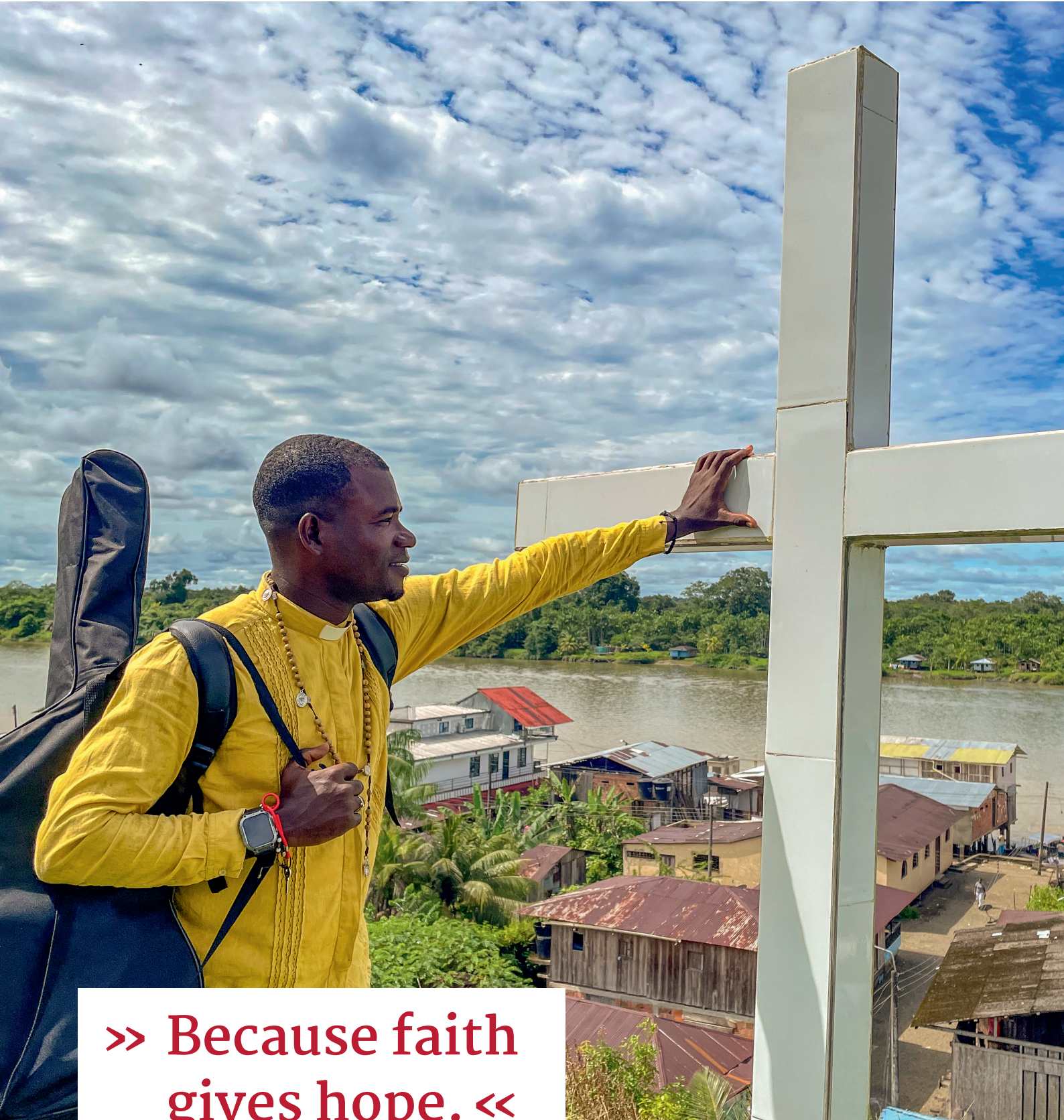




Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN INTERNATIONAL



»» Because faith
gives hope. ««

Activity Report 2025

PONTIFICAL
FOUNDATION



Imprint

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ACN Aid to the Church in Need International

Title: Father Javier Arle in the Colombian
jungle in the Apostolic Vicariate of Guapi.



Dear friends,

The first Apostolic Letter published by Pope Leo XIV bears the beautiful title “I Have Loved You” and focuses on love for the poor. The Pope proclaims the important message that God Himself has a preferential love for the poor, and therefore one cannot love God without also loving the poor. For God’s love depends on our passing it on to people in need.

This is the mission to which ACN is committed. The Church is in need wherever love is absent and harsh words are used to fuel hatred, and wherever, in matters great and small, life is neglected and death is advanced instead. In such circumstances, lasting peace becomes unattainable, as we are witnessing so painfully in the world today. For the peace of God can only flourish where love for the poor is nurtured. The first kind of peace, therefore, is the peace we have with God. All other forms of peace are only reflections of this one peace with God.

In this sense, the help offered by ACN is truly a peace initiative in the fullest sense of the term, as this annual report once again demonstrates in a most encouraging way. However, ACN can only fulfil its great responsibility thanks to many benefactors who support our work both spiritually and financially.

As the new President of ACN, I sincerely wish to thank all those whose contributions enable ACN to share God’s love for the poor, especially with impoverished Christians and churches in today’s world. To this end, I ask for the blessing of the living God and for Him to strengthen our love for the poor.

K. Cardinal Koch



Kurt Cardinal Koch,
*President of the Pontifical
Foundation Aid to the Church
in Need.*

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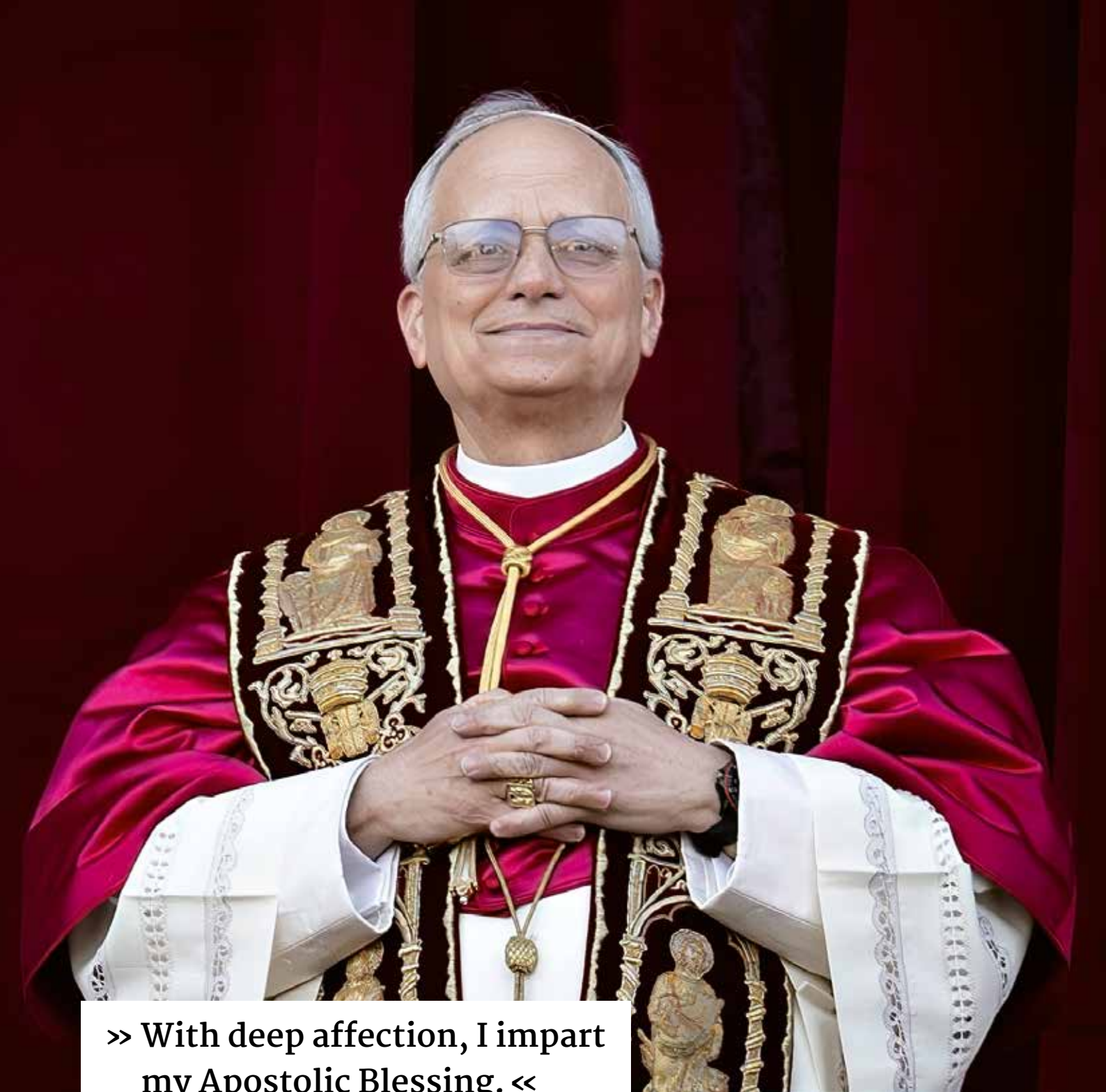
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Cover back Aid to the Church in Need worldwide – contacts



**>> With deep affection, I impart
my Apostolic Blessing. <<**

Dear friends, I thank each of you for this work of solidarity. Let us not grow weary in doing good (cf. Gal 6:9), for your service bears fruit in countless lives and glorifies our Father in heaven.

Pope Leo XIV, speaking to an international delegation of ACN at a private audience on 10 October 2025 in Rome.

As a Pontifical Foundation,
Aid to the Church in Need has
the mandate to act on behalf
of the Church.





About us and our mission.

Get to know Aid to the Church in Need. Our mission, what we are committed to and our funding priorities in 2025.

» I am so grateful for all that you are doing to help our suffering people. May our Lord bless you, and our brothers and sisters in Christ. «

Sr Annie Demerjian,
project partner, Syria





Aid to the Church in Need was initially established in 1947 as a Catholic aid organisation for war refugees and has been recognised as a Pontifical Foundation since 2011. Under our guiding principle of “information, prayer and action”, today we are committed to helping Christians across the globe, wherever they are persecuted or oppressed or suffer material hardships.

In addition, we are committed to religious freedom and reconciliation across all faiths. Our foundation does not accept any support from government agencies. However, thanks to hundreds of thou-

sands of benefactors who donate to Aid to the Church in Need, we are now active worldwide with an annual donation volume of 145.8 million euros. This story shows, once again, how practical charity arises from proclaiming one’s faith.



In many countries, Christians are discriminated against and persecuted.

>> Whatever you did for the least of my brothers and sisters, you did for me. << Mt 25:40

From its beginnings, the Church has always provided care for those in need. However, the Church often finds itself in urgent need of assistance, particularly in developing countries and in states where it faces displacement, persecution or disasters.

According to our calculations, 64.7% of the world's population live in countries

where their faith cannot be practised freely, and half of the world's population live in countries with outright persecution. The fundamental right to religious freedom is not guaranteed in at least 62 countries. Christians bear a disproportionate brunt of the impact.

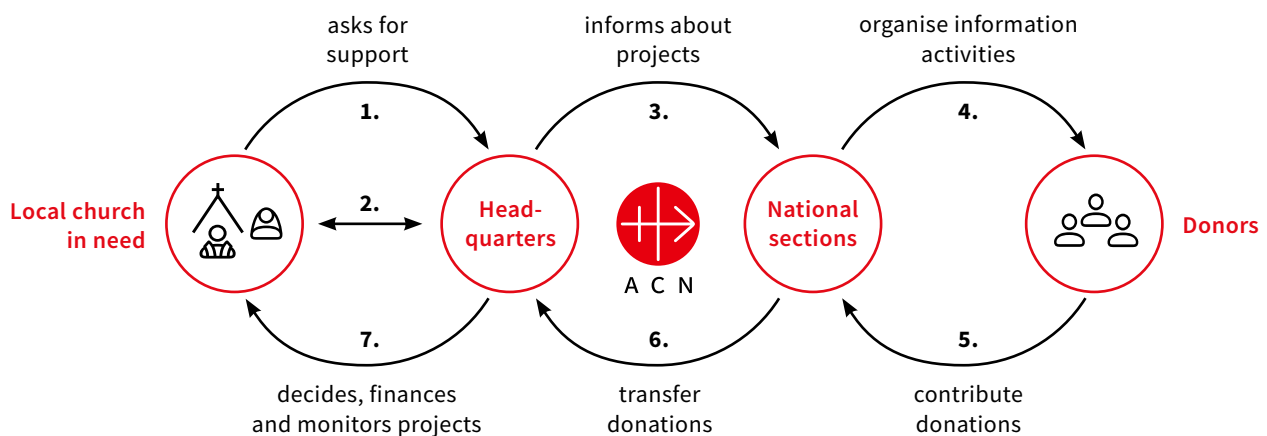
Where Church life and pastoral care for the faithful are difficult to maintain on their own, the Church is dependent on donations from abroad. Unlike most charities working to alleviate social needs, Aid to the Church in Need – formerly known as Church in Need – concentrates on supporting pastoral care.

For 79 years, our professionalism, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency have ensured that our benefactors' donations have the best possible effect precisely where they are most urgently needed: among local churches in need.





This is how donations become concrete aid for Christians in need.



1. The need for project aid arises in a place where the Church suffers from poverty or persecution. The diocese or parish forwards the project to ACN (Aid to the Church in Need) headquarters in Königstein, Germany, with a recommendation from the local bishop or supervisor.

2. The head of section for the region analyses the project. If necessary, he or she then asks for further information. Within a maximum of three months,

ACN headquarters confirms whether the project has been approved or not.

3. ACN headquarters informs the national offices about projects for local fundraising and financing through benefactors.

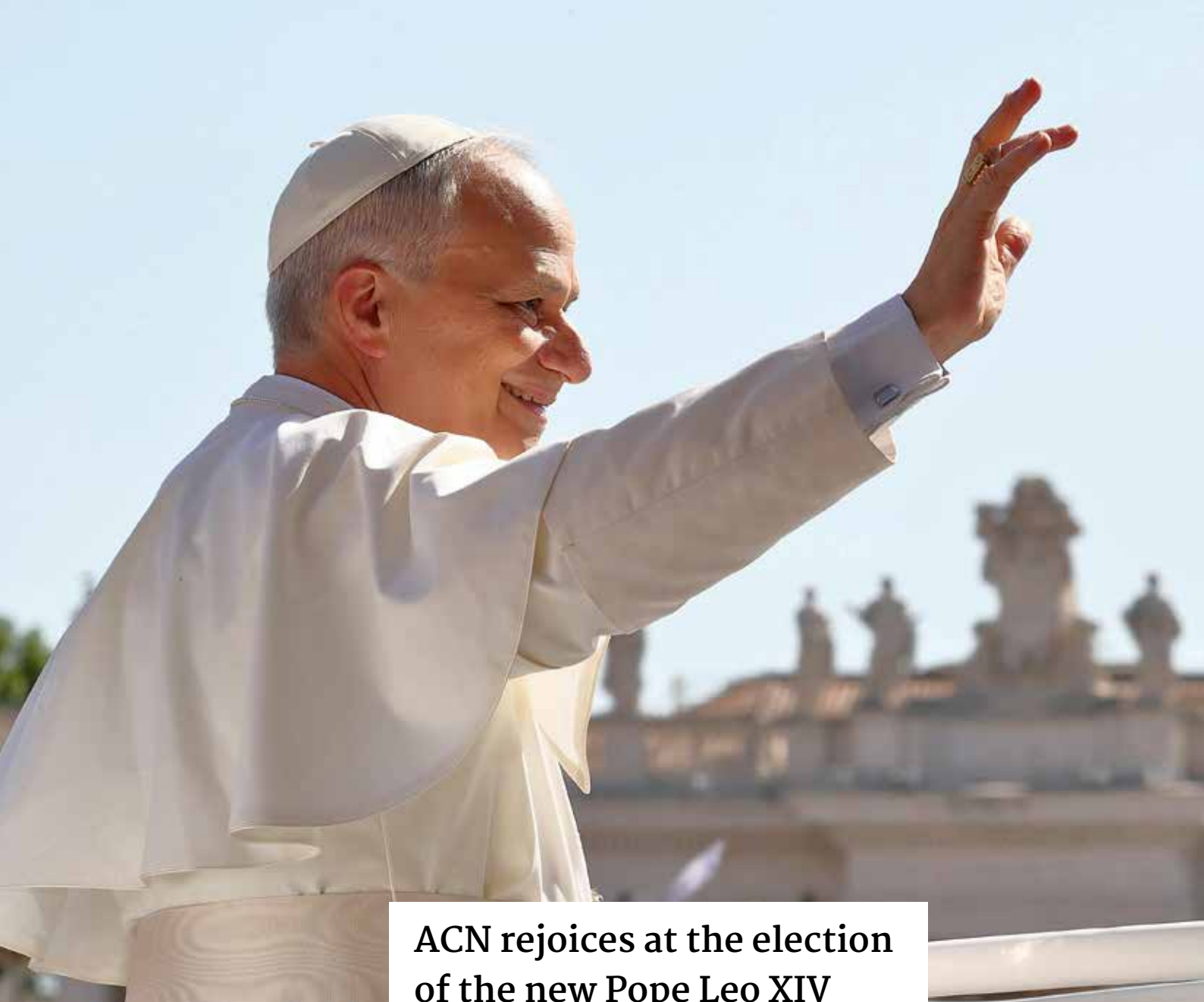
4. The offices organise information and awareness-raising measures so that donors support the projects.

5. Benefactors feel called on to join in and donate.

6. ACN's national offices transfer the charitable contributions to ACN headquarters.

7. ACN decides on projects and their funding, tracks and monitors their implementation.

Between one and six months after the approval of the project has been granted, ACN assumes the costs for the approved project. In emergencies, ACN headquarters provides immediate funds.



ACN rejoices at the election of the new Pope Leo XIV



The current Pope during his time as a bishop in Peru.

With great joy and gratitude, our charity welcomed the election of Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost as the new Pope Leo XIV during the reporting year. ACN had already come to know him during his time as a bishop in Peru, and was able to work fruitfully with him even then. We are especially pleased that the new Pope is a missionary who is familiar with the needs of the Church in the poorest regions.

By chance, during the May conclave, a large pilgrimage group from our organisation was in Rome and was able to share in all the excitement and joy on-

site until the moment the announcement was finally made: Habemus Papam!

Pope Leo XIV is already the eighth Pope since the founding of our organisation in 1947. From the very beginning, we have shared a close relationship with each Pope, a bond that was formalised in 2011 by Pope Benedict XVI when he elevated ACN to the status of a Pontifical Foundation. The election of Pope Leo XIV delighted us, especially because he is already familiar with the work and mission of ACN. During his time as Bishop of Chiclayo in Peru from 2015 to 2023, ACN supported him in many aid projects, including

Private audience of an international ACN delegation with Pope Leo XIV on 10 October 2025 in Rome.



the formation of seminarians, providing subsistence aid for priests and religious, and assisting missionaries in the remote regions of the Andes. We were also able to continue our cooperation more recently, after Pope Francis brought him to the Roman Curia.

Our organisation eagerly anticipates fruitful collaboration in the future. Already in October, the new Pope received a delegation from ACN on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Religious Freedom Report. On that occasion, he thanked the benefactors of our organisation and bestowed upon them the apostolic blessing. He told us: “Wherever ACN rebuilds a chapel, supports

a religious sister or provides a radio station or a vehicle, it strengthens the life of the Church as well as the spiritual and moral fabric of society.”

That same month, Pope Leo XIV also thanked children around the world on social media who took part in our traditional campaign “One Million Children Praying the Rosary” and prayed for peace.

ACN looks forward to continuing its service to the universal Church and its cooperation with Pope Leo XIV, strengthening the Church wherever it is persecuted and most urgently in need of help.



Father Anton Lässer, the International Ecclesiastical Assistant of ACN, with Pope Leo XIV.



