He is doing good for you."

The funds collected by the faithful of the Zaporozhye Diocese have already been used to purchase and send food to our needy compatriots: the peaceful civilians of the city of Slavic who are temporarily deprived of shelter have found shelter in Svyatogorsk Lavra. At this point, in our region we have already taken in more than 1,000 residents who are temporarily homeless people and are in need of everything, especially food and clothing.

We wholeheartedly encourage everyone, not just the parishioners of the Zaporizhia Diocese of the UOC, but all concerned citizens of our region, to provide financial assistance according to their abilities to their brothers and sisters from the neighboring regions.

I bless diocesan clergy to raise funds for the purchase of food and everything necessary for the existence of our fellow homeless people.

With love in Christ, I call upon you the blessings of our Lord!

+ Archbishop Luke of Zaporozhye and Melitopol.