

The Mobile Phone Challenge: Supporting Notes

- This is [Aid to the Church in Need's Lent Campaign](#) for young people (aged 11+) and adults.
- These notes accompany the presentation and will help youth leaders with additional information.

AIMS:

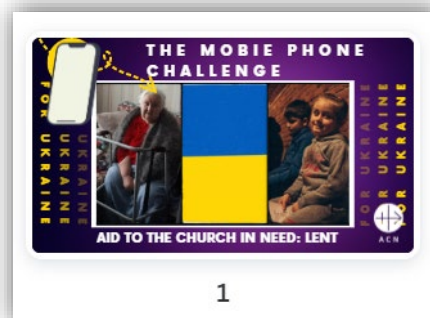
1. To inspire youth groups, schools, universities, families and parishes to pray, fast and give alms this Lent so that can continue to give material, psychological and spiritual help to the people of Ukraine.
2. To pray for Ukraine and Russia and for world peace.

TIME: 15-30 minutes depending on how much detail you decide to give.

Some of the information is on the slides, but if you would like extra information, please see below:

Slide 1: Title slide

The children on the right hand side are Internationally Displaced Persons (IPDs). They are hiding in the basement of a Catholic High School. Aid to the Church in Need has already given financial support to the refugees in this part of Ukraine. The elderly lady on the left is being helped materially, spiritually and emotionally by a nun who is bringing her some food. Like many older people in Ukraine, she has no one else to turn to. ACN provides funds so that the sisters may continue this work.



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Slide 2: Video (1.30)

A short video showing some of the effects of war and also some of the people being helped by ACN.

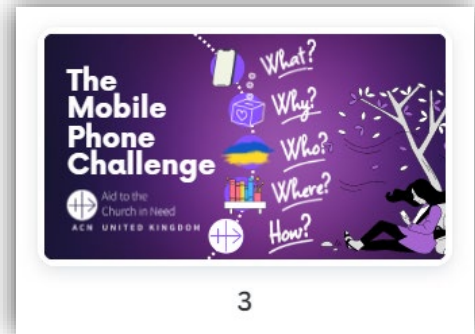


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Slide 3: Outline of presentation

The Mobile Phone Challenge. It is organised by the charity Aid to the Church in Need. This presentation/assembly/workshop/session will explain the 'What?', 'Who?' 'When?' 'Where?' and 'How?'

Each of the following five slides takes one of the questions above.



Slide 4: 'What?'

This challenge is a way to link fasting, prayer and almsgiving. We recognise that it will be difficult for some young people (and adults!) to go without their mobile phones for 24 hours, but the result is that ACN, in partnership with the Church in Ukraine, will be helping thousands of people with everything they need to survive (such as food, clothing, heating, shelter, blankets, sanitary products and medicine). ACN is dedicated to helping the 'whole person', so we also support larger items for refugee centres (cooking facilities, washing machines) as well as projects that offer spiritual and emotional support.



Young people give up their mobile phone for 24 hours and obtain sponsorship from friends and family. If as school/parish/university/family are taking this on together, please let us know. Those taking part could also encourage their families, friends and parishes to participate too. Please contact ACN for details about where to send donations.

Slide 5: Why do this?

Lent is when we consider our relationship with God and how we are living our Christian vocation in the world. We cannot comprehend how difficult it must be for people living in Ukraine; many of whom have seen atrocities, are separated from their families or are suffering bereavement. Our sacrifice enables us to think about how others are suffering and gives us space to pray for them. We are invited to live without one luxury for one day to help one community.



Slide 6: Who?

There are many sick people in Ukraine who have no one to care for them. Countless people have had to leave their homes or their country. ACN helps everyone, from children who may have been separated from their parents, to the elderly - many of whom had to be left behind due to infirmity when younger family members left for safer areas or to defend their country.



Slide 7: Where?

Anywhere! It is important that they fast from not just their mobile phones but also any other digital gadgets. The people of Ukraine repeatedly ask ACN to pray for them. Prayer is an integral part of this challenge, so we are encouraging participants to pray throughout Lent, but especially on the day they are fasting from their phones. They might decide to go to Mass, visit the school/university chapel/invite their family to pray etc on that day. Some parents may have concerns about their children being out of contact, and for this reason we suggest that they pair up, so that in the event of an emergency, they could be contacted via their partner.