In 2025, we were able to support 5,368 projects worldwide.

In 2025, we received 6,860 applications for aid from all over the world. Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, the level of donations we received totalled 145.8 million euros. Using this, together with 2 million euros in reserves from previous years, we were able to finance activities totalling 147.8 million euros. As can be seen in the diagram, by far the largest share of our expenditure was devoted to mission-related expenses, i.e. concrete project work, information and prayer activities.

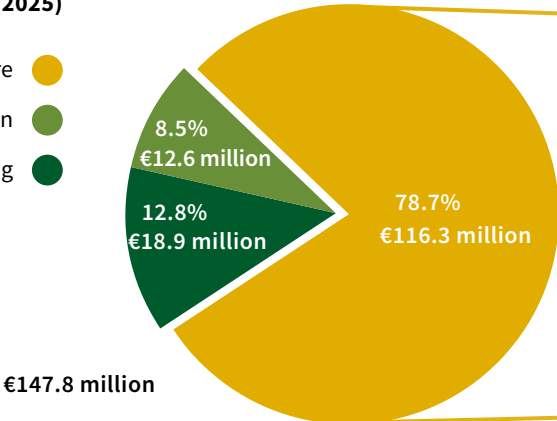
As always, the proportion of necessary administrative and fundraising costs was comparatively low, so that as many funds as

possible could reach local Christians. In 2025, we supported a total of 5,368 projects in 141 countries with approximately 97 million euros. 19.3 million euros were again spent worldwide on proclaiming the faith, providing information and advocating for disadvantaged and persecuted Christians.

At 31.3 million euros, or 21.5% of our revenues, bequests made up a significant part of our support for the Church in 2025. Together with our brothers and sisters in need, we therefore not only thank our living benefactors, but also gratefully remember those who support us beyond death.

Total expenditure (2025)

- Mission-related expenditure ●
- Administration ●
- Donor relations and fundraising ●





Facts and figures*

Offices in **23** countries

363,176 donors worldwide

145,811,625 euros in donations and legacies

Project partners in **141** countries

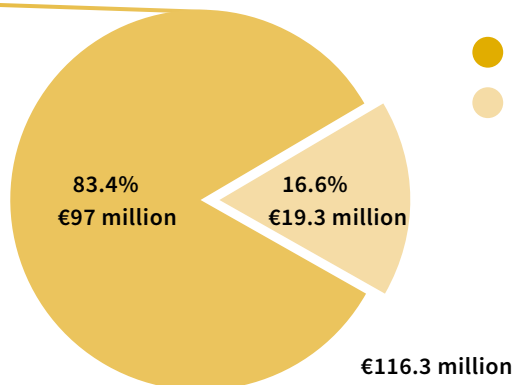
5,368 projects supported worldwide

78.7 percent of the funds used are allocated to mission-related expenditure

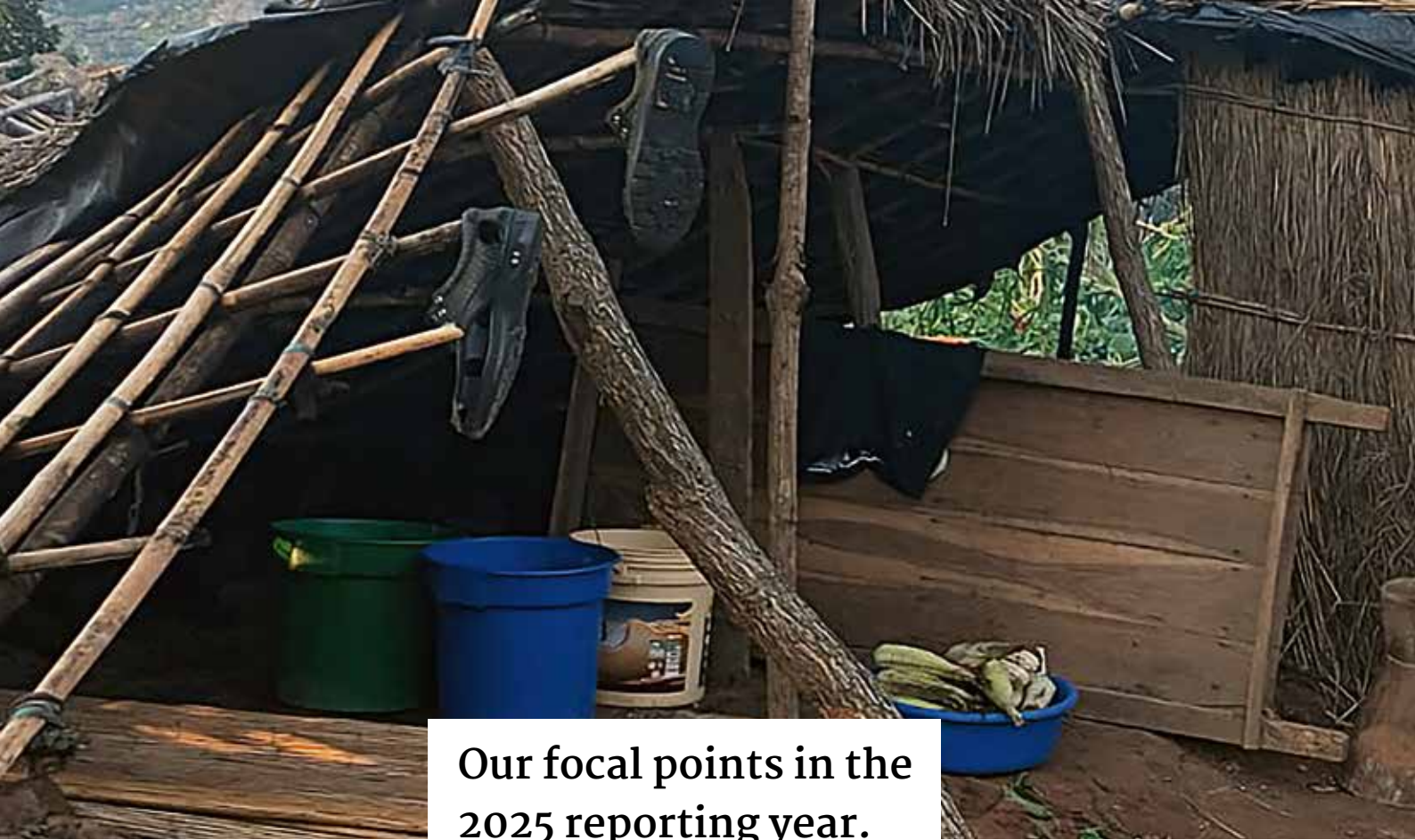
All financial figures are audited by the independent auditing firm PwC.

Mission-related expenditure (2025)

- Project work (→ p. 14ff.)
- Information, proclamation of faith and advocacy for discriminated and persecuted Christians (→ p. 26ff.)



*Valid as of 2025



Our focal points in the 2025 reporting year.









Our aid for the training of priests, religious (15%), and the laity (12.1%), which has always been among our priorities, accounted for a total of 27.1% in 2025, i.e. more than a quarter of our total aid.

At 25.1%, projects for the construction, reconstruction or renovation of churches and church buildings also accounted for more than a quarter of our funding.

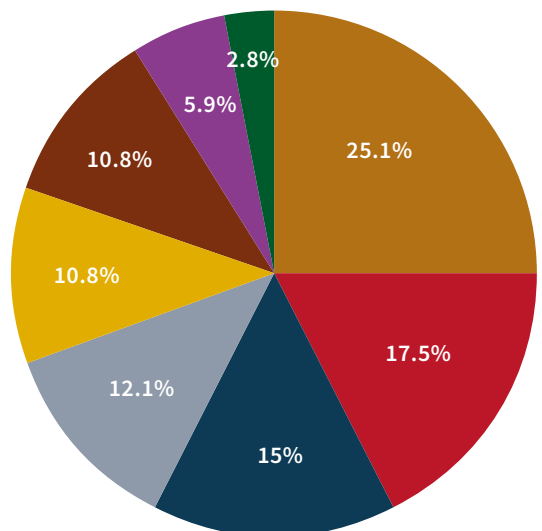
By providing Mass stipends for priests (17.5%) and subsistence aid for religious sisters (5.9%), we were once again able to help secure their livelihoods in 2025. A total of 23.4% of our funding was earmarked for these projects.

In addition, we are active in acute crises with emergency aid measures for the suffering population. In 2025, such emergency aid in areas where Christians are threatened by violence and displacement accounted for 10.8% of our total aid.

Aid granted by type of help (2025)

- Construction and reconstruction (→ p. 22) 
- Mass stipends (→ p. 16) 
- Training of priests and religious (→ p. 18) 
- Faith formation of laity (→ p. 21) 
- Emergency relief aid (→ p. 24) 
- Means of transport for pastoral care (→ p. 23) 
- Subsistence aid for religious sisters (→ p. 20) 
- Distribution of Bibles, religious books and media (→ p. 25) 

€97 million





» The starting point for our aid is a close dialogue with local churches. «

At 34.5%, Africa was once again the priority region for our aid projects in 2025. Especially in areas where Islamist terrorism is spreading and Christians are victims of persecution and displacement, we have increased our aid, for example in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger by 30% compared to the previous year. At the same time, the Church in Africa is growing dynamically and needs support in order to fulfil its mission.

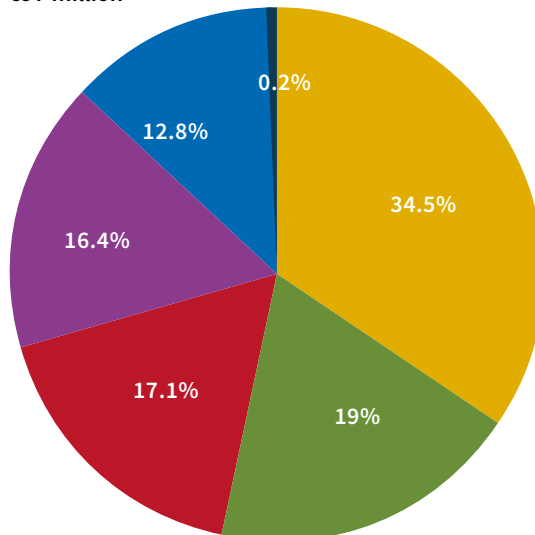
19% of our aid was devoted to Asia (including 0.9% for Oceania), where Christians form a minority in most countries and are discriminated against or even persecuted. India was the country that received the most aid from us worldwide in 2025.

The funding volume for the Middle East, where the situation has deteriorated massively, amounted to 17.1% of our total aid. In addition to Syria and Lebanon, suffering Christians in the Holy Land were a focal point in 2025. Through emergency aid and the strengthening of pastoral care, we aim to help secure the survival of Christian communities and counteract the massive exodus of Christians.

Latin America accounted for 16.4% of our total aid, as rural exodus, migration, sects and governments hostile to the Church present major challenges in the region.

In 2025, we once again received many requests for support from Ukraine. In the midst of the war, the Church supports people, most of whom are severely traumatised, who seek help in parishes and monasteries. Therefore, in 2025, 6.9% of our funds went to Ukraine. Overall, our aid for Europe amounted to 12.8%.

€97 million



Aid granted by region (2025)

- Africa (→ p. 48 ff.)
- Asia/Oceania (→ p. 76 ff.)
- Middle East (→ p. 60 ff.)
- Latin America (→ p. 36 ff.)
- Europe (→ p. 68 ff.)
- Other



Our task areas











Regardless of whether we are providing subsistence aid for priests and religious sisters, Mass stipends, training for seminarians, emergency aid during war and natural catastrophes or publicity work for the propagation of the faith, Aid to the Church in Need's task areas are as diverse as they are urgent. We lend assistance and fund activities where Christians are persecuted and the Church suffers hardships.



Church in Need – our name says it all

Over the 79 years since its foundation, Aid to the Church in Need has developed into an aid organisation with a broad range of tasks. Today we can rightly claim: our name is our mission. We now support some 5,300 church projects each year in 141 countries – many of these over the long term. In this way, we frequently remain in crisis areas much longer than other aid organisations.

Of course, this requires not only personnel and logistical resources, but also the necessary financial means. Only through the donations of over 363,000 benefactors throughout the world are we able to fulfil and successfully drive our mission of providing pastoral assistance.

-  Mass stipends (→ p. 16)
-  Training of priests and religious, safeguarding (→ p. 18)
-  Subsistence aid for religious sisters (→ p. 20)
-  Faith formation of laity (→ p. 21)
-  Construction and reconstruction of church facilities (→ p. 22)
-  Means of transport for pastoral care (→ p. 23)
-  Emergency assistance in cases of war, displacement, violence and natural catastrophes (→ p. 24)
-  Distribution of Bibles, religious books and media (→ p. 25)
-  Advocacy, public relations (→ p. 26)
-  Media support for the propagation of faith (→ p. 32)



» Putting the plight of the people before God is part of our mission. «

Fr Anton Lässer, CP, Ecclesiastical Assistant of ACN International

Helping persecuted Christians and the needy Church is of the utmost priority to Aid to the Church in Need. Whether through Mass stipends, the funding of priestly formation, subsistence aid for religious sisters or the faith formation of the laity – we sponsor thousands of brothers and sisters every year so that they, in turn, can support the faithful.




Thanks to vehicle donations, believers in the remote areas of Mozambique can also be reached.



P. Gabriel Romanelli in the Catholic parish in Gaza.



Mass stipends

 In many regions, the faithful are so poor that they cannot support their priests. Even the bishops often lack the financial means to provide their priests with a regular wage. In these areas, Mass stipends are often their only means of existential help. Mass stipends are monetary donations connected with the request to celebrate Holy Mass for the deceased and the sick or other concerns of the benefactors.

In 2025, a total of 1,887,721 Holy Masses were celebrated in the intentions of our benefactors. In this way, we were able to support a total of 40,207 priests – on average, about every tenth priest – worldwide.

The distribution of the Mass stipends reflects the conditions of poverty on the continents. In the reporting year, 44% of the Mass stipends went to Africa, 28%

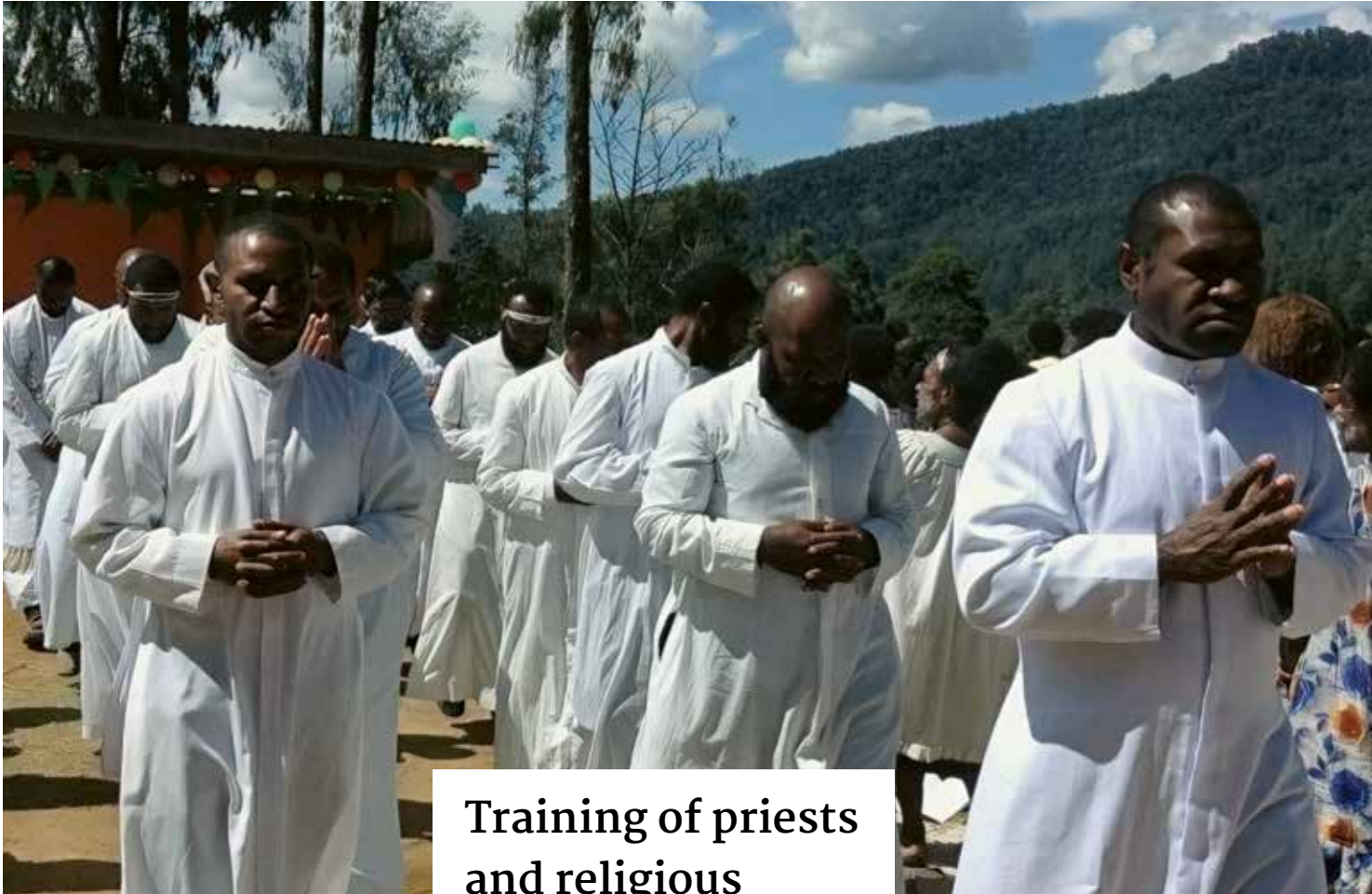
» For some priests, Mass stipends are the only source of income. «

to Asia and the Near and Middle East, 19% to Latin America and 9% to Central and Eastern Europe. By focusing Mass prayers on deceased or sick relatives, on people who are experiencing life crises or on certain issues our donors may be facing, they take part in the Eucharistic celebration in a very special way. With this kind of donation, many of our benefactors recognise the profound spiritual purpose of uniting their charity with Church prayers.

As a basic principle, 100% of the Mass stipends are forwarded to the intended recipients. On average, a Holy Mass is celebrated every 17 seconds for the intentions of ACN benefactors somewhere in the world.




Seminarians at St Josaphat Seminary in Ivano-Frankivsk in Ukraine.



Training of priests and religious

Seminarians of the Diocese of Wabag in Papua New Guinea.

 The theological training and qualification of seminarians has always been an important focus of our aid. After all, future priests will ultimately be spiritual pillars and safeguard sacramental life. Therefore, our educational assistance mainly flows into countries where the suitable and continuous training of future priests is endangered or is not adequately ensured due to poverty, war or persecution. Thanks to the

generosity of our benefactors, we were able to fund a total of 13,368 seminarians in 2025. The continuing education of God's servants is also an important concern to us. During the reporting year, we sponsored the continuing education of priests, who themselves will train seminarians and thus maintain the qualitative level of priestly formation in their home countries over the long term.

» Scholarships are the seed which we hope will yield ripe fruit for the Church. «

Training of sisters of the Society of Our Lady of Fatima in north-eastern India.



In 2025, we were also able to award 357 scholarships to priests who, for example, are pursuing a doctorate or an additional course of study. In terms of continental distribution, 46.2% of our scholarship holders came from Africa, 39.8 % from Asia, 12.3% from Latin America and 1.7% from Eastern Europe.



Safeguarding

ACN supports the Church in its abuse prevention efforts. For example, we promote courses around the world on the topic of safeguarding, in which priests and religious are trained to recognise and prevent sexual abuse and other forms of abuse of minors and wards.

To this end, we work closely with the leading Institute of Anthropology – Interdisciplinary Studies on Human Dignity and Care (IADC) at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, among others. A main focus of these courses is the detection of abuse, so that it can be identified as early as possible. The aim is to learn effective measures for prevention and to apply various strategies for dealing with suspected cases.

