

Annual Report 2020



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN UNITED KINGDOM

Visit our website:
www.acnuk.org

12-14 Benhill Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4DA ☎ 0345 646 0110

Dear Friends,

Who would have thought, a year ago, that our lives would still be affected by this global pandemic? We see this not only in the concerns and restrictions that affect our own lives, but also in the rising number of appeals from our project partners to help them confront the challenges of the coronavirus.

As always in such testing times, it is you, our benefactors, who are supporting our shared mission and strengthening the bridges of love and faith between us and the suffering Church. After a brief drop in the first quarter in the year, your donations for 2020 rose to new heights of love, thereby confirming your generous willingness to think of your suffering brothers and sisters even in the midst of your own difficulties.

This truly Christian attitude allows us, by way of thousands of projects, to support religious, priests and lay workers wherever they stand with people and bring them hope – often their last hope.

In order to express our gratitude to you all for this, and join with you in prayer, we celebrated a special Benefactors' Day for the first time this year on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (11th June). Masses of thanksgiving were celebrated all around the world. We were delighted to share this act of spiritual fellowship with you!



Thomas Heine-Geldern,
International
Executive President

Thomas Heine-Geldern



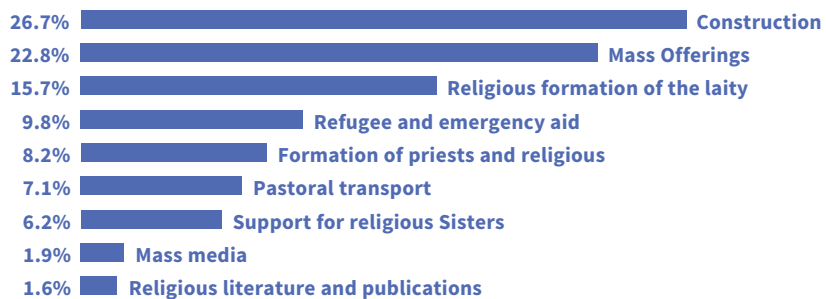
Neville Kyrke-Smith,
National Director

Neville Kyrke-Smith



Where your help went:

(Projects funded by all 23 of ACN's national offices)



• 744 construction projects

One third of all construction projects supported were in Africa. They included churches and presbyteries, convents, pastoral centres and seminaries. Likewise in Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, we were able to support the construction and repair/renovation of many similar buildings.

• 1,782,097 Mass stipends

Almost 1.8 million Masses were celebrated in the year 2020... one Mass every 18 seconds, somewhere in the world, for the intentions of one of ACN's benefactors. In this way we were able to help one in every nine priests worldwide (414,065), particularly in Africa, where 41.5% of your Mass stipends went.

• 14,009 seminarians supported

There are a total of 115,880 seminarians worldwide, and one in every eight of those studying for the priesthood received support from ACN. Most are studying in Africa (7,589), Latin America (2,384) and Asia (2,097). Once again this year, training focused on individual and spiritual maturity.

• 18,126 religious Sisters supported in their apostolate and/or training

One in every 35 of the 641,661 religious Sisters in the world was supported by ACN (in 2019 it was one in every 47). In most cases this was help for the formation of Sisters and novices, or basic support for active and contemplative religious Sisters. It also included retreats and ongoing formation.

• 1,243 vehicles for pastoral work

These included 783 bicycles, 280 cars, 166 motorcycles, 11 boats, two buses and one lorry. Most of the cars, bicycles and motorcycles in the year 2020 once again went to Asia, Africa and Latin America.

• 401 coronavirus-related projects

The pandemic demanded a special response (€6,275,910 and 401 projects). Much of our help went to priests and religious in Africa and Latin America.

Altogether, we supported 4,758 projects in 2020.*

This was 472 projects fewer than in the previous year. Once again, as in past years, we had to turn down many requests (1,432 altogether). In percentage terms, however, we refused fewer requests than in the previous year. Overall, the number of requests (5,727) actually declined. The average amount allocated per project was €13,800. The smallest projects were posters for the Child's Bible, while the biggest were aid parcels for Syria.

Our aid went to 138 countries and 1,145 dioceses – over a third of all the dioceses in the world (3,025). We also helped over 18,000 catechists and other pastoral workers, most of them in Asia and Africa. These two continents, and Latin America too, received the largest number of books, Bibles and other publications.

*Includes project requests submitted prior to the year 2020



ACN (UK) income and expenditure

All figures in this section relate to the UK office of ACN in 2020.

- Income from donations, grants and legacies **£9,738,444**.
- **394** projects supported in **82** countries.
- **82.9%** of charity resources spent on aid payments and mission-related communication.
- **75.2%** of charity resources applied to aid payments.
- **8.9%** of charity income went on fundraising.

Income from donations and legacies brought in £9.7 million. With this we were able to provide £8 million supporting various activities helping the Church in need.

75.2% of charity cash income (£7.3 million) was spent directly on aid payments enabling us to support 394 projects in 82 countries.

A further 7.7% was spent on mission-related communication, including raising the plight of suffering Christians at the very highest levels (£0.7 million).

Essential support costs accounted for 5.7% of charity income (£0.6 million), while fundraising costs made up 8.9% (£0.9 million) and movement on reserves make up the final 2.5% (£0.2 million).