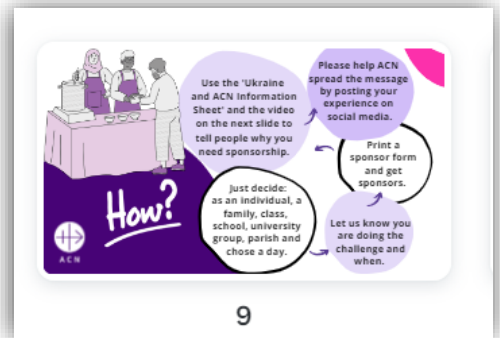
Slide 8: When?

One day during Lent. It might be worth emphasising to the young people that there are 40 days in Lent not including Sundays and, through their efforts, they will be giving *one* of those days to the people of Ukraine. It's useful to acknowledge that some people will find it difficult. St John Paul II said, "Prayer linked to sacrifice is the most powerful force in the world", so they should be encouraged that their prayers and sacrifices are real and will make a difference. If a whole school were to take on this challenge, including staff members, it might be worth organising a rota (please contact us for a grid for form classes). Consider organising a Mass or liturgy for Ukraine or regular prayer sessions. Please do keep touch with ACN and contact your local community fundraiser (details below) so that we can develop further links with your group and, with your permission, post about your efforts on our social media platforms.



Slide 9: How?

This is not a burdensome challenge to organise. It is a decision, followed by the action and then the collection of donations. We would really appreciate it if you would let us know that you are doing the challenge, and any details you can share with us. A printable sponsor form is available. If students old enough would publicise their efforts on social media, together we could make a real difference to the lives of people in Ukraine, raise awareness of the work of ACN, show the work of the Catholic Church and remind others about prayer, fasting and almsgiving during Lent.



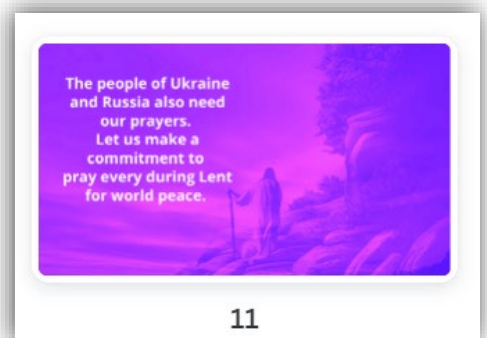
Slide10: Video

A summary of the challenge showing real people affected by the war.



Slide 11: Prayer

A reminder to pray during Lent and to make a commitment to pray every day. If you would like to receive a ACN's one-minute prayer videos during Lent, please contact us (see below).



Slide 12: Image

This may be left on as the group leaves the room.



Helpful Quotes:

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. 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, 1434
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P4B.HTM)

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has provided more than €5 million (£4.1 million) since Russian troops invaded Ukraine at the end of February 2022.

Magda Kaczmarek, ACN's Ukraine Project Head said: "The churches have opened their doors to everyone and host now thousands of internally displaced people in all dioceses."

"I would like, on behalf of all those who receive aid, as well as myself, to thank you all sincerely for your open hearts and your help. It doesn't matter whether it was a lot or a little, what is important is that you have not remained indifferent to our situation. I sincerely thank you – may God bless you." (Bishop Pavlo Honcharuk of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Kharkiv-Zaporizhzhia thanked ACN for all the help it is providing in Ukraine).

"Prayer linked to sacrifice is the most powerful force in the world." St John Paul II

Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, Apostolic Nuncio to Ukraine, spoke to ACN's Maria Lozano, Head of Press of ACN International, on 9 March 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.

Why Fast?

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 being sponsored, we can do something concrete for the people of Ukraine.

Contacts:

If you would like to join our free Youth Membership Programme, and/or our work in schools, parishes and universities, to obtain further resources, videos and information about Ukraine and receive access to the two liturgies written for schools for Ukraine/Easter, please contact:

Teresa Kehoe, teresa.kehoe@acnuk.org :
Archdiocese of Birmingham, Dioceses of Nottingham, Hallam and Northampton.

Rachel Buckley, rachel.buckley@acnuk.org :
Dioceses of Liverpool, Shrewsbury, Salford and Wrexham.

Jerry Lohan, jerry.lohan@acnuk.org :
Archdiocese of Southwark, Diocese of Arundel & Brighton and Portsmouth.

Steve Riedlinger, steve.riedlinger@acnuk.org :
Dioceses of Clifton, Plymouth and Menevia and Archdiocese of Cardiff.

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Archdiocese of Westminster, Dioceses of Brentwood and Northampton.

William More, william.more@acnuk.org :
Archdioceses of Glasgow and St Andrews & Edinburgh and Dioceses Aberdeen, Argyll & Isles, Dunkeld, Galloway, Motherwell, Paisley.

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