Our project partners only receive aid from ACN after submitting a written commitment to safeguarding. This aid is withdrawn if possible or actual cases of abuse are not adequately pursued.

Safeguarding requirements also apply to ACN’s own employees, who are required to comply with ACN’s safeguarding guidelines and also receive regular training on them.

The full Safeguarding Policy can be viewed at www.acninternational.org/safeguarding.



» We are working worldwide to improve the protection of minors and other wards. «

Regina Lynch, Executive President

Pastoral work with children and young people in the Dominican Republic.



Pastoral work with children in the Central African Republic.



Subsistence aid for religious sisters

Sisters of an indigenous parish during construction of a community hall in San José del Guaviare in Colombia.



Carmelite sisters in the Archdiocese of Kananga in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Especially in areas with a great shortage of priests, sisters literally look after everyone in the name of God: children and adults, orphans, the sick and dying, those who have failed and those who are searching, as well as traumatised people. These sisters often work under the most difficult conditions. Contemplative sisters, on the other hand, help the suffering through their prayers.

In 2025 alone, with 883 projects, we supported religious sisters from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe in their valuable work.


>> We recognise a successful aid project when people are once again free to live their faith. <<

Marco Mencaglia, Director of Projects



Faith formation of laity

Pastoral accompaniment of Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic.

 To enable young people the opportunity to deepen their faith, we support catechetical courses, Sunday schools and pastoral programmes for children, young people and adults. In order to sustain church life in areas with too few priests, we place particular emphasis on training catechists. Through a basic course in theology, women and men are empowered to share their faith and to prepare the faithful for the reception of the sacraments.

In 2025, we supported the faith formation of the laity in various ways in 847 projects.

» It is our duty to support our brothers and sisters in faith. «

Dolores Soroa Suárez de Tangil, benefactress, Spain



Pastoral meeting of a small Christian community in north-eastern India.



» Faith and a good organisation together can move mountains. «

Ferdinand Habsburg, Secretary General

Supporting the local Church is the key task of Aid to the Church in Need. This also includes measures such as the construction, reconstruction or maintenance of church buildings. We also finance vehicles for priests, sisters and catechists so that they can reach the faithful even in the most isolated areas. Wherever believers are victims of displacement, violence and persecution, we provide emergency relief to alleviate the worst suffering.



Construction and reconstruction of church facilities



Especially in crisis areas, churches and ecclesiastical institutions are often destroyed by violence. We support reconstruction in these areas, as the Church is the centre of the life of faith and a sign of hope.

Where the Church is growing, for example in Africa, Asia and Latin America, help is often needed to build up a new infrastructure. Therefore, Aid to the Church in Need provides assistance for

the construction and reconstruction of churches, monasteries, pastoral centres and mission stations, thereby safeguarding and promoting the pastoral work of the Catholic Church worldwide. We know from 79 years of experience: in slums, even the smallest chapel can offer people a spiritual home.

737 such buildings were constructed or repaired with our help in 2025 alone.



Means of transport for pastoral care

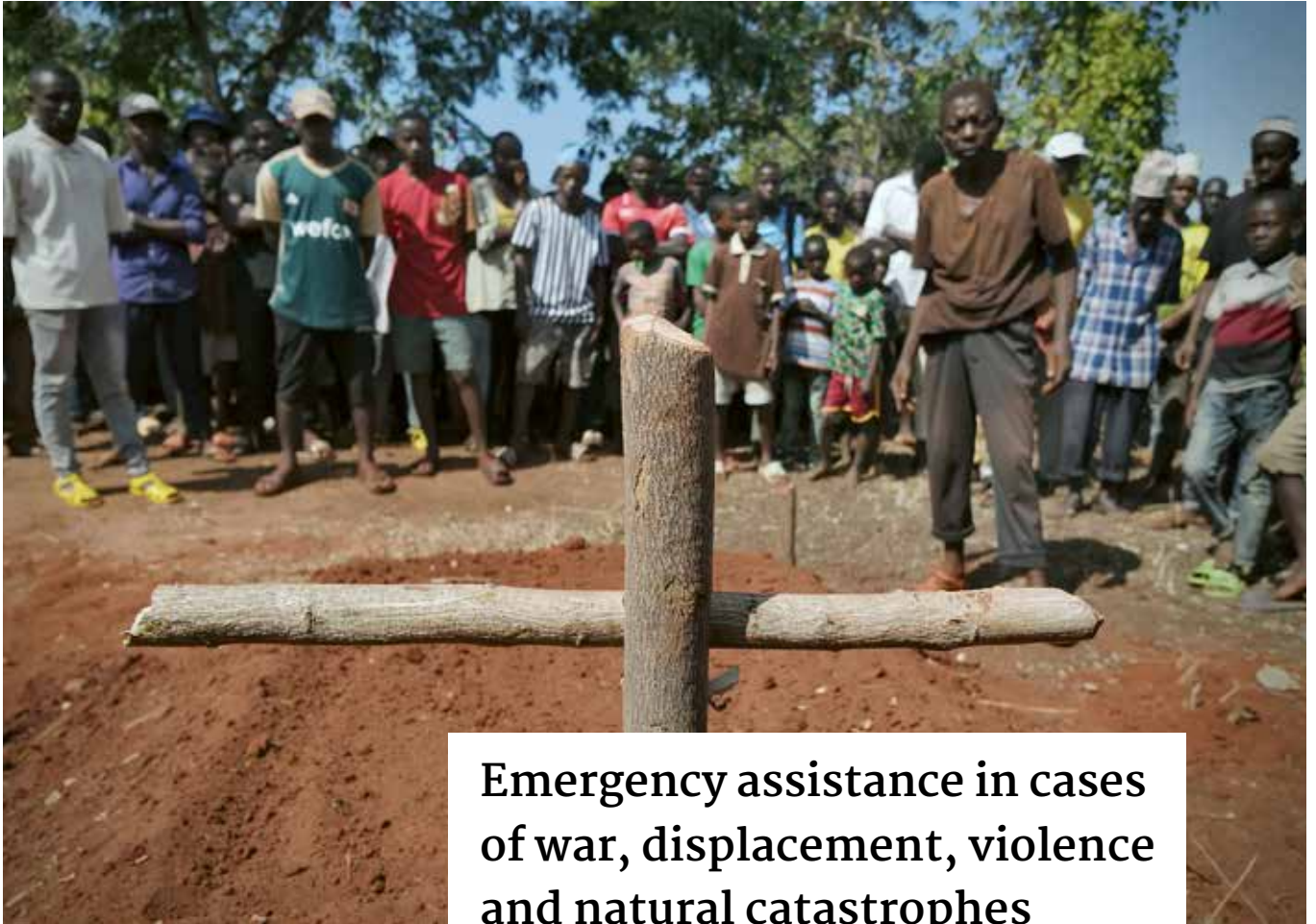
As early as the beginning of the 1950s, ACN sent chapel trucks as mobile churches to displaced persons. Today, ensuring that assistance and pastoral care are available to areas in need continues to be an important concern of Aid to the Church in Need.

We receive applications to fund vehicular purchases from every continent. Whether trucks, cars, motorcycles, bicycles, boats, or in particularly difficult mountain regions, mules – in 2025 alone, 493 motor vehicles, 339 motorcycles, five bicycles and eight boats were financed with our help.




In the Apostolic Vicariate of Guapi on the Pacific coast of Colombia, a motorboat enables pastoral care.

Vehicle for the pastoral journeys of Bishop Aurelio Gazzera in the Central African Republic.



Community during a funeral service in Tanzania.

Emergency assistance in cases of war, displacement, violence and natural catastrophes

 Emergency assistance for refugees is deeply rooted in the history of our relief organisation. At the beginning of the 1950s, ACN was already doing pioneering work in supporting displaced persons.

The bitter truth is: there are more refugees worldwide today than ever before. 117.3 million people are currently fleeing war and violence around the world; of these, several million alone are in the Middle East.

Our great financial commitment to refugees and displaced persons in the Middle East is not only a response to their

pressing need, but also a contribution to stop the wave of Christian emigration and thus ensure the continuity of Christianity in the region (for more information, see the Middle East chapter starting on page 60).

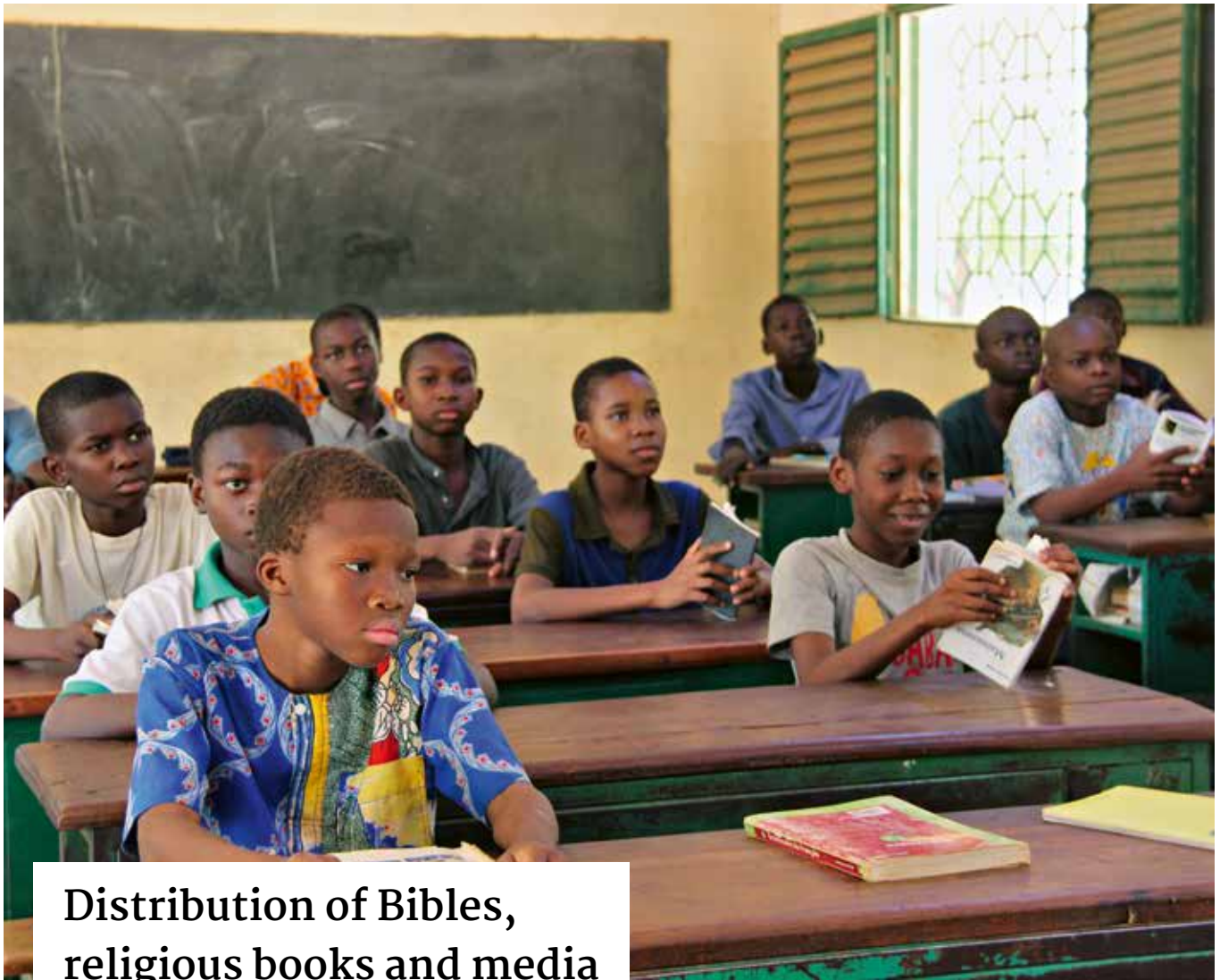
We also support Christians who have been persecuted and expelled for their beliefs in many other parts of the world. One key area of focus is the Sahel region in Africa, where Islamist terrorist groups are perpetrating acts of violence against the Christian minority, we stand by those who have not been able to save anything but their bare lives.

>> For us, the greatest conceivable catastrophe would be not to act. <<

Guido Gröning,
Director of Finance

A young Christian after an attack at his workplace in Pakistan in March 2025.





Distribution of Bibles, religious books and media



“Go out into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to all creation,” Jesus said. Aid to the Church in Need takes this assignment literally. For instance, since 1979, our organisation has been the publisher and global supplier of the Child’s Bible, which has been translated into 195 languages and has already been distributed 51.8 million times.

Often in poor countries, the Child’s Bible is the first book that children receive in their own language; frequently, it is the



only picture book that the little ones can get hold of in their entire lives.

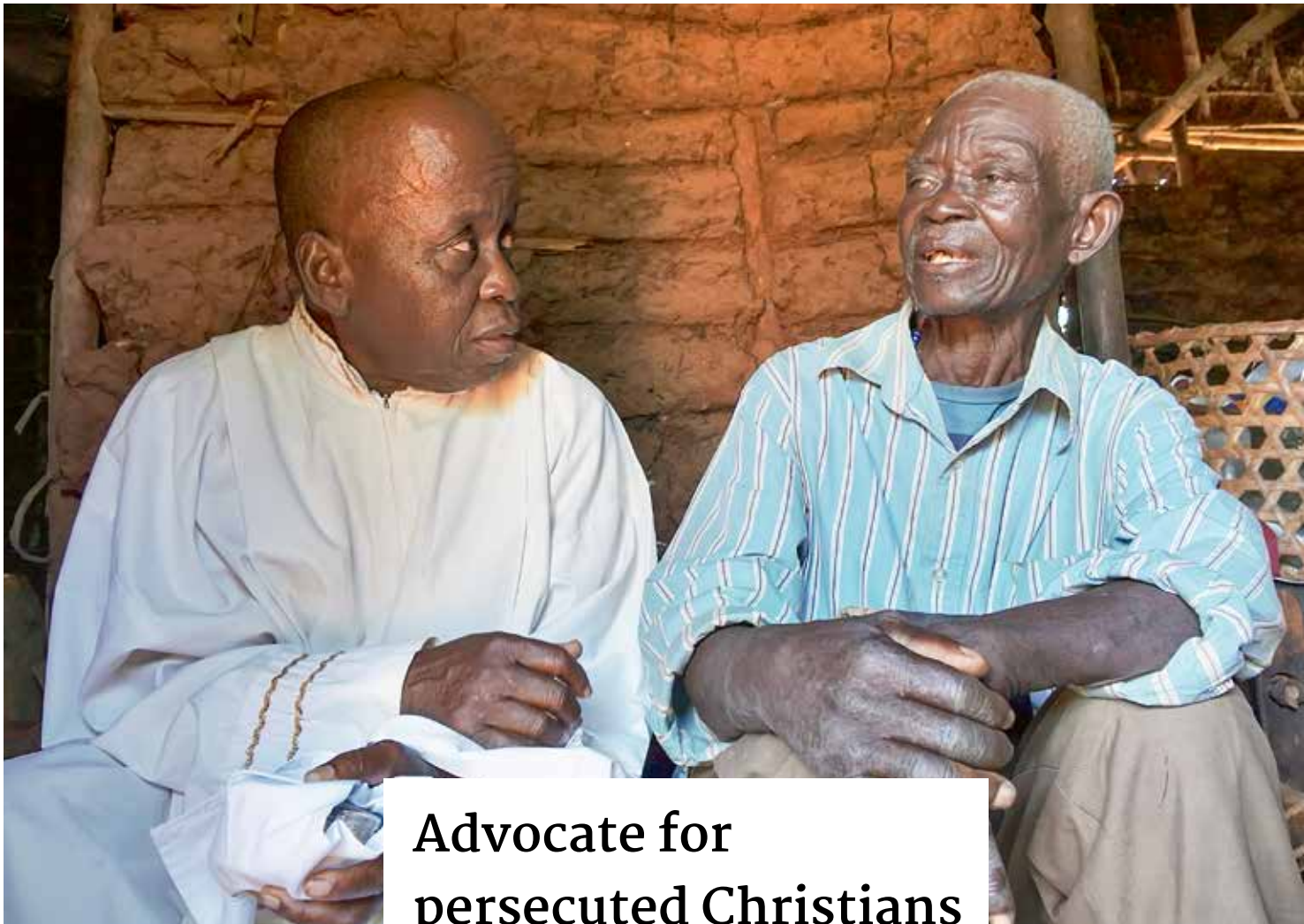
In 2025 alone, 520,000 religious books were produced and distributed with the help of ACN. In addition, Aid to the Church in Need promotes YOUCAT, the illustrated Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church, which is available in 60 languages. Since 2016, DOCAT, a modern translation of the social teachings and doctrine of the Catholic Church, has also been published. You can find more information about YOUCAT and DOCAT on page 33.

A girl from the Apostolic Vicariate of Nepal reading a donated YOUCAT.

At the minor seminary of Pabré in Burkina Faso – the first seminary of its kind in the country.

>> For some poor children, the Child’s Bible is the only picture book that they can get hold of. <<

Fr Anton Lässer, CP,
Ecclesiastical Assistant
of ACN International



Advocate for persecuted Christians

» We give persecuted Christians a voice. «

Mark von Riedemann,
Director of Public Affairs
and Religious Freedom
at ACN

 Through global project work, ACN reaches millions of Christians all over the world. However, more is needed to improve their political environment. ACN Advocacy focuses particularly on the exchange of information and organises visits by bishops, priests and religious sisters to Washington, D.C., London, Brussels and Geneva, where they meet with political decision-makers. In this way, politicians receive first-hand reports on the situation of Christians in conflict areas where the government has collapsed and from which the United Nations, diplomats and NGOs have withdrawn for security reasons. The Catholic Church is often the only institution still providing aid and information in these areas.

As an advocate of charity for Christians in need, ACN operates independently of government subsidies and influence.

In many cases, this allows us to raise awareness among political decision-makers about the growing persecution of Christians worldwide and explain the background behind the issues. A large part of this commitment in 2025 was once again devoted to Pakistan, where religious minorities – including Christians – suffer from discrimination and persecution. During the reporting year, ACN continued its information campaigns in EU member states and drew particular attention to the problem of forced conversions to Islam, as well as the abuse of blasphemy laws. Another key country for our work was once again Nigeria. In 2026, ACN plans to continue monitoring developments, with a focus on the return of internally displaced persons to their ancestral home regions. A new area of action is drawing attention to attacks on Church leaders by drug cartels, especially in Mexico.

A catechist in conversation with a believer.

Presentation of the report “Religious Freedom in the World” in Berlin (from left to right): Florian Ripka (ACN Germany), Bishop Wilfred Anagbe (Nigeria), Thomas Rachel (German Federal Government Commissioner for Freedom of Religion or Belief) and Ferdinand Habsburg (Secretary General, ACN International).



Top: Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Regina Lynch, Executive President of ACN International, at the presentation of the Religious Freedom Report 2025 in Rome.

Bottom: Presentation of the report “Religious Freedom in the World” as part of the Conference on Human Dignity at the European Parliament in Brussels.



January

ACN Advocacy accompanied Sister Hanan Yousef, who spoke before the European Parliament about the recent armed conflicts in Syria and Israel and their impacts on Lebanon.

February

At the invitation of ACN, the author Father Omar Sotelo took part in a panel discussion at the International Religious Freedom Summit in Washington, as well as in several meetings with ambassadors of the USA and the Organisation of American States (OAS). At these events, the author drew strong attention to the attacks by cartels on Church workers in Mexico.

March/April

At ACN’s initiative, the Bishop of Makurdi reported before the United States Congress on the situation of Christians in Nigeria and gave presentations in the British Parliament organised by our national office there.

May

ACN took part in a panel discussion at the World Law Congress in Santo Domingo. The main topic was the impact of electoral laws in increasingly autocratic regimes that restrict citizens’ voting rights based on their faith.

