

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED - LENT RESOURCE FOR UKRAINE

THE MOBILE PHONE CHALLENGE: NOTES FOR TEACHERS FOR PRESENTATION

Introduction

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Aid to the Church in Need has sent 1 million euros of emergency aid to support priests and religious Sisters caring for families, orphans and the elderly. We want to continue to help those in desperate need, so we are inviting schools to participate in our Mobile Phone Challenge for Ukraine.

We have recognised there is a need for resources for our young people to use in school or at home, to help them to understand a little of what is going on, as well as leading them into prayer and to do something to fundraise if they wish. We hope the following resources help your students to understand, as well as providing an opportunity for prayer.

Thank you for your support! For further information on any of the resources here, please email Schools@acnuk.org.

If you have any questions about the resources please contact marie.fahy@acnuk.org

Presentation

Slide 1: This challenge is for Ukraine. Aid to the Church in Need are asking for your prayers and fundraising efforts to support all those who are suffering as a result of the war in Ukraine.

Slide 2: Title slide: This is a 'challenge' because we all rely on our phones so much. Fasting is about giving up something that is important. There are many reasons why each of the world's religions advocates fasting: to sacrifice willingly something that makes our lives more comfortable and to offer that to God for the good of another person is an act of selfless love, so it has spiritual power for our own good and the good of the world. When we fast, we learn:

- That we do not need exterior material things as much as we think we do
- That when we clear our minds from the noise and distractions of the world we are better placed to hear God's voice
- The value of self-sacrifice and to become less self-centred
- To imitate Jesus in the desert. Jesus fasted before he began his mission - this shows us its value as a spiritual practice in growing in holiness and resisting evil
- By doing this challenge and getting sponsored, we can do something concrete for the people of Ukraine

Slide 3: The ACN Mobile Phone Challenge incorporates the three Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

1. FASTING - We fast from our mobile phones (except for emergencies).
2. ALMSGIVING - We raise money through asking our friends and family to sponsor us (this is also a sacrifice, because many of us find it difficult to ask our friends and family for sponsorship money, and organising the collection of the money can be difficult). The money we raise will go directly to those who need it at ACN emergency aid in Ukraine.

3. PRAYER - We ask that participants pray during the challenge, particularly when they miss their phones. There are two prayer services that can be used as a group at the end. Participants might also like to learn the Fatima Prayer and pray it during the fast day and beyond.

1434 *The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers insist above all on three forms, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others. Alongside the radical purification brought about by Baptism or martyrdom they cite as means of obtaining forgiveness of sins: effort at reconciliation with one's neighbour, tears of repentance, concern for the salvation of one's neighbour, the intercession of the saints, and the practice of charity "which covers a multitude of sins.*

(Catechism of the Catholic Church http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P4B.HTM)

Slide 4: You can decide how best to fast from your phone depending on your individual circumstances. Some participants will find it easier to fast in blocks of time (e.g. two hours a day for twelve days etc.), most however will complete the challenge in one 24-hour period. Some very brave souls may choose to 'give up' their mobile phone more than once during Lent or even every Friday!

Slide 5: WHY THIS CHALLENGE?

We want to make our Lenten offering meaningful. If we check our phones even half as much as the studies suggest, we will be making a significant sacrifice by choosing not to use them for a day. We will also have more time to pray for those in need.

Slide 6: This is the whole point of the challenge. When we sacrifice things for the sake of another we show love. This, combined with our fundraising, will show our love for the people of Ukraine.

"A sacrifice to be real, must hurt, and must empty ourselves. Give yourself fully to God. He will use you to accomplish great things on the condition that you believe much more in His love than in your weakness." **Saint Teresa of Calcutta**

Slide 7: Think about some of the ways in which this will be a sacrifice for you. How will you tell your friends and family in advance? Will you be able to get some of them involved, too? Consider pairing up with a friend or family member on the day you decide to do the challenge (they should do it on another day - not the same day as you) to ensure that you are contactable in case of an emergency.

