

**Three Years of Conflict: Jesuits Accompany Over 127,000 Refugees**

Europe's largest humanitarian crisis since World War II continues, with over 8.8 million people—or nearly one in three Ukrainians— fleeing their homes, leaving behind memories and hopes for the future.

As Ukraine marks three years of conflict, Jesuit Mission Australia alongside the Xavier Network, have been supporting project partner Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Europe to help provide life-saving support to over 127,000 refugees.

Since the war began, Jesuit organisations have delivered over 612,000 essential services—ranging from emergency aid and shelter to education and psychosocial support.

*"As another grim milestone passes and some decision-makers waver in their support, our commitment to accompanying those forcibly displaced remains as steady as the first day,"* said Fr Alberto Ares SJ, Regional Director of JRS Europe and project partner of Jesuit Mission Australia.

*"Even in a context marked by pain and uncertainty, we see daily examples of solidarity and integration—people extending a helping hand and walking together."*

JRS Europe has expanded their response to adapt to the evolving needs of displaced people. Initially focused on emergency aid, the coordinated programmatic response now primarily supports long-term integration—providing education, psychological support, legal assistance, and employment opportunities.

Thanks to JRS, just a few kilometres from their home in Ukraine, 10-year-old Nadja and her grandmother Natalia (62) have found refuge in a shelter on the outskirts of a small village in eastern Moldova.

*"Nadja and I were shopping when we heard the first explosions. The child was so frightened that all she wanted was to leave,"* said Natalia. In a moment of urgency, Nadja's parents made the painful decision to send their daughter and Natalia to safety. *"My daughter told me: 'Go to Moldova; you'll be safe there. We'll stay here to defend our home, and you'll come back when it's all over.'"*

The Jesuit network's support extends across Ukraine, neighbouring countries, and further afield—reaching as far as Portugal and Spain.

*"Even in the darkest times, hope persists. We see it in every refugee who finds a new home, a new job, a new future – made possible by the generosity of those Australian supporters who have stood alongside the Ukrainians during this time,"* said Helen Forde, CEO of Jesuit Mission Australia. *"*said Helen Forde, CEO of Jesuit Mission Australia.

Jesuit Mission Australia stands in solidarity with families like Natalia's. Donate to the Emergency Action Fund to support refugees of the Ukraine crisis and beyond at [jesuitmission.org.au/ukraine](https://jesuitmission.org.au/ukraine) or call 02 8918 4109.

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Caption: For Natalia and her granddaughter, the future remains uncertain. "I hope the war will end soon so we can return home to Mykolaiv. I eagerly await the birth of my second grandchild and dream of being a united family again."



Caption: A joyful moment in the classroom for Ukrainian children in Romania.



Caption: Ukrainian refugees arriving in Poland. Photo by Sergi Cámara.

### **Supporting Links:**

Ukraine Emergency Action Fund donation page

<https://jesuitmission.org.au/ukraine/>

### **About Jesuit Mission Australia**

Jesuit Mission Australia works in over 10 countries across Asia and Africa to uphold the innate dignity of people living with the effects of poverty, especially the most marginalised and vulnerable.

Funds from our supporters:

- Break cycles of poverty through teaching and education
- Protect the health of communities by providing medical care and programs that improve access to clean water and toilets
- Develop independent, sustainable communities through livelihood training and income-generating projects
- Provide vulnerable individuals with pastoral care, social inclusion and advocacy
- Support refugees in crisis
- Enable effective disaster response and relief.