June

ACN was represented at the opening panel of the Religious Liberty Summit of the Notre Dame Law School in Dublin and addressed European and American judges. The topic was the gradual loss of freedom of thought, conscience and religion in autocratic regimes.

September

ACN participated in an expert meeting in Washington, D.C. on the topic of freedom of religion and expression. Together with professors from the Catholic University of America and Catholic representatives at the United Nations, discussions focused on how to bring more attention to these issues and improve their media coverage.

October

ACN organised a one-week visit programme for Bishop Ramón Castro from Mexico, including bilateral meetings within U.S. government institutions, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Organisation of American States. On the occasion of the publication of the report “Religious Freedom in the World 2025”, ACN also organised a conference in Rome. The keynote speaker was the Cardinal Secretary of State of Vatican City, Pietro Parolin.

December

Following the European Prayer Breakfast with over 200 participants, ACN presented reflections on how policy can be shaped with regard to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.



Faith needs freedom: the Religious Freedom Report

On 21 October 2025, ACN presented the new report “Religious Freedom in the World”, which is published every two years. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of this publication, Pope Leo XIV received an international ACN delegation. In his address, he emphasised: “Religious freedom is not merely a legal right or a privilege granted to us by governments; it is a foundational condition that makes authentic reconciliation possible. When this freedom is denied, the human person is deprived of the capacity to respond freely to the call of truth. What follows is a slow disintegration of the ethical and spiritual bonds that sustain communities.”

The report analyses the state of religious freedom in 196 countries and concludes that the situation has significantly worsened during the reporting period. According to the report, two-thirds of humanity – more than 5.4 billion people – live in countries where full

religious freedom is not guaranteed. In 62 countries, serious violations of religious freedom are even recorded.

Autocratic governments are identified as the main actors in suppressing religious freedom, using systematic strategies to control religious life or silence religious minorities. For example, authorities in China, North Korea and Nicaragua employ mass surveillance technologies, digital censorship, restrictive laws and arbitrary arrests to suppress religious communities.

In addition, Islamist extremism continued to spread during the reporting year, with the Sahel region developing into a hotspot and hub of jihadist violence.

Meanwhile, in Asia, ethno-religious nationalism is driving the oppression of minorities. In India, the report

describes the situation as “hybrid persecution”: a combination of discriminatory laws and violence by civilians, fuelled by political rhetoric.

Organised crime has also emerged as a driver of persecution. In Mexico and Haiti, armed groups murder or kidnap religious leaders or extort parishes in order to assert control over certain areas.

In Europe and North America, anti-religious attacks also increased during the reporting period. These include the desecration of places of worship, physical assaults on clergy and the disruption of religious services. All of this reflects a climate of ideological hostility toward believers.

» Religious freedom is the benchmark for all other human rights. «

Regina Lynch,
Executive President of ACN



A petition for religious freedom

In view of the dramatic situation documented in our current report “Religious Freedom in the World”, we feel obliged not only to inform, but also to act. Therefore, in October 2025, alongside presenting the report, ACN launched an international petition for the defence of religious freedom, addressed to the United Nations, the Council of Europe and democratic heads of state and government around the world.

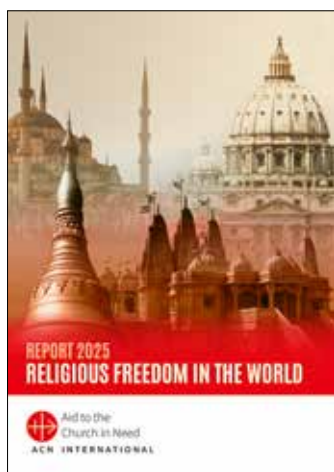
Religious freedom is enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It protects the dignity of every human being and lies at the heart of the Church’s social teaching and pastoral mission. With an international petition, ACN now seeks to give greater weight to this human right. The motto of the initiative is: “Religious freedom is a human right, not a privilege.”

The petition gives a voice to those who cannot freely express themselves because of their faith. This includes not only persecuted Christians, but believers of all religions who are persecuted or discriminated against because of their faith. Through a simple signature, the petition offers everyone the opportunity to express solidarity with those affected, from which effective actions can emerge and decisive changes toward greater religious freedom can be set in motion.

Sign our petition:



<https://acninternational.org/petition/>



<https://acninternational.org/religiousfreedomreport/>



#RedWeek

Christianity is the most widely persecuted religious community globally. Christians often live in an environment in which they are violently oppressed, discriminated against or prevented from freely practising their faith. #RedWeek, also called “Red Wednesday” in some countries, is an initiative that was launched by ACN in 2015 to draw public attention to the plight of persecuted and disadvantaged Christians.

Red Week took place in 2025 from 15 to 23 November. More than 600 churches and other symbolic buildings around the world were illuminated in red, including in Australia, Austria, Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Ireland, Switzerland, Hungary, Canada, Mexico and Colombia. Among the illuminated churches were several significant cathedrals, including St. Michael’s Cathedral Basilica and Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral Basilica in Canada, the Las Lajas Sanctuary in Colombia and Worms Cathedral in Germany, as well as a notable number of cathedrals in Australia and New Zealand, for example in Perth, Hobart, Melbourne, Newcastle, Bendigo and Palmerston North.

At St George’s Cathedral in London, Bishop Nicholas Hudson celebrated

Mass on 19 November, during which the catechist Tobias Yahaya from Sokoto, Nigeria received the “Courage to be Christian” award from our British national office. That same day, he was also a guest of honour at a parliamentary event in Westminster.

In addition, the event “La Nuit des Témoins” (Night of the Witnesses) took place in several French cities. For the first time, Paris landmarks

such as the Luxor Obelisk, Pont Neuf and Pont des Arts were illuminated in red, creating a striking visual message in the heart of Paris. For the first time, the European Parliament decided to illuminate its seat in Brussels in red on 19 November, representing the 27 member states.

In Portugal, important landmarks in Lisbon, Viana do Castelo, Braga

At the European Parliament in Brussels.



The Basilica of Sacré-Cœur in Paris illuminated in red.



Tobias Yahaya receives the “Courage to be Christian” award in London.

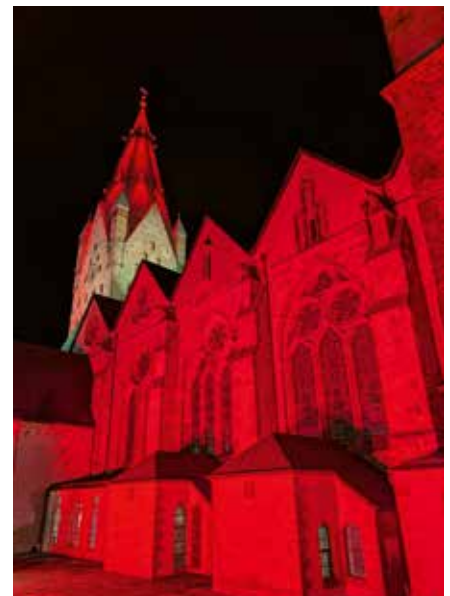
and Porto were illuminated. For instance, the Christ the King statue overlooking Lisbon shone for three nights in red light. Other European countries, including Hungary, Croatia and the Czech Republic, also participated in Red Week, illuminating buildings such as embassies and foreign ministries.

In the Netherlands, a total of 200 churches took part in Red Week; in Germany,

around 185 participated, and in Austria, more than 200 parishes joined in. Additionally, a peace march with Orthodox Christians and a parliamentary event took place. The Federal Chancellery in Vienna was also illuminated in red.

In Mexico City, Tlaxcala, Puebla and Guadalajara, Sister Gloria Narváez, a Colombian nun who was held captive for nearly five years by Islamist extremists in Mali, spoke about her experiences.

- Left: St. Michael’s Cathedral Basilica in Toronto.
- Middle: The illuminated Regensburg Cathedral.
- Right: The Paderborn Cathedral illuminated in red.





CRTN

>> In 2025,
we produced
100 television
programmes
to spread
the faith. <<

Mark von Riedemann,
Director of Public Affairs
and Religious Freedom



Behind the Catholic Radio & Television Network (CRTN) is a modern production studio specialising in reports and documentaries on the Catholic Church in remote areas. The broadcasts primarily serve to support evangelisation efforts and promote solidarity with the suffering Church. Additionally, they publicise the work of Aid to the Church in Need. Through our network, we provide our productions to TV stations around the world.

In 2025, the studio produced a total of 100 TV programmes in all language versions, which were then broadcast on 196 channels. With documentaries, interviews and short films, the programmes reach an audience of tens of millions worldwide. In addition to production and distribution, CRTN also supports a number of worldwide TV distribution initiatives through consulting and programming services.

What's more, CRTN established the global Catholic television resource network crtn.org 26 years ago, which gives Catholic producers and television stations the opportunity to facilitate the presentation, exchange and distribution of Catholic programmes worldwide. In addition, we have compiled a web catalogue containing 700 productions. In 2025, 349 producers and 207 television stations used this service, which is unique in the Church. A CRTN newsletter, a CRTN Facebook page and the CRTN YouTube channel with 17,500 followers round out our media service.



The CRTN YouTube channel, which currently has more than 3.3 million views.



YOUCAT

The YOUCAT Foundation is a subsidiary of ACN. YOUCAT provides a broad portfolio of media that contributes to the re-evangelisation and deepening of faith among young Catholics. The offer ranges from attractively designed catechism and Bible editions to digital formats, including teaching materials, apps and social media channels.

Interest is growing – especially among dynamic and vibrant spiritual movements that attract many young people. The expanding range of supplementary catechetical materials in various languages is well received.

The YOUCAT Foundation can look back on another successful year in

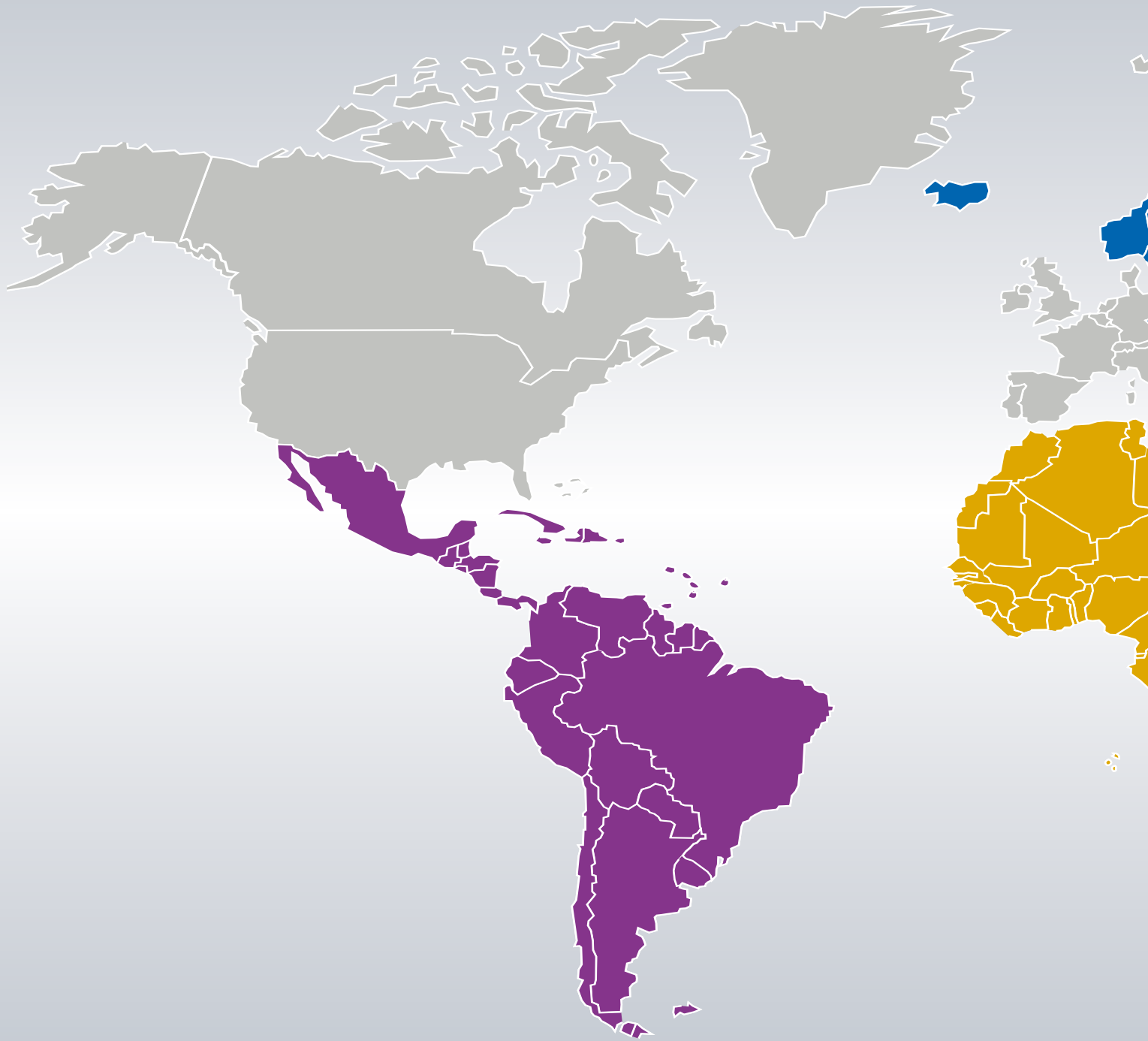
2025. As in the previous year, the YOUCAT Youth Catechism and YOUCAT for Kids were once again global bestsellers during the reporting year. A special milestone in 2025 was the publication of “YOUCAT Love Forever”, a work on the sacrament of marriage that addresses key topics such as personality, love, relationships and marriage, using the familiar question-and-answer format. The foreword was written by Pope Francis. The book was initially published in German, English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, with further translations to follow.

Another highlight of the year was the Youth Jubilee in Rome. On the

Day of Reconciliation at the Circus Maximus, 10,000 copies of the Youcat Confession Book were distributed as gifts to young people in five languages in cooperation with ACN.



» YOUCAT is becoming an indispensable companion for more and more young people worldwide. «



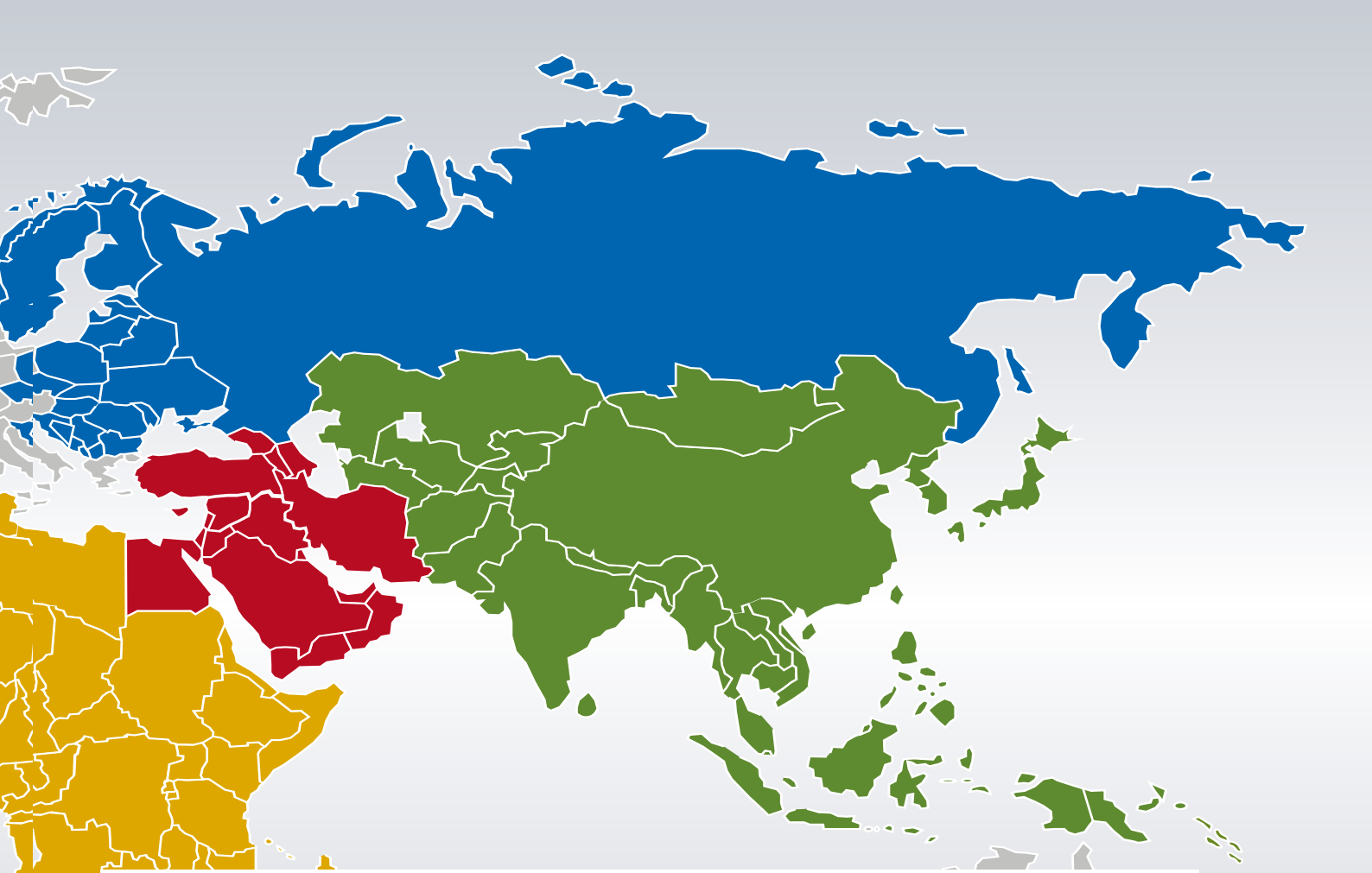
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Our regional activities in 2025

In 2025, ACN received 6,860 requests for aid. In total, we were able to help in 141 countries. On the following pages, we would like to provide you with an overview of our regional funding priorities. Our priority commitment once again centred on the African continent, where the Church is expanding, yet needs remain great and terror continues to spread in many areas. The Church also provides support to local populations affected by the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East. ACN therefore not only provides emergency aid to ensure the immediate survival of Christian families, but also increasingly supports projects aimed at assisting and treating traumatised individuals.



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Latin America

Latin America, with nearly 400 million Catholics, is often called ‘the Catholic continent’. Nevertheless, the local Church is concerned, as the number of believers has declined sharply over the past ten years. The main reasons for this are aggressive secularism, the growth of sects and authoritarian regimes that oppress the Church and severely restrict its work. Migration flows also pose major challenges for the Church. Against this backdrop, ACN supported Latin America in the reporting year with a total of 16 million euros.

For years, the situation has been particularly critical for the Church in Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, where its work is obstructed by the state. In countries such as Mexico, Haiti, Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil, on the other hand, criminal gangs and drug cartels are terrorising the population. The Church is often targeted because it raises its voice in favour of justice and peace.

» In many countries across the continent, the Church faces policies that are hostile to its mission. «

Another problem in many Latin American countries is the high rate of inflation. The growing poverty crisis has significantly increased migration abroad, particularly to neighbouring countries, which in turn face additional social chal-

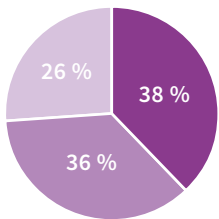
lenges. At the same time, the rural population is increasingly migrating to urban centres in many places, which also leads to rapid growth of the already overcrowded slums. Parishes are often overwhelmed by the resulting influx of believers and can hardly meet the demand for pastoral and social care.

To help address the shortage of priests – which in some regions leaves the Church with minimal presence and allows sects to gain influence – ACN supports the training and formation of priests, religious and catechists. Additionally, initiatives are supported that guide young people in discovering their calling. To counter currents in society that are hostile to the Church, ACN promotes the work of Catholic television and radio stations, as well as digital media. It also supports the distribution of catechetical books.



