

# Love amid the suffering

Thanks to you, ACN is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with those suffering due to a fatal insurgency in Mozambique

**“We are running, fleeing, trying to hide here on the shore. They are shooting everywhere. May it be as God wills, here in Palma...The houses have been abandoned.”**

These were the words of a voice message an unnamed man sent Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) during an attack in March by more than 150 insurgents on the port town of Palma, northern Mozambique.

Since 2017, a militant group called ‘Al-Shabaab’, with links to Daesh (ISIS), has waged a violent insurgency that has seen **children as young as 11 beheaded and churches destroyed.**

According to the United Nations, **more than 2,500 people have been killed and 700,000 have fled their homes.**

Bishop Luiz Fernando Lisboa, who has ministered to the region’s refugees, told ACN how Christians in the country are

being targeted by the extremists.

Speaking after 52 young people were massacred in Muidumbe District for refusing to join the extremists, he said: **“They attacked the church and burnt the benches and a statue of Our Lady, made of ebony...”**

“They had already attacked and burnt five or six local chapels, they also burnt some mosques. Although ultimately, it seems, the target is the Christian churches.”

Thanks to you, ACN has been able to provide extensive support to Mozambique including **church reconstruction, pastoral support and psychological help for those suffering from trauma, as well as emergency aid.**

Bishop Lisboa said: **“I would like to take this opportunity to thank ACN for all the years of collaboration and all the help you have given our diocese...”**

During this time of war ACN has helped us greatly with... projects that have enabled our missionary personnel to work and bring relief to the victims of this war.”



Priests and Religious have been helping victims of violence



# Emergency aid after terrorists attack

**In March, more than 150 insurgents attacked Palma, a port town, in the Cabo Delgado region. Omar Saranga, a spokesman for the country's security forces, said the attack saw "the assassination of dozens of defenceless people".**

Daesh bragged about the attack on its

Telegram channel media platform, saying "the caliphate's soldiers seize[d] the strategic town of Palma".

Attacks like this have forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes and now they need food, sustenance and support.

Sister Monica, from the Congregation of Our Lady of Fatima's Sisters of Reparation,

said displaced people are at the heart of her congregation's concerns.

**She said: "They are people with nothing, who depend entirely on solidarity. They're empty-handed people".**

She said the refugees are **"the victims... those who, despite being able to escape,**

**have lost their family, their property".**

ACN responded quickly, **providing £136,000 in emergency aid**, including beans, flour, cooking oil and other foodstuffs for people facing famine.

Through your generosity, ACN can help the Church minister to those in desperate need. 🙏



ACN has provided vital aid for refugees fleeing violence



ACN is committed to helping Sisters carry out vital pastoral work – also providing the Mercedarian Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament with this vehicle.

**Since 2015, there has been no priest in the parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the district of Metuge, Pemba. The parish consists of more than 83,000 people.**

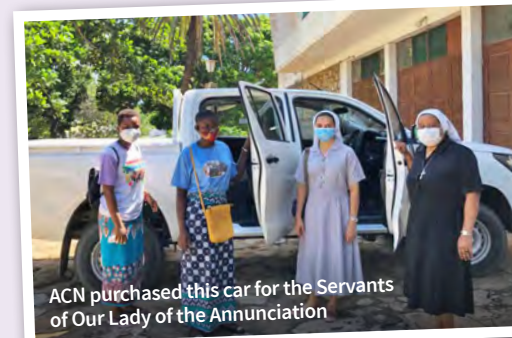
The Servants of Our Lady of the Annunciation organise the parish's life: **visiting communities, counselling families, catechesis, liturgies, and preparing for the sacraments.** They have even founded a small school.

Unfortunately, their old car was damaged beyond repair during a vital pastoral journey in April 2019. One of the Sisters is still recovering from her injuries.

**Bishop Luiz Fernando Lisboa said: "A vehicle is vital for them to help visit**

**the scattered people of God in this part of the world."**

Only through your love could ACN help the Sisters with a brand new pick-up truck to continue their essential care to the Church of Pemba. 🙏



ACN purchased this car for the Servants of Our Lady of the Annunciation

## Help for holistic healing

**Pemba diocese has welcomed a quarter of a million displaced people. Many of them are profoundly traumatised having lost relatives, friends, and their livelihoods.**

Father Kwiriwi Fonseca, from Pemba diocese, told ACN "there is a generalised panic" among the population.