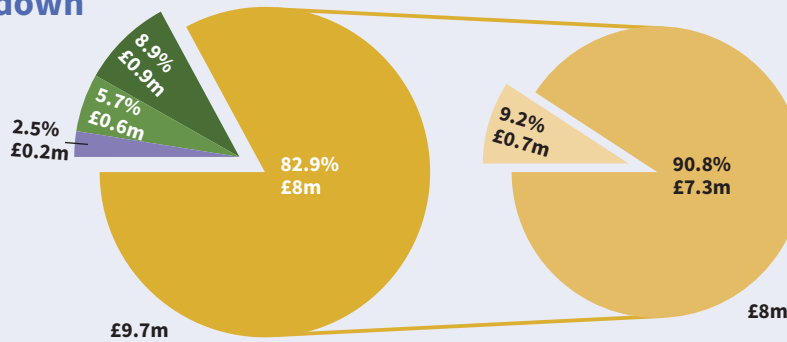
Once again in 2020, legacies accounted for a significant proportion of income received for the support of the Church (£1.9 million or 19.0% of income in 2020). Together with our project partners in the suffering Church, we remember those departed benefactors with gratitude.



Your love means Sisters can offer vital help to those in need during the pandemic.

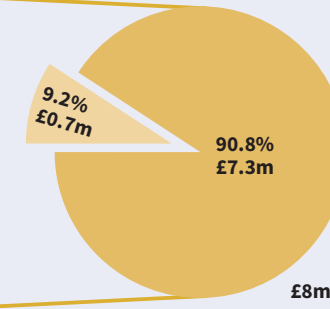
Detailed breakdown of expenditure

- Fundraising
- Support costs
- Reserves
- Aid payments plus mission-related communication



Aid payments plus mission-related communication

- Mission-related communication
- Aid payments



The Annual Report and Accounts of Aid to the Church in Need (United Kingdom) have been audited by Moore Kingston Smith and are available on the Charity Commission website.

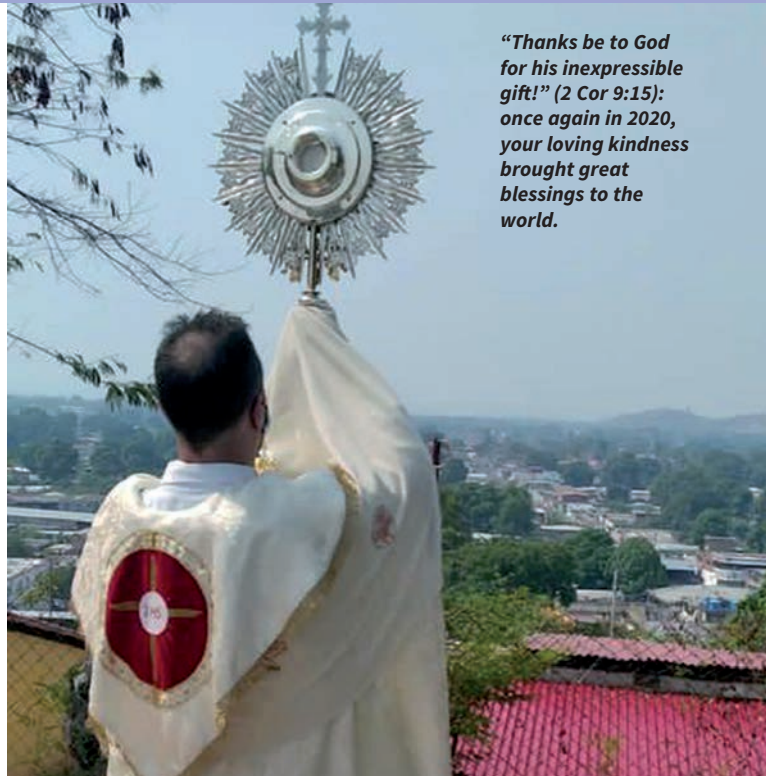
The pandemic and divine providence

2020 passed in the shadow of the pandemic. Travel and physical contact were limited throughout the world. This had implications for catechesis and worship, not to mention material consequences. Sunday collections stopped – in many cases these were the only source of income for priests, particularly in Africa and Latin America. For months, the faithful could only participate in the celebration of Mass online; unleavened wafers baked by contemplative Sisters were no longer required; schools were closed, leaving many Sisters without an income – with which they otherwise used to help the poor and sick.

We responded with an increase in Mass stipends for priests (from 15.9% to 22.8% of total aid) and basic subsistence support for religious Sisters. We also funded PPE, so they could continue to visit the old and sick.

The shift in aid was also reflected in the countries receiving help. Aid for Africa, already the biggest recipient, increased to 32.6% (from 29.6% in 2019) due not only to the pandemic but also to the growing problem of Islamist extremism. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, the marked rise in aid is due almost entirely to the COVID crisis – for example, our increased help for Sisters in Ukraine. The sharp fall in support for the Middle East was due to building work stopping in the Nineveh Plains region. COVID made it simply impossible to deliver the building materials.

The fall in project requests last year (5,727 compared with 7,154 in 2019) was also partly due to the pandemic. Many of our project partners initially put their plans (particularly for buildings) on hold, in order to focus on emergency aid. These project applications came through in the second half of the year – along with a rise in donations. It was impossible to ignore the divine providence of God's merciful love!



“Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!” (2 Cor 9:15): once again in 2020, your loving kindness brought great blessings to the world.