Haiti

Aid granted
1,158,291 Euro



- Pastoral support
 - Training of priests and religious
 - Formation of faith
 - Bibles & books
 - Media help
- Subsistence support
 - Mass stipends
 - Subsistence aid
 - Emergency aid
- Material support
 - Construction/reconstruction
 - Means of transport

Religious sisters in the Diocese of Fort-Liberté.



Haiti, located on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, is one of the poorest countries in Latin America

and the Caribbean. The population has suffered for years from a growing social, economic and political crisis. Violence and insecurity have reached dramatic levels in recent years and continued to rise during the reporting

year. The Church has not been spared either. Because of the persistently difficult situation in the country, the local Church can continue to rely on the support of ACN.

The Haitian population of 11.6 million suffers from a high rate of inflation. Even essential food items are extremely expensive and often unavailable. Because of this catastrophic situation, many Haitians are migrating to Central America,



At the infirmary of the Carmelite Sisters in Anse-à-Pitres.

the United States and especially to the neighbouring Dominican Republic. The latter has now erected a border wall to slow down immigration.

Those who remain in the country usually face extreme challenges. Observers speak of ‘civil warlike conditions’. Cities and major transport routes are controlled by heavily armed gangs. Robberies, kidnappings, drug and arms trafficking and violent clashes during demonstrations are commonplace and increasingly make life difficult for the population. Representatives of the Church are also repeatedly victims of violence. In late March 2025, two religious sisters from the Congregation of the “Little Sisters of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus” were murdered by armed gangs in Mirebalais, not far from the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince.

In this dramatic situation, the Church continues to be a sign of hope for many believers in Haiti. During the reporting year, ACN continued to support the formation of future priests and, in response to the widespread crisis, provided subsistence aid to religious sisters and priests.

We also supported the training of catechists and the youth ministry in the parishes, as the good news of the Gospel can offer hope and confidence to young people even in desperate circumstances, inspiring them to contribute to a better future for their country.

>> We survive in Haiti only with great difficulty. <<

Bishop Quesnel Alphonse of Fort-Liberté

Priestly formation at the Propaedeutic Seminary in Les Cayes.



Sister Helena Queijo of the Spiritan Sisters working with children.



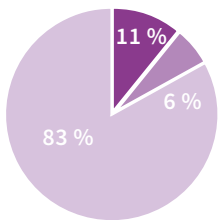
A new motorcycle for pastoral care in Carice.



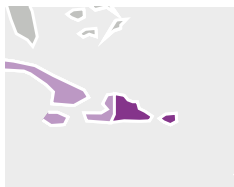


Dominican Republic

Aid granted
492,969 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



Like Haiti, the Dominican Republic is located on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola and currently

has just over 11 million inhabitants, the majority of whom are Catholics. Since the country is mainly known

as a tourist destination, it rarely attracts the attention of aid organizations. Yet it faces economic, social and pastoral challenges. Due to its limited resources, the local Church in many areas struggles to meet these challenges. Therefore, ACN focuses particularly on dioceses in the poorest provinces.



Mass in the parish of St Martin de Porres, Barahona.



Subsistence aid for religious sisters

Around 200,000 people in the Dominican Republic live permanently in what are known as 'bateyes', which originally served as temporary housing for seasonal workers on the sugar cane plantations. One of these impoverished settlements lies in the parish of St Martin de Porres. There, three religious sisters

provide care especially for young people and children, as well as for elderly people living alone. The sisters themselves live in extremely modest conditions and often go many hours without electricity. We provide subsistence aid to these and other religious sisters who dedicate themselves to serving in the country's poorest regions.

>> Your help is a gift from heaven for my pastoral tasks. <<

Father Júnior Vásquez, project partner.

Father Júnior Vásquez in San Juan de la Maguana.



Especially the western part of the Dominican Republic, which borders on the crisis-stricken neighbouring country of Haiti, is an almost forgotten region. There are very few priests, so they have to oversee many parishes and often travel long distances across vast areas. Here, we provide support not only by supplying vehicles for pastoral work but also by promoting priestly formation, assisting priests with Mass stipends and helping religious sisters with subsistence aid.

Youth ministry is a particularly important concern for the local Church. Many families have broken down, and sects are increasingly spreading. At the same time, there has been an extreme rise in violence – many young people join gangs or fall into prostitution. What's more, the Dominican Republic is also a transit country for drug trafficking. Others choose to emigrate. Another challenge is the high influx of migrants from

Haiti, who often require pastoral care. Against this background, the Diocese of Mao-Monte Cristi launched a programme for 2025 with youth gatherings and workshops, in which 20,000 young people were able to participate with our support.

Bishop Andrés Napoleón Romero Cárdenas during a visit to the parish in Barahona.

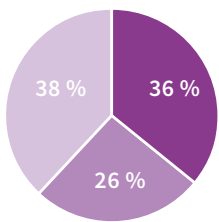




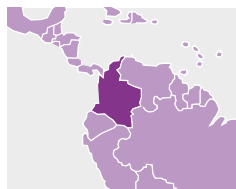
Colombia

Aid granted

1,426,426 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



Located at the northern tip of South America, Colombia has great geographical diversity, ranging

from high mountain ranges to dense rainforests. For decades, the country has been shaped by the presence of guerrilla groups and drug cartels. The high level of violence and social inequality is also one of the major challenges for the Church. ACN supports the local Church, as in many places it depends on assistance in order to carry out its daily pastoral and social tasks. 79% of the 52 million inhabitants are Catholics.



- Top: At the Shrine of Saint Laura Montoya.
 Middle: Father Jonathas Fernandes at a baptism in the Apostolic Vicariate of Mitú.
 Bottom: Father Gersain on his way home in the south-east of Cali.

Since the mid-1960s, an armed conflict has raged in Colombia between government forces and guerrilla organisations such as the FARC. Over the course of the conflict, six million people have been displaced, 200,000 killed and another 60,000 are considered missing. Although a peace agreement was signed in 2016, violence has once again increased

Father Jorge Zapata visiting a family in a district of Cali, which has one of the highest murder and drug rates.

» The priests in Colombia refuse to be intimidated. «

In Cuerval, a grandmother places a rosary around her granddaughter's neck.



significantly since 2024. Drug trafficking also continues to be a major problem. In many rural areas, coca cultivation has almost replaced traditional farming culture. In addition, poverty, especially in border regions, has been further worsened by a large influx of migrants from neighbouring Venezuela.

For priests, Colombia has been a dangerous country for decades. Over the past 40 years, numerous priests have been kidnapped and murdered. Nevertheless, the Church refuses to be intimidated.

ACN regularly supports priests in various dioceses across the country through Mass stipends, as they are in urgent need of assistance. Encouragingly, Colombia continues to be blessed with many vocations to the priesthood and religious life. For this reason, we also support the training of future priests and catechists who are active in proclaiming the faith. In addition, we help religious sisters with subsidies for their livelihood.



A messenger of peace in a country full of violence

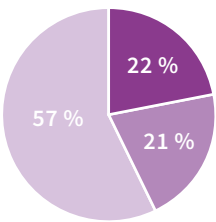
Many people in Colombia are exhausted and demoralised by the violence. All the more valuable in this time are messengers of peace such as Bishop Israel Bravo Cortés of Tibú, who wrote to us: “A region like ours, so deeply marked by violence and death, needs God.

The people here long for the presence of the Lord in their hearts in order to transform the many painful situations that have shaped their lives. We feel a responsibility to foster a new culture that places the joyful message of peace from the Gospel at its heart.”

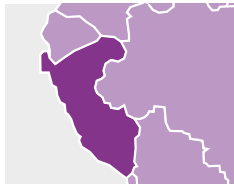


Peru

Aid granted
1,686,955 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



After Brazil and Argentina, Peru is the third-largest country in South America by area. Its geographical

diversity ranges from coastal regions to the Amazon rainforest and the Andean highlands. The economic differences are also great, while modest prosperity has developed in the cities, abject poverty often prevails in rural areas. For the Church, the shortage of priests is also a

major challenge. Although 67% of Peru's 34 million inhabitants are Catholic, sects are spreading more and more. For this reason, ACN places special emphasis on supporting the formation of future priests in Peru.

As in many South American countries, rural poverty in Peru is leading to mass migration to urban areas – with all its social consequences, such as the breakdown of families or drug addiction. Because many believers in the large cities cannot



Pastoral care in the Diocese of Puerto Maldonado.



receive sufficient pastoral care, sects continue to spread. For this reason, ACN supports the local Church in the training of seminarians and in programmes that promote vocations. Since religious sisters and catechists also play an important role in proclaiming the faith, we also help ensure their qualified training.

In urban centres, another challenge is that the spatial capacity of many parishes has reached its limits due to the growing number of believers resulting from migration and rural exodus. For this reason, we also assist with the construction of additional chapels, churches and pastoral centres.

Our aid measures also include providing means of transportation for pastoral care. In the Amazon region, this may include boats, since many places there can only be reached by water. In addition, we support parishes with catechetical materials to deepen the faith and provide subsistence aid to religious sisters who help the poor and the vulnerable under extremely difficult conditions.

» The Church also brings hope to the people of the Amazon and the Andes. «



Construction aid for the Carmelite Sisters

The Carmelite Convent of Chachapoyas is located in the Amazon region in north-western Peru. It was founded in 2015 and celebrated its tenth anniversary during the reporting year. However, the building has not been able to offer enough space for

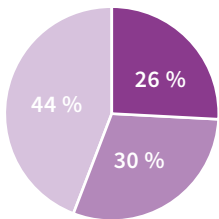
the encouragingly large number of young vocations. The laundry, the host bakery and other utility rooms are still housed in temporary facilities. In order to expand the convent, another two-story building is currently being constructed with the help of ACN.



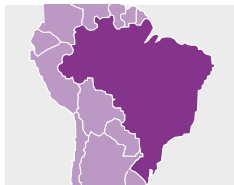
Brazil

Aid granted

2,206,866 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



With an area of 8.5 million square kilometres, Brazil is not only the largest country in South America

but also the fifth largest in the world. It is marked by corruption, economic crises, environmental destruction and

great social inequality. Although Brazil is still the country with the largest number of Catholics in the world, the number is declining. The Church is particularly concerned about the increasing spread of sects. ACN therefore focuses on supporting the local Church in the training of pastoral workers.

The challenges are especially great in the extremely poor north-east of the country, which is frequently struck by droughts. But the population in the vast Amazon region also suffers great hardship. Although the region is rich in natural resources, the local population hardly benefits from this wealth. Here the Church plays an important role in helping the poorest and most neglected.



The Church in Brazil is going through a difficult period, as the proportion of Catholics among the more than 213 million inhabitants has now fallen to below 60%; some sources even indicate figures below 50%. In many dioceses, the decline

Pastoral visit to an indigenous community in the Diocese of Juína.

Devotion at the Capuchin Mission in Belém do Solimões.

» The Church plays an important role in helping the poorest and most neglected. «



Bishop Tondello with indigenous communities in the Diocese of Juína.

in the number of believers is linked to a severe shortage of priests. During the reporting year, it was therefore especially important for us to support the local Church in the formation of future priests, religious and lay workers, so that the Church can more effectively carry out its pastoral mission of proclaiming the faith and providing pastoral care.

The Diocese of Rio Branco in western Brazil also benefited from this assistance. It covers an area of more than 100,000 square kilometres of dense rainforest. Because there are only a few priests there, sects with considerable financial resources and numerous quickly trained preachers have increasingly spread in recent years.

Unfortunately, believers are repeatedly drawn away by their questionable promises of salvation. In order to counter this development, ACN regularly supports the Diocese of Rio Branco in the formation of future priests. Currently, 14 young men are pursuing their calling.



Participants praying at a catechists' conference in Castanhal, Pará.





In spite of all the challenges it faces, the African continent remains a place of hope for the Catholic Church, This is because Catholic communities in Africa are young and are growing. Today, one in five Catholics around the world lives in Africa. In addition, one in seven priests worldwide, more than one in seven religious sisters, and around one-third of all seminarians now come from Africa. In the face of hunger, violence, and political instability, the Church is often the only institution that stands by the population. This is one reason why the continent continues to remain a priority region for ACN.

In 2025, growing Islamist violence in many parts of Africa remained one of the biggest problems. The presence of jihadist terrorist groups has continued to consolidate and expand, especially in the Sahel region. The countries particularly affected include Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. Millions of people have already fled the conflict regions. Although flight protects many, it brings tremendous hardship and suffering. During the reporting year, the situation worsened even further. ACN therefore increased its aid to this region by 30% compared to the previous year.

priests and religious has become a weapon and also a means of pressure that is used against the Church in many places.

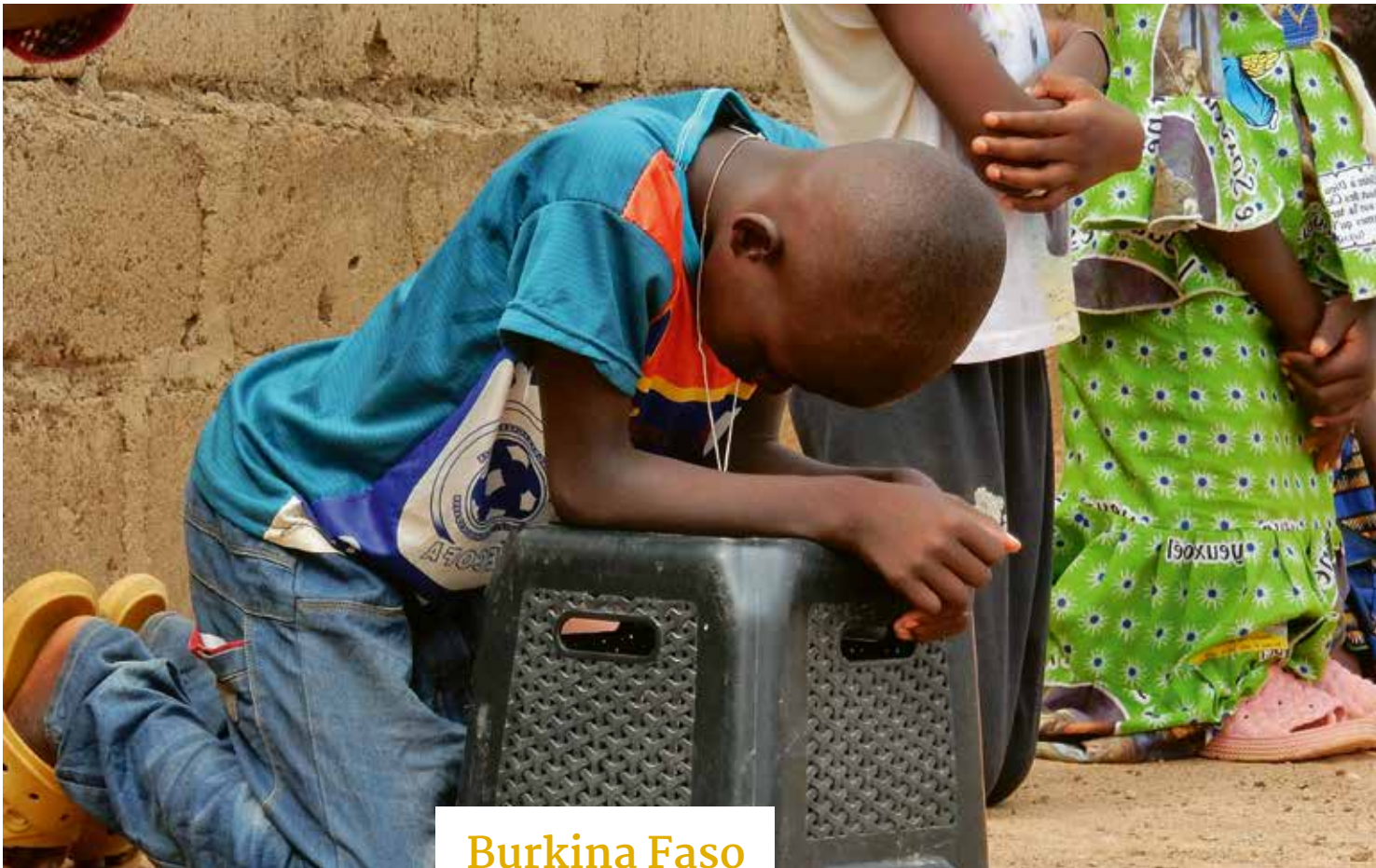
ACN will not abandon the Church in this difficult situation. We particularly focus on the formation of priests, religious and laypeople, including further training that enables them to competently support people who are often severely traumatised in conflict regions. We also help purchase off-road vehicles, so pastoral workers can better reach believers in remote areas. Furthermore, we support the construction of churches and chapels, and contribute to the livelihood of priests and religious through Mass stipends and subsistence aid.

>> Despite numerous challenges, Africa remains a continent of hope for the Catholic Church. <<

Unfortunately, the growing violence has once again claimed victims among representatives of the Church. During the reporting year, Africa continued to be the continent with the highest number of murdered priests and church workers worldwide. What's more, kidnapping



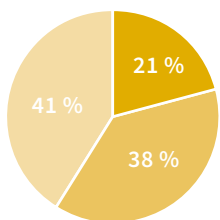
A priest baptising an infant in the Central African Republic.



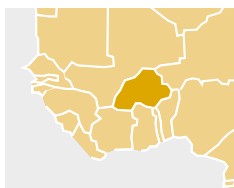
Burkina Faso

Aid granted

2,545,773 Euro



- Pastoral support
 - Training of priests and religious
 - Formation of faith
 - Bibles & books
 - Media help
- Subsistence support
 - Mass stipends
 - Subsistence aid
 - Emergency aid
- Material support
 - Construction/reconstruction
 - Means of transport

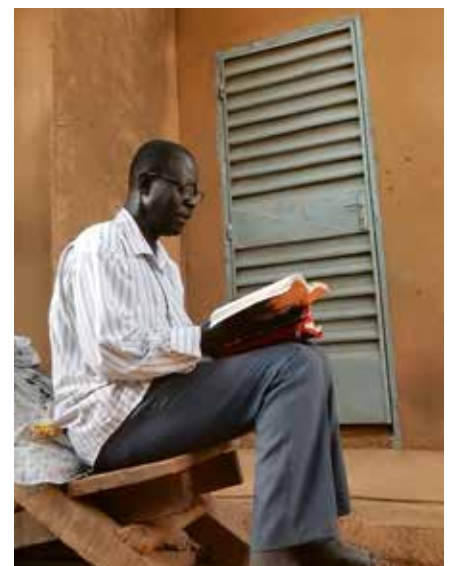


During the reporting year, the local Church in Burkina Faso celebrated the 125th anniversary of evangelisation. Today, nearly a quarter of the country's 23 million inhabitants are Christians. For a long time, coexistence with Muslims (57%) was peaceful. However, due to extremism imported from abroad, Burkina Faso has emerged as one of the countries most severely affected by terrorism worldwide. Against this backdrop, ACN increased its aid by €2.4 million compared to the previous year.