Slide 8: WHO IS IT FOR?

The following slides will answer these questions – we will learn about some of the people we are doing this challenge for!

Slide 9: Bishop Stanislav Szyrokoradiuk, Bishop of the Diocese of Odessa-Simferopol from the Odessa Cathedral talking about what it means to be in Odessa now.

Slide 10: Night time adoration and praying with Father Mateusz in the shelter of St. Anthony Parish in Kyiv, in the St. Matheus bunker.

Slide 11: Shows us a drawing that represents who we will help, and how!

Slide 12: The following slides will answer these questions – we will meet a few more people in Ukraine who we will be able to help.

Slide 13: ACN is helping the church to look after those who need to shelter there.

Slide 14: ACN is helping the church to look after those who need somewhere safe to sleep.

Slide 15: Despite the increasing risk of being injured or killed by remaining in a warzone, religious Sisters have stayed in their communities to serve the people and continue to provide spiritual care for families. For the local population the nuns are a sign of hope. Many neighbours say: *“We are staying as long as the sisters stay. When they go, we go too.”*

Magda Kaczmarek, Project Manager of Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) for Ukraine, is in close contact with several orders of nuns. One nun has told her that she has never prayed the Rosary as much as she has now.

Slide 16: The Ukrainian army notified Alexander that he had been drafted into the army. He had to report to the barracks in four hours. A close witness told ACN that with only four hours to say goodbye to each other, Alexander and Irina decided to spend one of those four hours with a priest, preparing for the sacrament of marriage. Then they both went to confession, received Holy Communion, and made their marriage vows. After the wedding, Irina told her husband, Alexander, *“Now you can go and defend your country”*.

Slide 17: As tensions rise, the situation in Kyiv becomes more desperate. In the diocese of Kyiv-Zhytomyr supermarket shelves are empty. There is no bread or water. The Bishop, Aleksander Yazlovetskiy, is responding to this need by transporting and distributing food, medicines and personal hygiene products to people in Kyiv.

Slide 18: The next few slides will demonstrate what types of things ACN will be able to help our project partners in Ukraine with.

Slides 19-21: Examples of emergency aid

Slide 22: In time, we hope to be able to support rebuilding projects in places such as Kharkiv – you can see on the slide the destruction caused in the Main Square of the city.

Slide 23: We are providing support for refugees, orphanages and homes for single mothers.

Slide 24: We will continue to provide support for the elderly.

Slide 25: All of the people ACN is in touch with in Ukraine, have asked for prayers. They value the prayers of those around the world, just as much as the physical help they are receiving.

Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, Apostolic Nuncio to Ukraine, spoke to ACN’s Maria Lozano, head of press of the international Aid to the Church in Need foundation on March 9th 2022 and said:

“So, I say to myself, and also to many believers I speak to, that our main weapons, so to speak, are humility, surrendering ourselves totally to God, solidarity, and love. Because in any case if we are here for each other, if we are close to God, if we are faithful, He will look after us. And so it is during this war, which is not a purely human invention, there is something demonic about it – as there is in all violence. And we can only defeat the evil in this war together, all over the world, through fasting, prayer, much humility and love.”

Slide 26: Press play to watch this short video of Fr Frankie Mulgrew, talking about the power of prayer in a desperate situation. Discuss the power of prayer.

Slide 27: Press play to watch this short video, which explains why this help and support is needed for the people of Ukraine.

Slide 28: Shows an image which shows the fullness of the challenge- you could use this to promote the challenge to students. This image is used infographic. You can use this image with your pupils and the activity (you will see it under linked on the same page as these notes).

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is a Pontifical Foundation of the Catholic Church, supporting the Catholic faithful and other Christians where they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need.

Founded on Christmas Day 1947, ACN supports around 5,000 projects across the world each year.

For regular updates from the suffering Church around the world or to find out more information, please visit www.acnuk.org

Thank you for your prayers and support for our brothers and sisters in Christ in Ukraine.

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