

“So what is it you are holding in your hands? A piece of literature? A collection of charming old tales? No. Through the Word of God, light has come into the world, and so what you are holding in your hands is something divine – a book like fire! A book through which God is speaking to us.”

Pope Francis
Foreword to the YOUCAT Bible



The Bible endures. On returning to their village, Iraqi Christians found the Holy Scriptures still there.

Dear Friends,

That great saint Don Bosco once said: “So many souls have been saved by good books; so many shielded from error and encouraged to do good! Whoever gives someone a good book, even if it does no more than awaken the thought of God in them, has performed an incomparable service in the sight of God. And in reality how much more it usually achieves!”

Yes, along with the proclamation of the Gospel and the living witness of the Church, good spiritual books represent a major contribution to the transmission of the Faith. The first place, of course, belongs to the Book of Books, the Holy Scriptures, which springs from the very source of divine revelation and through which God himself speaks to us. That is why ACN, as a pastoral charity, also places particular emphasis on disseminating Sacred Scripture, catechetical and religious books around the world.

Even if no book can replace the personal proclamation of Jesus, God’s living Word, nonetheless a good book can greatly help us to find our way to God and grow in

knowledge and understanding of the Faith. How many people have had their lives changed, or even begun a completely new life, as a result of reading a religious book. We need only think of Saint Ignatius of Loyola who, lying wounded in hospital as a soldier, read the lives of the saints and said to himself: “If they can do it, then so can I!”



“Good books can inspire us in our prayers and actions and teach us the truth about God and humanity.”

The Bible, the Catechism, the writings of the saints, spiritual literature generally and indeed every good book can be a signpost through life for us. They can inspire us in our prayers and actions and teach us the truth about God and humanity. A good spiritual book can strengthen the soul and make you ready to give an answer to everyone who asks about the hope that is within you (cf. 1 Pt 3:15).

Since its inception, 51 million copies of ACN’s Child’s Bible have been distributed throughout the world. And we continue to support numerous projects for the

translation and printing of Bibles and other theological, catechetical and spiritual writings. All these publications serve the pastoral mission of the Church, and many of them are also essential to the formation of priests and religious.

The religious formation and catechesis of children is a special priority for ACN. To this end, ACN set up the YOUCAT Foundation which produces catechetical publications that are attractive and accessible to young people and that can help them to discover

the Catholic Faith as the foundation of their lives.

Through publications such as these, we are helping millions of people to come to know Jesus Christ and discover true life in him. So help us, dear friends, to save more souls through good books!

My grateful blessing on you all,

P. Martin M. Barta

Father Martin Maria Barta
Ecclesiastical Assistant



Pope, Bible, children:
Benedict XVI at the
Fazenda in Brazil.

**A companion for
life: children in
Mexico with the
Child's Bible in
Tzeltal, their
mother tongue.**



Blessed by Popes

Saint John Paul II was present and was delighted when, in 1979, the Child's Bible was launched in Puebla, Mexico. In Brazil, Pope Benedict XVI was presented by a child with the 10 millionth copy of the Portuguese edition and Pope Francis, while still Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aires, requested thousands of copies of the Child's Bible.

Now, after 40 years we have published and distributed a staggering total of 51,188,209 copies (as of June 2019). Many parishes, dioceses and religious orders who want copies are unable to cover the printing costs, including seven dioceses in **Pakistan** (80,000 copies in Urdu at a cost of **£42,900**) and the Greek Catholic Church in **Ukraine** (50,000 copies illustrated with icons for **£22,400**). Similarly, the dio-

cese of Tarahumara in northern **Mexico** cannot afford the **£8,300** cost for the 10,000 copies it needs. So we are spreading the Word without asking for any payment.

At the same time, thank-you letters come in daily from many children in some of the poorest countries, such as Mozambique, from where 13-year-old Dieudonné wrote: "All the words of Jesus make us



**Kazakhstan, September 2001: showing
Pope John Paul II her Bible in Kazakh.**

reflect and give us meaning to our lives." These Bibles are 'grains of wheat': who knows what fruit they will bear in the millions of souls who have received them? ●



Bibles for Cuba, where there is still a longing for God's Word.

To the ends of the earth

There are more than 7,000 different languages in the world. So far, the complete Bible has been translated into 692 languages and the New Testament into 1,547.

We receive many requests to give the faithful Catholic Bibles, both in places where it is dangerous to possess a Bible and where people have

for decades been brought up under atheistic ideologies such as China.

Cuba has been a communist state for almost 60 years. But the Archbishop of Havana wants Catholics to learn the practice of *Lectio Divina*, or prayerful meditation on the Scriptures. One Bible costs **£3.49**, and 15,120 Bibles can fit into a container. This would also be enough to supply the other ten dioceses in Cuba with this primary instrument of the new evangelisation. ACN has already promised the **£57,200** they need. ●



Standing up for persecuted Christians

Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil, Iraq (centre) and ACN's Neville Kyrke-Smith (right) met with then Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt in May 2019. Archbishop Warda also gave evidence to the independent review of the FCO.