For about ten years, the northern and eastern parts of Burkina Faso have developed into hotspots for violent extremists. During the reporting year, the situation worsened even further. The country has now become the main battleground of a conflict waged across the Sahel by Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State. The consequences for the population are devastating: brutal attacks are a daily occurrence in many places, more than 2,000 schools have been closed and

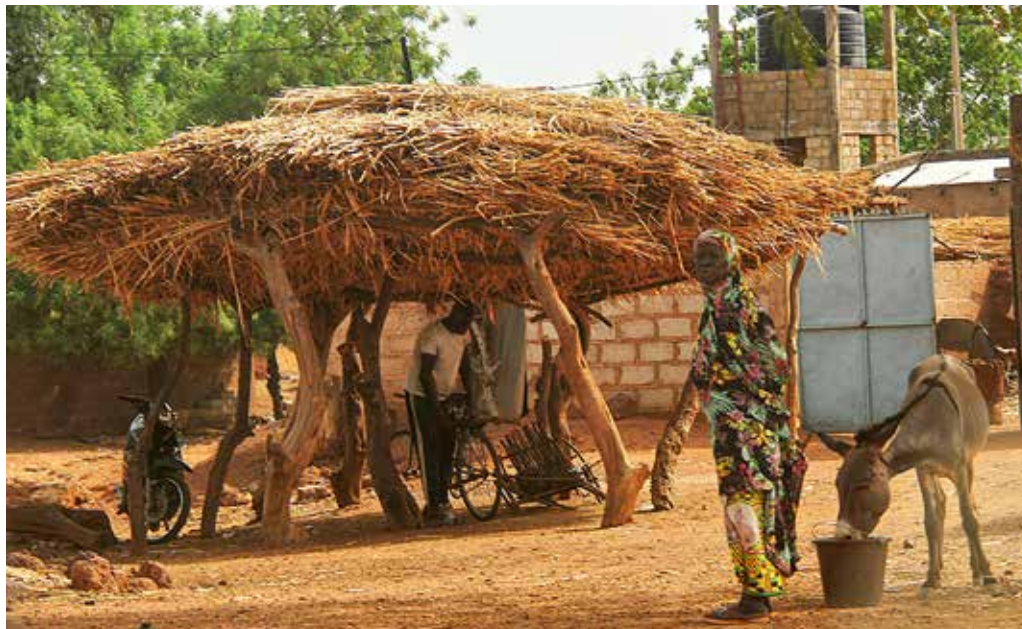
more than two million people are now displaced. Many Muslims are also among the victims.

The Church has been particularly affected. In many parishes, the faithful have been driven out, while in others, pastoral work is severely restricted. Targeted attacks against Christians and Church institutions had begun as early as 2019. Our local pro-



>> Please pray for the conversion of hearts, so that everyone may become peacemakers. <<

Father Jean-Pierre Keita, project partner



Street scene in Ouagadougou.

ject partners report that priests, religious and the faithful are increasingly targeted by jihadists and that the frequency and brutality of attacks are increasing. Priests, catechists and dedicated laypeople are especially vulnerable, with men being particularly targeted for murder. Where jihadists have taken control, women and girls are forced to wear full veils, regardless of their religion. Otherwise they risk assault or abduction. In some cases, a Christian name or a cross necklace is enough to be killed.

Despite the great challenges, the Church in Burkina Faso looks to the future with confidence. It can continue to rely on our help. During the reporting year, with Mass stipends, we were again able to support numerous priests in the areas particularly affected. We also provided emergency aid to Christians who were forced to flee under the pressure of terrorists. Other relief measures included the purchase of vehicles for pastoral care, as well as support for the training of priests and members of religious orders. And there are also rays of hope. Despite increasing violence, the Church is seeing a rise in vocations to the priesthood.



Catechists in constant danger

ACN supports catechists and their families in Burkina Faso in their valuable service to communities. Unfortunately, they are repeatedly exposed to brutal violence. For example, in January 2025, two catechists were killed by armed attackers in the Diocese of Dédougou while travelling on motorcycles. In September and October, two

catechists were kidnapped in the Diocese of Fada N’Gourma.

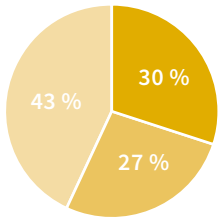
Father Edgard Ouedraogo, Director of the Centre of Formation of Catechists, reported: “Catechists are the pillars of the Church and often risk their lives. They are the most endangered and pay the highest price.”



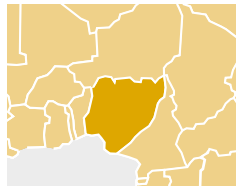
Nigeria

Aid granted

3,257,496 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



With almost 228 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. About half of the

population is Christian and half Muslim, although the distribution varies strongly by region. For years, the population has suffered from violence caused by terrorist groups. In many places, the Church is the only institution that offers protection and hope. ACN supports the local Church as much as possible in this crisis-stricken country.

Northern Nigeria is especially plagued by jihadist terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, whose declared aim is to impose an Islamist ideology. But violence also affects the country's 'Middle Belt'. There, radicalised Fulani militias are responsible for mass killings, forced displacement, the occupation of farmland and the destruction of predominantly Christian villages.

Church representatives such as priests and religious are doubly at risk in Nigeria: on the one hand, due to hatred against Christians, and on the other,

» How much longer shall our priests and faithful be hunted like prey? «

Bishop Julius Yakubu Kundi of Kafanchan

After an attack on a displaced persons camp in Benue State.



Internally displaced persons in the Uikpam refugee camp, Benue State.

Children from the Diocese of Jalingo participate in a procession.



due to bandits. In 2025 alone, three priests and two seminarians were killed. The final weeks of the reporting year were particularly violent. In northern regions, several hundred students were kidnapped from educational institutions. In response to the escalating wave of terrorist attacks and kidnappings, in November 2025, the Nigerian president declared a nationwide state of security emergency.

Despite threats and violence, the faith of Christians remains unshaken. This is evident in the growing number of vocations to the priesthood. As a result, the number of candidates for the priesthood has even increased in recent years. For ACN, this is a reason to focus strongly on the training of future priests. In addition, we remain committed to supporting priests in need by offering Mass stipends. In view of the high number of severely traumatised victims of violence, ACN also promotes additional psychotherapeutic training for priests and religious sisters, enabling them to offer qualified help to those affected.



Hundreds of kidnapped priests

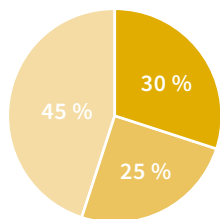
Nigeria remains one of the most dangerous countries in the world for priests. Between 2015 and 2025, 212 priests were officially kidnapped. However, the real number is likely higher. An investigation by the Nigerian Bishops' Conference at the end of 2025 was still incomplete, and so far only 41 of the country's 59 Catholic dioceses and archdioceses had been included.



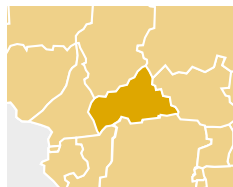
Central African Republic

Aid granted

622,337 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



The Central African Republic is a land-locked country in the heart of Africa with about 5.6 million inhabitants.

75.5% of them are Christians and 13% are Muslims. The remaining population consists of followers of traditional African religions. Although rich in natural resources, it is one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world. Yet the Church brings hope even where there seems to be none. ACN supports it in this endeavour.

The country gained independence from France in 1960. Since then, its history has been marked by unrest and coups. Despite huge reserves of gold, diamonds and uranium, only a small elite benefits.

Large parts of the country are controlled by armed groups that terrorise the population. Violence repeatedly erupts. For many people, the Church is the only place of refuge and help. The Church also assumes responsibilities normally belonging to the state. It establishes schools, kindergartens and health centres, provides development aid, negotiates with armed groups and repeatedly shelters people in its facilities who have fled from rebel attacks. The Bishops' Conference and individual bishops repeatedly call on the government to do more for peace and the common good and to take concrete steps.

Our foundation primarily supports the training of future priests and catechists, assists priests with Mass stipends, helps religious sisters with subsistence aid and also provides vehicles and construction assistance.

Baptism of children and young people in the parish of Baoro.

>> **My dream is that the people of our country can live in dignity and solidarity.** <<

Bishop Aurelio Gazzera of Bangassou, project partner



Altar servers before the Sunday Mass.

Confession in a village of the Diocese of Bangassou.



More mobility for the bishop

The infrastructure in the Central African Republic is catastrophic in many places, especially the roads. It often takes many hours to cover just a few kilometres. For this reason, we repeatedly help with the provision of off-road vehicles. In the reporting year, we were able to assist Bishop Aurelio

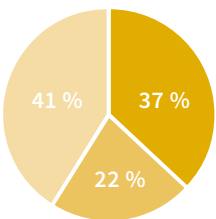
Gazzera of Bangassou with the acquisition of an off-road vehicle. To visit the parishes, he often has to travel long and difficult stretches through the jungle. Given that armed rebels frequently hide in the forest, a reliable vehicle can be life-saving in an emergency.



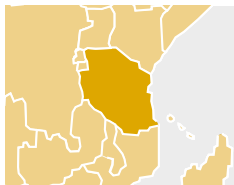


Tanzania

Aid granted
3,021,165 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



The East African country Tanzania has 66.6 million inhabitants who belong to some 130 ethnic

groups and speak more than 120 languages. Christians – mainly Catholics – make up the majority of the population at 56%. Muslims make up just under a third of the total population. In recent years, radical Islamism has been increasing, which has also worsened the security situation for

the Church. To enable it to continue fulfilling its mission, ACN supports it on several levels.

The growing influence of Islam is noticeable in large parts of Tanzania, though it varies greatly by region; for example, 98% of the inhabitants of the Zanzibar Archipelago, which forms an autonomous republic of the country, are Muslim. Here, the Islamist separatist movement Uamsho (“Awakening”) has been gaining political influence for about 15 years. The proportion

Home visit in a rural community.



A woman receives communion.

» The still young Church in Tanzania is lively and dynamic, but it needs support. «



A catechist on the way to remote communities.

of Muslims along the former caravan routes is also higher than in the rest of the country.

The Church is concerned because hate sermons and religiously motivated attacks have increased both on Zanzibar and the mainland. Terrorist attacks also occur repeatedly near the border with Mozambique.

Despite these challenges, the Catholic Church in Tanzania is young, vibrant and rich in vocations. We focus primarily on supporting the training of future priests and religious, and we assist needy priests with Mass stipends. In addition, during the reporting year, we were once again able to assist with the construction and renovation of church buildings, as well as help the local Church acquire vehicles for pastoral care.

We are particularly committed to supporting the training of catechists,

who serve close to the faithful in the expansive parishes. We frequently receive requests for bicycles and motorcycles for catechists, so they can better cover the long and often difficult distances to reach the faithful and the sick.

Home visit by a catechist in Tanzania.

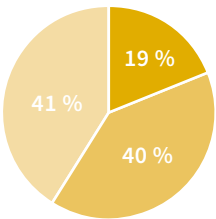




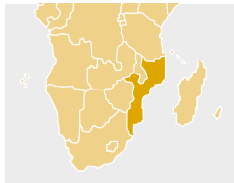
Mozambique

Aid granted

1,460,603 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



Mozambique is located in south-eastern Africa on the Indian Ocean. Of its 34 million inhabitants, just

under 57% are Catholics. Muslims make up 18% of the total population, but in some northern provinces, they form the majority. Since 2017, the north of the country has become a conflict hotspot

due to the presence of jihadist groups. The Church has also been affected by terrorist aggression. ACN supports the local Church with aid measures so that it can continue to fulfil its pastoral and social mission.

Before 2017, relations between Christians and Muslims were largely peaceful. But since then, the northern provinces Cabo Delgado and Nampula have

Reconstruction of St. Joseph Parish Church in Mitúcue.



Destruction caused by cyclones
Chido and Dikeledi in Nacala.

suffered from jihadist terror. The radical groups operating there are mostly linked to the Islamic State. Through kidnappings, ransom demands, extortion and control of gold mines, they have created new sources of income and established structures resembling those of a caliphate.

Since 2021, the violence has also spread to the provinces of Lichinga, Nampula and Niassa. In total, more than 6,400 people have died since the outbreak of the conflict, and over one million people have been displaced. During the reporting year, the situation worsened even further. For example, intensive attacks in September and October alone forced nearly 40,000 people to flee. The Church was also alarmed by increasing reports of selective killings of non-Muslims. According to Bishop Dom António Juliasso Sandramo, since 2017 “more than 300 Catholics have been killed, most by beheading.” In 2025 alone, 35 Christians were killed, including catechists, parish workers and believers. Since the outbreak of the conflict, 117 churches and chapels have been destroyed, 23 of them in 2025 alone.

ACN is aware of the difficult situation of the local Church in Mozambique and again provided comprehensive aid in 2025. The focus was on supporting the training of priests and religious sisters, providing vehicles, Mass stipends for priests and subsistence aid for religious sisters. Support was particularly directed to the dioceses of Pemba and Nacala, which are heavily affected by terrorism. Through emergency aid, pastoral projects and psychosocial support, we were able to alleviate the greatest needs of the people.



Religious sisters give thanks to ACN

With the help of ACN, 59 religious sisters in the Diocese of Pemba are able to confront immense suffering every day. Sister Maria Aparecida Queiroz told us: “Imagine coming home after a day’s work, and suddenly a group of armed men breaks

in, kills your children and abducts relatives. This is the pain that thousands of our brothers and sisters endure – people who have lost everything. Here, ACN’s help is like the hand of God, bringing relief and saving lives.”

» Please continue to support the people in Cabo Delgado; Mozambique needs peace. «

Father Kwiriwi Fonseca,
project partner

Blessing of the sick in the Diocese of Nacala.



Blessing a vehicle for religious sisters in Pemba.



A religious sister in Boroma cares for an infant.







The Middle East continues to be one of the largest conflict regions in the world. The military escalation in the Gaza Strip and the war in Iran have once again plunged the region into chaos and severe suffering. For ACN, the Middle East therefore remains a priority region. In 2025, 17.1% of ACN’s total aid went to Christians in the Middle East. In total, we supported this region with 16.6 million euros in 2025. Our primary goal is to encourage Christians to remain in their home region. An important sign of hope in the reporting year was the Middle East trip of Pope Leo XIV.

The focal countries for our aid to the Middle East include Syria, Lebanon and the Holy Land, where we continue to support suffering Christians with extensive emergency aid. Strengthening the presence of Christians in the Middle East is of immense importance, because they are seen by many as mediators between the different religious groups in the region.

>> The Middle East needs new approaches in order to open new chapters of reconciliation and peace. << Pope Leo XIV

In light of the new escalations that the Iran war has also brought to Lebanon, ACN initiated extensive emergency aid in March 2026, especially for people who have fled from southern Lebanon.

During the reporting year, the visit of Pope Leo XIV to the Middle East was



Pope Leo XIV during his visit to the tomb of Saint Charbel Makhoul in Lebanon in December 2025.

particularly eagerly anticipated – it was also the first foreign trip of his pontificate.

First, the Pope visited Turkey on the occasion of the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea, at which important foundations of faith were formulated for all Christians. One of the highlights of the apostolic journey was the joint prayer of the Pope with Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and other representatives of Orthodox Churches.

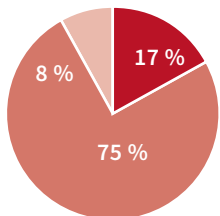
Afterwards, the Holy Father travelled to Lebanon, where he made a strong appeal for peace in Beirut.



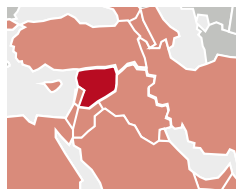
Syria

Aid granted

5,071,594 Euro



- Pastoral support
 - Training of priests and religious
 - Formation of faith
 - Bibles & books
 - Media help
- Subsistence support
 - Mass stipends
 - Subsistence aid
 - Emergency aid
- Material support
 - Construction/reconstruction
 - Means of transport



Even though the war in Syria now appears to be over and a fragile hope for a better future is emerging,

the population continued to suffer from the economic and social crisis throughout the reporting year. Even after the change of government, the situation remains marked by tensions and insecurity, which also affects the local Church. Not without reason, Syria therefore ranked fourth among the countries most strongly supported by ACN in 2025.

Even after the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, there were still acts of violence and attacks in many parts of Syria during the reporting year. Church institutions were also affected by this. Particularly tragic was the suicide bombing carried out in June 2025 against the Greek Orthodox St Elias Church in Damascus. In this attack, 25 believers lost their lives. The pastoral mission of the Church is all the more important in this difficult time. It guides the faithful, heals wounds, cares for the traumatised and bears witness to reconciliation and peace in the midst of a fractured society.

Left: Spiritual encounter for young people and families in Syria.

Right: Pastoral activities of the Jesuits for children and young people in Homs.



Holy Mass as part of catechist training in Damascus.

>> We must provide the remaining Christians with real prospects for the future, otherwise they will all leave. <<

Sister Annie Demerjian,
project partner

Summer camp of the Melkite Catholic Diocese of Homs in Syria.



Today, it is estimated that no more than one-third of the 1.5 million Christians who lived in Syria before the war remain. Nevertheless, they are indispensable for society, because Christians often take on a key role in the peace process, since the Christian religion calls for reconciliation, forgiveness and peace. Unfortunately, many Syrian Christians continue to leave the country because they no longer see a future for themselves. One goal of our aid is therefore to open up new prospects for as many Syrian families as possible. In order to encourage them to stay, we once again supported church microcredit programmes in 2025. These provide families and young people with the necessary means to start their own businesses and stand on their own feet professionally. In addition, we were able to secure basic necessities and medical care for many elderly people, enable Christian children and young people to attend school, and continue the “A Drop of Milk” programme, which provides milk to children under nine years of age.



ACN supports the work of the parish in Dwel'a

Father Basilios Gergeos, together with two other priests, looks after a parish in Dwel'a, a district of Damascus where an attack was carried out on an Orthodox church in June 2025. ACN supports the work of the Catholic parish, among other things through aid for a psychiatric day clinic, summer recreational programmes and scouting activ-

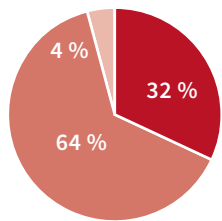
ities, a kindergarten and a soup kitchen, as well as the monthly distribution of milk to needy families. Father Gergeos thanked us with these words: “You help us to serve the people. All these projects show the families that the Church cares for them and is there for them. All of this has a significant impact on whether they stay in Syria or not.”



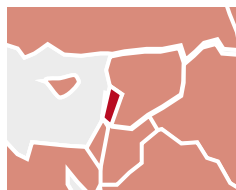
Lebanon

Aid granted

5,369,015 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



Since 2019, Lebanon has been suffering from the worst economic crisis in its history. During

the reporting year, well over half of the population lived below the poverty line, including large parts of the former middle class. In addition, the country has the highest rate of refugees per capita in the world. In 2025, Lebanon ranked third among the countries most strongly supported by ACN. A significant part of our aid flows into emergency relief,

enabling the local Church to provide assistance to refugees and extremely poor Christians.

The catastrophic situation in Lebanon is the result of a disastrous interplay of structural corruption, political paralysis, a massive financial crisis and repeated military conflicts. The refugee situation is particularly severe. Of the approximately 5.7 million people currently living in Lebanon, 1.5 million are Syrian refugees. In addition, there are about half a million Palestinian refugees, as well as numerous Lebanese who are internally displaced.

A Franciscan missionary sister of the Most Sacred Heart working with children in Menjez in northern Lebanon.



War destruction in Tebnine in southern Lebanon.



Signs of hope: Pope Leo XIV visited Lebanon

From 30 November to 2 December, Pope Leo XIV visited Lebanon – a moment that was a long-awaited sign of hope for Christians in the country. The Holy Father urgently called on all political leaders to commit themselves to peace and reconciliation. We were especially

pleased by his visit to the Psychiatric Hospital of the Cross in Beirut, run by Franciscan sisters and supported by ACN. Also symbolic was his prayer at the Port of Beirut, where a devastating explosion occurred in August 2020, the consequences of which the country still feels today.

Pope Leo XIV at the Port of Beirut at the site of the 2020 explosion.

The crisis is evident not only in the economic hardship of the people, but also in the severe psychological consequences. Discouragement and despair are spreading. In recent years, an increase of 21.7% in the suicide rate has been recorded.

The situation of the young population is particularly threatening for the future of the country. The majority of young people see no future any more. Many have already emigrated or are on the verge of doing so. In this way, Lebanon is further weakened, because well-educated people are urgently needed. At the same time, Christian communities are being drained, because among those emigrating are many Christians who in the recent past still formed the majority in the country.

In order to encourage Christians to remain in their homeland, ACN provides massive emergency aid to at least cover their basic needs. At the same time, we support Catholic schools, strengthen pastoral care, including through vehicle assistance, enable retreats and provide subsistence aid to religious sisters and Mass stipends to priests.