**He added: "Whenever they hear the sound of a gunshot, or shooting of any kind from the Army training camps, people immediately start to panic and come running out of their homes..."**

"And so the government, the NGOs and the Church are going to have to start talking intensively and constantly about peace and security, because there really is a great deal of fear."

To alleviate rising anxiety levels,

Pemba diocese is training its priests, Religious and pastoral workers in how to provide vital psychological support for the faithful.

**Father Fonseca said: "Our life has changed. [Being a priest] is like being one of the emergency services. That's exactly what it is, it's a matter of being on call 24 hours a day. We are putting our hearts and souls into this struggle."**

**He added: "On a daily basis, we strive not only to be priests, but also activists, psychologists, spiritual directors, first aiders, suppliers (and distributors) of foodstuffs."**

ACN is supporting six courses, training hundreds of priests, Religious and lay pastoral workers in how to provide psychological support. 🙏



A Sister from Pemba diocese cradles a baby.



A group of internally displaced people seeking refuge in Pemba diocese



# Bringing Christ through the airwaves

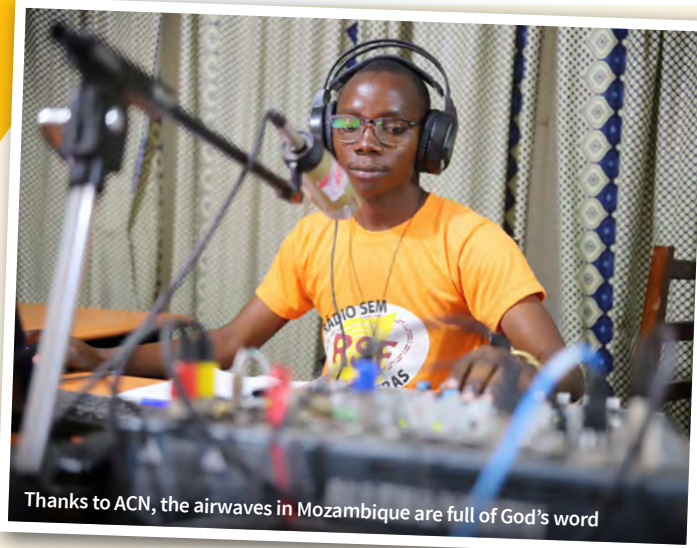
**Even in a time of war, the Church's mission of evangelisation must continue. To meet the people's needs, Pemba diocese is running a programme called "Evangelisation in a time of crisis".**

In a country buffeted by war and COVID-19, with access to remote villages and settlements difficult, radio is a vital means of communicating God's word.

**Because of the diocese's work, the radio waves are full of catechesis, spiritual formation, Mass and Christian**

**music.** Yet, one of the Catholic radio stations in the region, *Rádio São Francisco*, was completely destroyed by the terrorists, so now the other Catholic radio station, *Rádio Sem Fronteiras*, has had to fill the gap.

ACN has aided the station's growth by funding broadcasts and improving signal reception. Isolated communities, desperate to hear the Good News, have



Thanks to ACN, the airwaves in Mozambique are full of God's word

been given a number of solar-powered radios by the charity.

**Father Latifo Fonseca, director of *Rádio Sem Fronteiras*, said to ACN's benefactors: "Please accept my special blessings on each one of you, for each day you are facilitating the mission of Jesus in places where there is great suffering."** 🙏

## Defence against the elements



Renovation of the Church of Saint Magdalene of Netia



Last December, a tropical storm passed through Netia, **killing one, wounding 25, leaving 2,400 homeless and destroying 300 homes and a church.**

The roof of the Church of Saint Magdalene of Netia was totally destroyed in the storm. It usually welcomes more than 350 faithful who couldn't visit their church.

**Bishop Alberto Vera Arejula of Nacala said: "We have come to beg you... ACN with benefactors and donors, to help us rebuild this temple of God so that the faithful can come together again and praise God."**

Only thanks to you can ACN help repair churches like this. 🙏



ACN [www.acnuk.org](http://www.acnuk.org)

Aid to the  
Church in Need

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