In December 2018 then Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt announced an Independent Review of Foreign and Commonwealth Office Support for Persecuted Christians. After months of research and work the final report, overseen by the Anglican Bishop of Truro, was released in July 2019. It can be read online at <https://christianpersecutionreview.org.uk>

ACN (UK)'s national director Neville Kyrke-Smith said: "It is an encouragement that these issues are finally being recognised at the right level. **It is so important that the challenges faced by people of Christian faith and other minorities are recognised by our Foreign and Commonwealth Office.** There is a vital need to support the Christian presence – as Christians are so often the bridge builders, peace makers and negotiators." He welcomed the report's recommendations, which included using the UK's

position on the UN Security Council to increase protection for Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East, consider sanctions when religious minorities suffer serious human rights abuses, and champion the prosecution of Daesh (ISIS) perpetrators of sex crimes against Christian and Yazidi women. It also called for the FCO to support ACN's #RedWednesday initiative.

Neville added: "We at Aid to the Church in Need are pleased to have been involved in

this report." Along with experts from other organisations, ACN's John Pontifex and Dr John Newton provided extensive input into the first phase of the project.

Jeremy Hunt said: "**The sense of misguided political correctness that has stopped us standing up for Christians overseas must end... It is a sad fact that Christians are the most persecuted religious group in modern times. I am determined to show that we are on their side.**" ●



Letting the Holy Land's children be children

This year around 6,000 children and young people from Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem will enjoy 2-4 week summer courses in **Israel, Jordan** and the **Palestinian territories**, run by the Church. Children learn, through play, to see one another through the eyes of Christ, who embraces every child in love. Learning this is the basis for peace. The patriarchate is investing a great deal in these crucially important summer camps – and we are supporting them with **£26,800**. For Jesus himself said: "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them. For to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Mk 10:14). ●



Living according to God's plan

“Discover the greatness and beauty of marriage,” Pope Benedict XVI said in 2010. Married couples in both **Bangladesh** (above) and **Kenya** are being equipped to help other families to do just this. And in **Belarus** Church courses are supporting families in difficult situations. Your love makes this possible.

Need, love and thanks – your letters

Profound solidarity

I've put aside some of my savings in order to help our Christian brothers and sisters who have to fear for their lives on account of their faith in Jesus Christ. I feel a sense of profound solidarity with them, as living witnesses who are suffering a daily martyrdom and many of whom have even given their lives. And so I've decided to pass over other appeals and am sending you this cheque from my vacation money. I rejoice to share with my suffering brothers and sisters in this way. Please use it to support the poorest churches in their most basic necessities.

A benefactor in Portugal

The source of all Christian action

From a very early age my mother made us aware of the needs of persecuted Christians. She always sent donations to ACN, even when she had virtually nothing left to spare. Since her death in 2011 I have felt the desire to take up where she left off. I want to thank you for all the things your aid makes possi-

ble. But at the same time I want to thank you for your letter in the Mirror, which is a powerful reminder of the very heart of our faith, the source of all true Christian action. Of the various phrases highlighted on this front page of the Mirror there are two I want to quote: “It is not the elimination of the need that ultimately counts, but loving to the limits.” And “All light, all spiritual strength, all reason for hope, everything comes from the Cross.”

A supporter in Belgium

Thank you for your mission

I want to thank you and encourage you with my donation for the wonderful mission with which you are comforting the hearts of our persecuted brothers and sisters, drying their tears and rekindling their hope, with a warmth so urgently needed in the darkness of the present time, and also for bringing to others the torch of the Gospel light, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

A benefactor in France



Thomas Heine-Geldern,
Executive President,
ACN (International)

Dear Friends,

It is always a joy to us ‘oldies’ to see pictures of joyful and committed young people whenever we read reports of a World Youth Day for example, or a big meeting of one of the spiritual movements. It is proof that our mission of guiding the next generation to God and to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is indeed achievable.

To help attain this goal still more successfully, ACN has been committed for many years now to supporting the family and youth apostolate. We are helping with a range of formation programmes of this kind with our project partners, and in particular of course with our popular Child's Bible, so sought after for 40 years and on every continent. Added to this are the rapidly spreading books of the YOU-CAT series. These are available not only to our brothers and sisters of the Church in need, but to each and every family that strives to spread the Gospel word.

Thanks to your generous help we can in this way build solid bridges of shared knowledge of our faith and so inspire young people with enthusiasm for God and his love.

My heartfelt thanks to you all,

Where to send your contribution for the Church in Need

Our address: Aid to the Church in Need, 12–14 Benhill Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4DA. Please use the Freepost envelope – it saves you money and helps us. If you give by standing order or direct debit or have sent a donation recently, please accept our sincere thanks. This Mirror is for your interest and information.

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