Due to the military escalation in the Middle East since February 2026, the situation in Lebanon has once again dramatically worsened. For this reason, ACN immediately launched additional aid programmes for people who have fled from southern Lebanon.

Marian procession during the pastoral summer camp of the Diocese of Sidon in Lebanon.



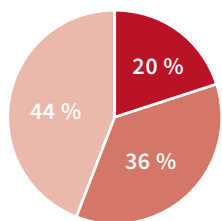
>> For the region, it is not only the mere number of Christians in the Middle East that is important, but above all their presence. <<

Cardinal Bechara Rai,
Patriarch of the Maronite Church

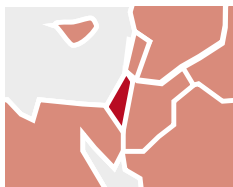


Holy Land

Aid granted
1,722,634 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



The Holy Land remains plagued by violence. Through the attack by Israel and the

USA on Iran on 28 February 2026, another painful chapter in the Middle East conflict appears to have begun. The situation had already deteriorated dramatically since October 2023 due to the war in the Gaza Strip. During the reporting year, the situation of Christians in the Palestinian territories, in particular, continued to worsen. Here, ACN focused mainly on emergency relief projects and worked closely with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

In 2025, Christians and Church institutions once again suffered heavily from the consequences of the war. The only Catholic parish in the Gaza Strip, the Parish of the Holy Family, was hit by a rocket on 17 July 2025. The projectile, apparently fired by an Israeli tank, killed three people. Fifteen others were injured, including Father Gabriel

Romanelli. Pope Leo XIV personally called the parish to express his shock and sympathy after the attack.

Christians in the West Bank were also once again exposed to systematic attacks by Jewish settlers during the reporting period. In addition, many Christians lost their jobs due to the closure of the border between Israel and the West Bank. As a result, pilgrims also stayed away, which further worsened the economic situation of Christians.

Our aid organisation continues to stand by the Christians living there. In cooperation with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, we provided emergency aid for seven Catholic schools and covered school fees for 844 Christian students from poor families. Pastoral initiatives aimed at young people were also supported again during the reporting year. For example, in cooperation with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, ACN enabled 600 young Christians to participate in summer camps. In the “Holy Year of Hope”,

Boy praying in the Parish of the Holy Family in the Gaza Strip.

>> Many thanks to all who support us. Please pray for all those working for peace. <<

Father Gabriel Romanelli,
Catholic parish priest in Gaza City

Distribution of food and relief supplies of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Gaza Strip.



51 young people from the Holy Land were also given the opportunity to take part in a pilgrimage to Rome and other holy sites in Italy.



Religious sisters of the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará at prayer in Bethlehem.

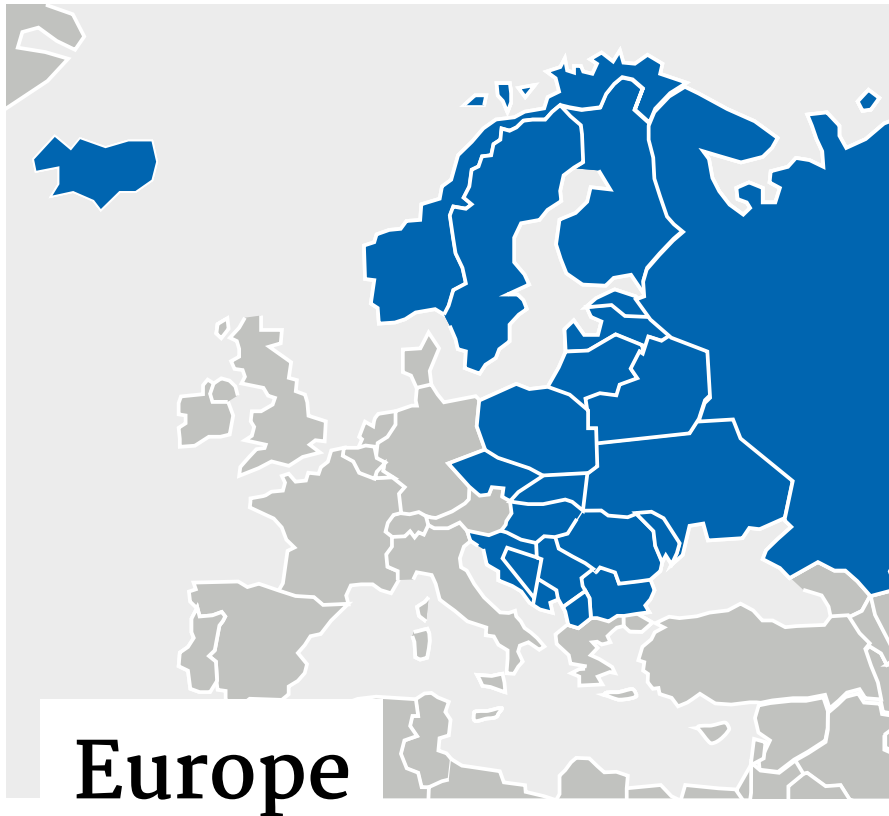


Witness of the horrors of war

In September 2025, we received a letter from George Akroush, the Director of the Development Office of the Latin Patriarchate. In it, he wrote: “The civilian population continues to suffer from bombardments, displacement and shortages of food, medicine and electricity. In recent days, the Israeli army has demolished

houses only a few hundred metres from the Catholic compound, apparently in preparation for an imminent ground offensive, as the streets in Gaza City are too narrow for tanks or large military vehicles. The demolition work is causing ongoing fear and concern among families.”





In 2025, Ukraine was once again our priority country for aid in Europe, as the population there still suffers from the ongoing war. The Church continues to stand unwaveringly by the people in their needs. Since the outbreak of the war in February 2022, we have supported 1,256 projects in the country with a total of 30.35 million euros. During the reporting year alone, there were 308 projects with a total volume of 6.7 million euros. As a result, Ukraine ranked second globally among the countries receiving the most support from ACN in 2025.

When the war started, we primarily provided emergency aid, helping the Church to secure the immediate survival of displaced people. Meanwhile, the focus of our aid measures has shifted to psychological care for those traumatised by the war. The Church is an indispensable point of contact for many affected individuals here.

We also promote the formation and further training of priests and religious, providing subsistence aid so they can continue serving those most in need. You can learn more about our aid projects in Ukraine on pages 72–73.

>> During the reporting year, we supported 308 projects in Ukraine alone with a total of 6.7 million euros. <<

The Church continues to depend on foreign aid not only in Ukraine but also in other European countries, particularly where Catholics are in the minority.

Already during the pandemic, many religious communities in Eastern and Central Europe became increasingly dependent on financial support. Since the war in Ukraine and the resulting global economic crisis, the situation for many monasteries has further worsened, primarily due to sharply rising energy prices. We continue to provide subsidies for the livelihood of religious here. In addition, we assist priests through Mass stipends and fund urgently needed renovations of church buildings.

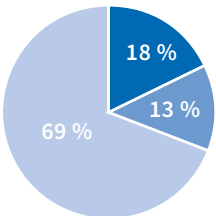
Lesson at the Holy Spirit Seminary in Lviv.



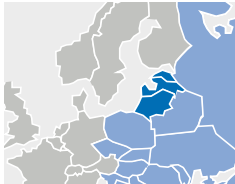


Baltic States

Aid granted
136,786 Euro



- Pastoral support
 - Training of priests and religious
 - Formation of faith
 - Bibles & books
 - Media help
- Subsistence support
 - Mass stipends
 - Subsistence aid
 - Emergency aid
- Material support
 - Construction/reconstruction
 - Means of transport



The Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia became independent in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They have been members of the European Union since 2004. Lithuania is the only country of the former

Soviet Union in which Catholics form the majority. 80% of the 2.8 million inhabitants are Catholic. In Latvia, by contrast, Catholics make up only one-quarter of the roughly 1.9 million inhabitants. In Estonia, only 10,000 of the 1.24 million inhabitants are of the Catholic faith. ACN was particularly active during the reporting year here.



Lithuania: Bishop Vodopjanovas of Panevėžys and the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Gänswein, visiting religious sisters.

Christoph Cardinal Schönborn preaching at the Mass for the beatification of Archbishop Eduard Profittlich in Tallinn.

>> We are delighted by the development of the Church in Estonia. <<

Regina Lynch,
ACN Executive President



Procession of relics during the beatification celebration in Tallinn.

Estonia – the smallest of the Baltic States – is considered one of the most secularised countries in Europe. The majority of the population is without religious affiliation. Most inhabitants do not view the Catholic Church with hostility, but at best with indifference. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church is currently the only religious community experiencing growth.

There is also more good news. Recently, the Apostolic Administration of Tallinn was elevated to a diocese, so that for the first time since the Reformation, Estonia now has a permanent Catholic diocese. What's more, on 6 September 2025, the country witnessed the recognition of the martyrdom of Archbishop Eduard Profittlich of Tallinn, who died in a Soviet prison in 1942, marking the first beatification since the time of Lutheranism. This was an event of exceptional significance, giving the Church's mission in this highly secularised society greater

weight. The beatification brought together believers and non-believers alike and offered the bishop an unprecedented platform for a public testimony of faith. The Estonian president and several ministers also attended.

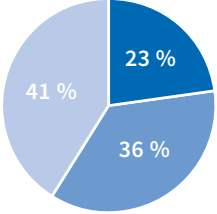
Due to the importance of this event, ACN supported the three-day celebrations marking the beatification. The Bishop of Estonia personally expressed his appreciation for our gesture of support and told us that following this event he had already received enquiries about baptisms. During the reporting year, we also assisted the local Church in renovating the country's two Catholic schools and supported priests with Mass stipends. But in 2025, we were also active in the other Baltic States. In Latvia, we primarily strengthened pastoral care through vehicle support, while in Lithuania we focused on youth ministry and supported religious sisters through subsistence aid.



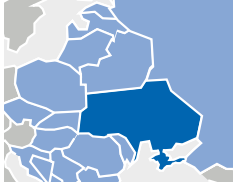


Ukraine

Aid granted
6,724,803 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



For Ukraine, 2025 was already the fourth year of war. Peace still seems far away, and continues to test

the resilience and faith of the people. According to United Nations figures, 6.9 million Ukrainians have now fled abroad, while a further 3.7 million are on the run within the country. The local Church is urgently dependent on assistance from abroad. ACN stands by it in this difficult time.

Both the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic Churches continued to tirelessly care for the suffering population during the reporting year. Our aid organisation was able to make an important contribution through extensive measures. From the outbreak of the war in February 2022 until the end of 2025, ACN has supported the Catholic Church of both rites with altogether 1,256 projects totalling 30.35 million euros.

The longer the war lasts, the more severely traumatised people are seeking



Anointing of the sick in the Diocese of Mukachevo.

» What still gives us hope? Simply the belief that God is stronger than evil. «

Bishop Maksym
Ryabukha of Donetsk



A young woman comforts a mother who lost her son in the war.

help from priests and religious. For many, the Church is the first and only point of contact. However, the normal pastoral experience of priests is often insufficient to care for people who are deeply psychologically wounded. For this reason, we enable priests and religious to participate in further training measures to acquire psychological skills.

To protect priests and religious from burnout, we also provide opportunities for retreats, days of reflection or seminars with psychological support. In addition, during the reporting year, we were able to support 4,285 Catholic priests with Mass stipends and nearly 550 religious with subsistence aid.

With our support, more than 4,000 Ukrainian youths were able to participate in holiday camps and retreats during the reporting year – here too, the focus was on coping with war trauma. We also supported the formation of 515 seminarians and 150 novices. Additional funds went toward repairing destroyed infrastructure and procuring vehicles. Overall, in 2025 we financed XXX projects in Ukraine with a total volume of X million euros.



Victims become witnesses of hope

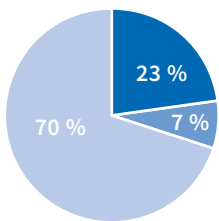
Many Ukrainian priests care for people who are deeply traumatised by the war. One of them is Father Oleksandr Ryepin in Mykolaiv. He told us: “At first, shock, withdrawal, a sense of emptiness and the question ‘why?’ dominate. Many pray silently, and sometimes they are not even able to pray. But over

time, their hearts open, and the pain gradually transforms. Tears are then no longer only an expression of despair but become prayers. It is moving to see that many, despite their own injuries, begin to care for the suffering of others after some time. In this way, victims become witnesses of hope.”



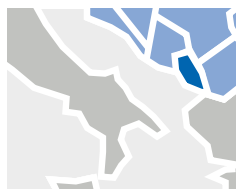
Albania

Aid granted
876,879 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support

Youth at the parish centre of John Paul II in Bathore.



Albania, located on the southern Adriatic coast, has about three million inhabitants. The

majority are Muslim, while only 10% of the inhabitants are Catholic. In a country that declared itself “the first atheist country in the world” in 1967 and in which all religions were severely persecuted for decades,

religious freedom has existed since the political turnaround. However, the Church still has a good deal of work to do to strengthen the faith of a young generation of Catholics. ACN supports the local Church in this major challenge.

The economic crisis of recent years has led to an emigration wave in Albania, particularly among the younger population. The effects of the crisis are





ACN supports National Youth Day

During the “Holy Year of Hope”, ACN was able to support the National Youth Day of the Albanian Church, which was attended by 800 young people from all dioceses of the country. Father Ignazio Bonsignore wrote to us: “The event filled our youth with

excitement and a fresh sense of missionary spirit. Many reported that the shared beauty of the day inspired them to engage more deeply with their faith and helped foster a greater awareness of each person’s individual spiritual journey.”

also felt by the local Church. Another problem is the lack of local vocations. The majority of priests and religious still come from abroad, because even after the end of communist rule, which saw entire generations raised without religion, the number of local young priests is not growing quickly enough.

ACN supports the Church in all six dioceses in the country, for example, by promoting the training of prospec-

tive priests, by providing vehicles for pastoral care in large parishes, through renovation aid and through Mass stipends for priests and subsistence aid for religious sisters. Our aid organisation also supports youth pastoral care to help young people better understand and deepen their faith, so that they can build a solid foundation for their lives.

>> In a country where religion was once targeted for eradication, the Catholic faith is now undergoing a delicate revival. <<



Father Salvatore Reino at the Holy Mass in Lezhë.





In Asia and Oceania, the Church faces a wide variety of challenges that differ greatly from region to region. In many areas, poverty and natural disasters are making life difficult for the population. Rural exodus and migration are also widespread problems that require pastoral and social-charitable responses. While Oceania is largely shaped by Christianity, Christians in most Asian countries are a minority and are often exposed to discrimination and attacks because of their faith. In recent years, the situation has worsened in many countries. ACN stands reliably by the local Churches and helped with 19.4 million euros in 2025 (of which over €0.85 million was allocated to Oceania).

In several Asian countries, Christianity is seen as a harmful foreign influence that threatens the dominance of the ruling party or the perceived religious cohesion of the nation. As a result, nationalist movements and authoritarian systems of government make life difficult for many Christians.



Believers during a procession in the Diocese of Wabag, Papua New Guinea.

>> In Asian countries, Christianity is often perceived as a threat from abroad. <<

ACN assists the local Churches in carrying out their multifaceted tasks. We particularly support the training of priests, religious and laypeople. Promoting family and youth ministry is also high on our list of priorities. The breakdown of families and the uprooting and disorientation of

young people have become global problems that have also impacted Asia and Oceania.

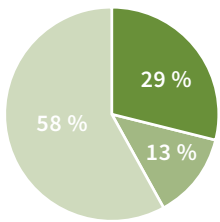
We also provide financial assistance for the construction and renovation of church buildings, as well as for the purchase of vehicles for pastoral work and the provision of catechetical materials. In countries with a Muslim or other religious majority, we sometimes also support initiatives for interreligious dialogue in order to strengthen peaceful coexistence.



Kazakhstan

Aid granted

792,464 Euro



- Pastoral support
 - Training of priests and religious
 - Formation of faith
 - Bibles & books
 - Media help
- Subsistence support
 - Mass stipends
 - Subsistence aid
 - Emergency aid
- Material support
 - Construction/reconstruction
 - Means of transport



Kazakhstan, located in Central Asia, covers a vast territory of more than

2.7 million square kilometres. At the same time, however, the country only has 20.3 million inhabitants. The former Soviet republic has

been independent since 1991. In this multi-ethnic state, 73% of the population are Muslim. 24.3% are Christians – most of them Orthodox. Catholics form a small minority of just under 1%. In order to survive economically, the Catholic community is dependent on help from abroad. ACN has been a reliable partner for them for many years.



Left: A boy in front of a statue of Mary in Korneevka.

Right: Father Leopold Kropfreiter has been serving as a priest in Kazakhstan for 17 years.



A baptism in the Almaty region.



» ACN has become an indispensable part of our pastoral reality in Kazakhstan. «

Father Leopold Kropfreiter, project partner



Consolata Sisters Dorota, Argentina and Irene in the Almaty region.

Most Catholics in Kazakhstan are former deportees or their descendants. They usually have Polish, German, Baltic or Ukrainian roots. The country is considered a successful example of mutual understanding and friendly coexistence between Catholic and Orthodox Christians. There are joint initiatives and a constructive dialogue.

In Kazakhstan, ACN primarily supports the training of priests at the Catholic seminary in Karaganda and also provides construction, renovation and vehicle assistance. In addition, we support religious sisters with subsistence aid, as they carry out essential pastoral and social tasks in the Church. For example, they hold catechesis sessions for children, young people and adults, prepare them to receive the sacraments, organise days of reflection, holiday camps and youth meetings, and care for the elderly, the sick, the lonely and those in need.



ACN builds bridges across borders

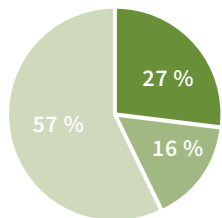
On 1 August 2025, the exhibition “The Shroud of Turin” was opened in the Kazakh capital Astana in the presence of government representatives, religious leaders and international guests. The international exhibition at the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation was made possible with the support of ACN and

the German Malteser organisation as part of a joint initiative of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches of Kazakhstan. In this way, ACN continues to promote the faith, strengthen interdenominational and interreligious dialogue and build bridges across cultures and borders.

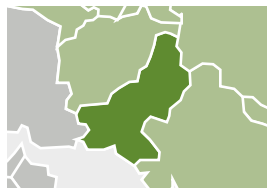


Pakistan

Aid granted
2,264,558 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



Almost 97% of Pakistan's 247 million inhabitants are Muslims. Religious minorities

have a difficult time in the country, as often only Muslims are regarded as full Pakistani citizens. Christians and other non-Muslims face constant pressure in everyday life and have very limited opportunities for social advancement. In addition to discrimination, the local Church also reports an increasing level

of violence against Christians. In view of the major challenges that the Church in Pakistan faces, ACN supports it with extensive aid programmes.

False accusations of blasphemy are frequently used to discredit members of religious minorities. The consequences often include mob violence or years of imprisonment. Social media is also increasingly used to stir up hatred against religious minorities. Particularly worrying are the increasing cases of abduction, forced marriage and forced conversion of Christian and Hindu girls.

» Thank you for your prayers and support. ACN's assistance is truly invaluable for us. «

Bishop Indrias
Rehmat of Faisalabad

Devastation after the acts of violence on 16 August 2023 in Jaranwala.



Christian farm workers, whose settlement in the Karachi district was destroyed by flooding.



ACN provides help for the construction of a Marian shrine

With the support of ACN, a Marian shrine is currently being built in the northern part of the Archdiocese of Islamabad–Rawalpindi. The goal is to establish a pilgrimage site where the Mother of God will be venerated as “Our Lady of Peace and Hope”.

The location is easily accessible, as many Pakistanis like to travel to this region in the summer to escape the heat. The shrine can be visited by both Christians and Muslims, since many Muslims – especially women – also venerate the Virgin Mary.



A liturgical celebration in the parish of St John the Baptist in Tando Allahyar.

Violent attacks on Christian institutions are also common. Sadly, the victims often wait in vain for justice. Even two years after the attacks of 16 August 2023 in the Jaranwala district, which the bishops described as “the most serious attacks against Christians in the history of the country”, none of those responsible has yet been held accountable. During the attacks, 26 churches, 80 Christian homes, church facilities

and rectories were destroyed or severely damaged, and Christian graves were even desecrated.

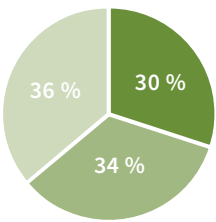
Despite the difficult situation of Christians in Pakistan, the churches are full – mostly with young believers – and parish life is developing dynamically. Catechists are indispensable here for proclaiming the faith. ACN supports their training and promotes various

pastoral programmes to strengthen the faith, for example in the youth ministry. In addition, we support priests through Mass stipends, promote participation in spiritual retreats, provide vehicles for pastoral work and supply funds for the construction and renovation of church buildings.

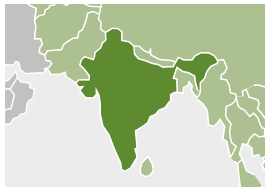


India

Aid granted
7,101,867 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



With almost 1.44 billion inhabitants, India has now surpassed China as the

most populous country in the world. Over 70% of the population profess Hinduism. Muslims, with 15.2%, and Christians, with 5.2%, belong to the religious minorities that suffer discrimination and repression from

Hindu nationalist groups. Accordingly, the situation is very difficult for Christian communities. ACN supports the local Church with a wide range of aid measures so that it can continue to fulfil its pastoral tasks.

Church representatives repeatedly call on the Indian government to protect religious minorities from attacks. However, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), under the leadership of Prime Minister

A celebration in a Catholic parish in eastern India.



>> Christians here are exposed to systematic and long-term oppression. <<

A project partner from the Indian state of Jharkhand.

Narendra Modi, is pursuing the goal of establishing India as a Hindu nation. The government refers to the nationalist ideology of Hindutva, which seeks to present the “Hindu identity” as the only true culture and religion of the country and instrumentalises religion for political purposes.

During the reporting year, the situation of Christians and other religious minorities in India continued to deteriorate. Militant groups further intensified their hostile actions against Christians. Christian churches are increasingly being vandalised, and priests, religious and believers have been attacked, mostly by radical Hindus. Many Christian communities now live in constant fear of violence and attack.

ACN supports the local Church in its pastoral work, especially in the north and north-east of the country, where most Catholics belong to disadvantaged social groups and ethnic minorities. There we help priests and religious with Mass stipends and subsistence aid, provide vehicles for pastoral work in remote and vast areas that are difficult to access and assist in the renovation and construction of church buildings. In addition, we promote the training of future priests and continuing formation programmes for priests, religious and laypeople. We also strengthen church marriage preparation and catechesis initiatives for children and young people.

Meeting of a small Christian community in the state of Tripura.



ACN supports young seminarians

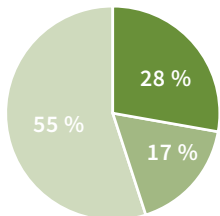
Brothers of the Premonstratensian Order live in the Abbey of Jamtara, which was founded in 1960. They carry out their work in seven states of India and serve 22 parishes. They are particularly active in catechesis, as well as

youth and family ministry, helping Catholics deepen their faith. During the reporting year, ACN once again provided support to 25 young seminarians of the order who are currently undergoing their priestly formation.



Indonesia

Aid granted
707,626 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



The island nation of Indonesia has 281 million inhabitants, around 80%

of whom profess Islam. This makes the country the largest Muslim nation in the world. Christians make up a total of 10% of the population, and Catholics around 3%. While relations between the religions in Indonesia have largely been peaceful in the past,

in recent years there has been an increase in conservative and sometimes violent Islamist groups. Nevertheless, the local Church rejoices in a vibrant faith and in many vocations. ACN primarily supports the Church in the training of priests and religious sisters.

Although many Muslims in Indonesia follow moderate Sunni traditions, there have been increased acts of violence on Indonesian soil following the military defeat of the militias of the “Islamic State”

» There are a gratifying number of vocations to the priesthood and religious life in Indonesia. «

Poor Clare Capuchin Sisters in the convent chapel of St Clare in Gunungsitoli.



Salesian Sisters with school children in Palla.



From left to right:
Poor Clare Capuchin Sisters making hosts,
working in the garden and painting Easter
candles at St Clare Convent in Gunungsitoli.

in Syria and Iraq. Christian churches have also become targets of attacks by radical Islamists. Despite the new dangers, the local Church has much reason for hope. The faith among Christians is strong, and encouragingly, there are many vocations to religious life and the priesthood.

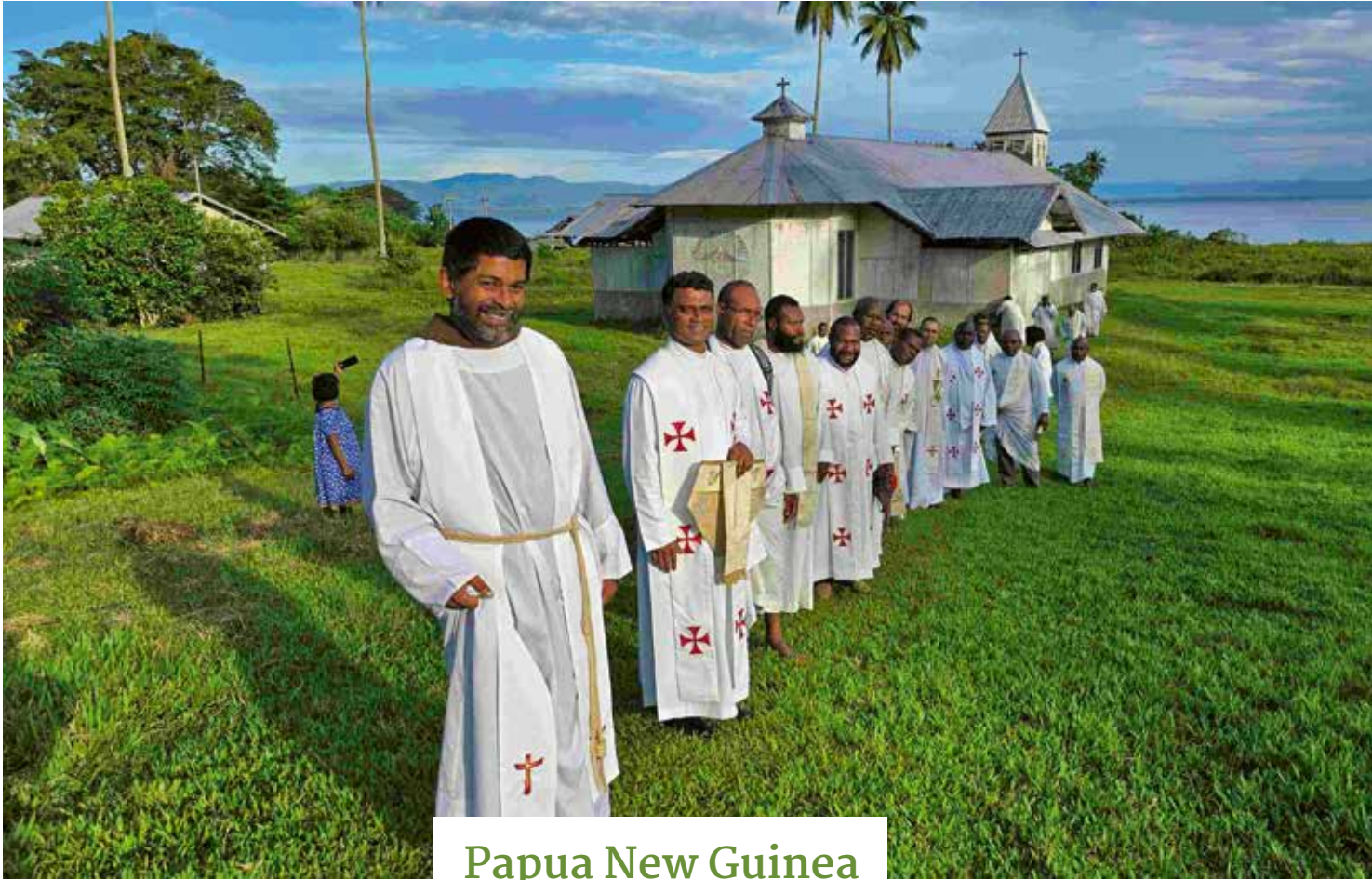
One focus of our aid to the Church in Indonesia is promoting the training and further formation of priests and religious sisters. In order to give religious the opportunity for spiritual deepening and renewal, we also enable them to take part in spiritual retreats. Additionally, we support priests through Mass stipends. Where parishes or convents lack rooms for pastoral work, we also finance construction projects, and in large parishes we help with the purchase of vehicles.



A new village chapel for Golo Popa

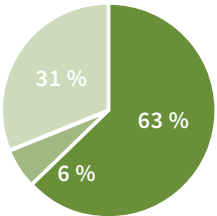
On the Indonesian island of Flores, we were able to support the construction of a village chapel in Golo Popa. Parish priest Ferdinandus Tahul reports: “The construction was completed thanks to the commitment of the faithful and the generous help of ACN. The faithful worked diligently, and the women also took part in the construction work. Now

the community can celebrate church services in the new chapel and has already celebrated its first Christmas there. We see that people are participating more actively in the life of the Church and also that more people are coming to church. Our heartfelt thanks for your generous support, and may God richly bless you!”

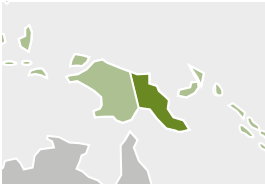


Papua New Guinea

Aid granted
746,922 Euro



- Pastoral support
- Subsistence support
- Material support



The island nation of Papua New Guinea lies in the south-western Pacific and is considered part of the Australian continent. More than 95% of its nearly 10.4 million inhabitants profess Christianity, and around one-quarter of them are Catholic. In the face of rapid development, large parts of the population feel left behind, and poverty remains widespread. Many people find support and guidance above all in their faith. The local Church stands by the faithful with all its strength. ACN supports it in this endeavour.

The Church in Papua New Guinea faces many challenges. For instance, in the largest and most populous state of Oceania, hundreds of different languages are spoken. In addition, the infrastructure in many regions is underdeveloped, which makes mobility in the rugged areas of the country particularly difficult.



Bishop Józef Roszyński of Wewak with seminarians in traditional dress.

Priests and deacons during their annual retreats on Kairiru Island.

>> Thanks to the help of ACN, we can bring the love of Christ to more people. <<

Father Martin Prado, project partner



A priest with believers in the Diocese of Wabag.

Globalisation and digitalisation have now reached the island state, but a large part of the population does not benefit from them. On the contrary. The standard of living is extremely low and prices are disproportionately high because there is hardly any industry, which means that many goods must be imported. At least there is a stable subsistence economy, which allows most people to live from what they grow themselves. However, schooling is still unaffordable for many or only possible through great sacrifice.

The Church responds to the needs of the people, helps them, accompanies them and offers the faithful a spiritual home where they can find hope. To make their work easier, it is especially important to us to support priests and religious through Mass stipends and subsistence aid. We also enable them to take part in spiritual retreats so that they can continue their demanding mission with renewed inner strength. In order to ensure pastoral care in the future, we also promote the formation of future priests. In addition, we

support the Church in faith formation for laypeople, since traditional beliefs and superstition are still often mixed with the Catholic faith. Here it is important to root the Gospel more deeply in people's lives.

To ensure pastoral work in the rugged regions of Papua New Guinea, ACN also helps with the purchase of off-road vehicles. For a four-wheel-drive vehicle that we were able to provide to St Joseph's Parish in Margarima, Bishop Donald Francis Lippert of Mendi thanked us with the following words: "The parish is located in the rugged Hela Province, which is often plagued by brutal tribal conflicts. The Church does not abandon the people here and may be the only ray of light in the midst of this darkness. Thanks to the solidarity of ACN's benefactors, Father George can now regularly visit his faithful in the remote outstations with the new vehicle."

Postulants on a flooded road.





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>> For the love of Christ
urges us on. <<

2 Corinthians 5:14

Our mission

As a Catholic charity, we support the faithful wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in need, through prayer, information and action.

Our vision

A world in which Christianity can thrive everywhere.

Our guidelines

1. We are loyal to the Holy Father. As a Pontifical Foundation, we participate in the universal mission of the Church.
2. We serve the cause of evangelisation. We respond courageously to the challenges of the time following the teachings of the Church.
3. We are committed to the persecuted Church. By sharing testimonies of faith, we build a bridge of charity between our benefactors and beneficiaries.
4. We are custodians of our benefactors' generosity. We run modern, transparent and effective fundraising and administration.



Our values



Faith and Christian love

The foundation of all our activities is Christian faith and love. This includes our fidelity to the Holy Father and the adherence to both the teachings and institutions of the Catholic Church.



Prayer

Regular prayer, personal and common, animates our daily work and strengthens our missionary spirit. It moves us to offer assistance to those who are suffering because of their loyalty to Christ and His Church – on whose prayers we rely as well.



Pastoral commitment

We strive to proclaim the Gospel, be it “welcome or unwelcome” (2 Timothy 4:2), responding courageously to the challenges of the time. We do this when engaging our benefactors and by financing pastoral projects with their contributions.



Unity

Conceived as a “bridge of love” from its origins, ACN serves for unity and reconciliation. We create communion with and between both our benefactors and beneficiaries through prayer, providing information and expressing gratitude.



Service

We fulfil our mission through mercy and humble service, listening carefully to the needs of our partners. We aspire to be a personal source of comfort and strength to our beneficiaries and benefactors.



Openness

Through our support of the Universal Church we promote a respectful dialogue with many cultures around the world. We live this openness ourselves in our manifold encounters both within and outside the Catholic Church.



Accountability

We handle the funds we receive with the highest care, seeking efficiency and measuring impact both in our funding activities and within our internal organization. We work transparently, showing the sources, uses and achievements of the funds we receive.



Trust

Our unshakeable trust in Divine Providence guides us into the future and enables us to place trust in others and, in turn, to be trusted by them. Consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima we are filled with hope and confidence.



» Dear friends, I thank each of you for this work of solidarity. «

Pope Leo XIV to Aid to the Church in Need

Ever since its earliest days, ACN has been geared towards charity and reconciliation, providing assistance to Christians in need. With the support of our bene-

factors, we will remain true to this spirit in future with a view to helping the Church where its believers are threatened most by persecution, discrimination and poverty.



1947 At Pope Pius XII's request, Father Werenfried van Straaten founds ACN (then "Aid to the Eastern Priests") at the Premonstratensian monastery in Tongerlo, Belgium. In a unique reconciliation campaign, donations are collected in Belgium and the Netherlands for displaced Germans, including 3,000 priests.

1965 Petitions also reach us from the Church in Africa, which we proceed to assist with the same commitment as on other continents.

1966 ACN is consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima. The following year, a large international pilgrimage takes place to mark the 50th anniversary of the apparitions.

1950 To provide pastoral care to displaced Germans, 35 buses and trucks are converted into "chapels on wheels" as part of the highly original "chapel truck campaign".

1970 We launch our aid campaign to assist the Church in Haiti, one of the world's poorest countries.

1975 ACN relocates its international headquarters from Rome to Königstein/Taunus.

1952 ACN comes to the aid of persecuted Christians behind the "Iron Curtain". The projects range from helping to renovate churches and train priests to funding radio broadcasts and the book apostolate.

1979 With the Children's Bible, we launch a major project for boosting evangelisation efforts worldwide. To date, the book has been translated into 195 languages and printed and distributed over 51 million times.

1956 After the bloody suppression of the Hungarian uprising against the Stalinist system, ACN helps the local Church get through the crisis.

1984 ACN is recognised by the Holy See as a Universal Public Association of Pontifical Right.

1961 We launch our aid projects for the beleaguered Church in Asia. Following this, the first meeting between Father Werenfried and Mother Teresa takes place in the Home for the Dying in Calcutta.

1989 Following the political turning point in Eastern Europe, ACN provides aid for reconstruction and new evangelisation in the former Eastern bloc countries.

1962 We step up our aid for persecuted and threatened Catholics in the "Catholic continent" of Latin America.

1992 By order of Pope John Paul II, our aid organisation begins to work towards a dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church.





1997 The 50th anniversary of ACN’s efforts on behalf of the Church in need worldwide – an occasion that is celebrated fittingly.

2003 Father Werenfried van Straaten, founder of our aid organisation, dies on 31 January at the age of 90 in his place of residence, Bad Soden/Taunus.

2007 The Middle East conflict causes more and more difficulties for the Church in the region, prompting Pope Benedict XVI to ask ACN to intensify its activities for Christians in the Middle East.

2011 An eventful year for ACN: our aid organisation is re-founded as a Foundation of Pontifical Right by Pope Benedict XVI and subsequently restructured. When the Syrian war breaks out, ACN begins extensive aid and solidarity campaigns, including the “Light a Candle for Peace in Syria” initiative.

2014 ACN initiates an emergency campaign to allow Christians in Iraq to remain in their homeland. The project is still going strong to this day, with more than 5,000 houses having already been renovated. ACN also becomes the sole shareholder of the YOUCAT Foundation and therefore its publisher. ACN opens its first Asian office in South Korea. This is followed by further offices in Mexico, Malta, Colombia, Slovakia and the Philippines up until 2019.

2017 To mark the 70th anniversary of our aid organisation, ACN invites benefactors from all over the world on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Fatima in Portugal. In the same year, Aid to the Church in Need

assumes responsibility for the annual One Million Children Praying the Rosary campaign.

2019 With the Safeguarding project, ACN is helping the church to introduce measures to prevent abuse and is encouraging safeguarding courses for priests and religious worldwide.

2020 Our foundation helps the Church worldwide in their efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic and grants special assistance to cushion the impact of the coronavirus crisis for local churches. Following the explosion in Beirut’s harbour, ACN is launching a major aid campaign for Lebanon.

2022 Immediately after the start of the war in Ukraine, our aid organisation launches a large-scale relief operation to enable the local church to assist those who had fled their homes, suffering people and to continue pastoral care.

2023 Immediately after the outbreak of the war in Gaza, ACN launches a relief operation for Christian families in the Holy Land, especially in the Gaza Strip.

2025 Due to the further escalation of the war in the Holy Land, ACN steps up its relief efforts in cooperation with the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem. Additionally, extensive emergency aid is provided in Lebanon, which is also severely affected by the war. Following the resignation of Cardinal Mauro Piacenza (81), who had held this post since 2011, Pope Leo XIV has appointed Cardinal Kurt Koch as the new president of the foundation.





Aid to the Church in Need and its organisational structure

Kurt Cardinal Koch
President



The **Superior Council**, under the chairmanship of its **President**, is responsible for the basic content and guidelines of the charity.

On behalf of the Superior Council and under the chairmanship of the **Executive President**, the **Administrative Council** ensures the statutory management of the charity.

Regina Lynch
Executive President



In the **General Council**, the presidents of the 23 National Sections advise the foundation and vote on all the significant decisions of the Superior Council.

In cooperation with the Ecclesiastical Assistants of the National Sections, the **International Ecclesiastical Assistant** is responsible for the spiritual life of the foundation.

Ferdinand Habsburg
Secretary General



The **General Secretariat** in Königstein/Ts. centrally manages the entire funding activities and the financial, technical and administrative needs of the foundation. It supports the National Sections in providing media material and produces press and social media content and sound and video productions.

Guido Gröning
Director Finance and Administration



The **23 National Sections** inform the benefactors and the public on the situation and needs of suffering Christians. They initiate prayer campaigns, acquire new donors and are responsible for the foundation's relations with its benefactors.



Father Anton Lässer, CP
International Ecclesiastical Assistant



Marco Mencaglia
Director of Projects



Mark von Riedemann
Director for Public Affairs and Religious Freedom

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Aid to the
Church in Need

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