



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN CANADA

acn-canada.org
info@acn-canada.org

Annual Report 2019

Aid to the Church in Need (Canada) Inc.
P.O. Box 670, Stn. H
Montreal, QC, H3G 2M6
(514) 932-0552
1-800-585-6333

Dear Friends,

Mercy is the mark of God's nature, as it is precisely in God's mercy that His almighty power is revealed. This is reaffirmed again and again each year in our papal charity. God demonstrates to us, above all through your generosity, that He does not abandon His children, His Church, in times of trial. His mercy is greater than our every need.

We can only look back with great humility on the past year when, through your generous love, we supported 5,230 projects in 1,162 different dioceses around the world—more than in 2018—allowing God's Mercy to work in the world. Despite many economic difficulties in the countries where our national offices are based, the level of your donations remained high. However, we ask you to stay as open and generous this coming year, as we all know that this year the need will be greater than ever as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic. We anticipate an increase in requests and appeals for help, for the living charity and deeds of mercy that are the hallmark of this papal charity, and of the Church, too. More than ever today the Church, and the world, need to see action reflecting the sign of God's Almighty Power.

United in our trust in God, and with heartfelt gratitude to you all,

We remain,



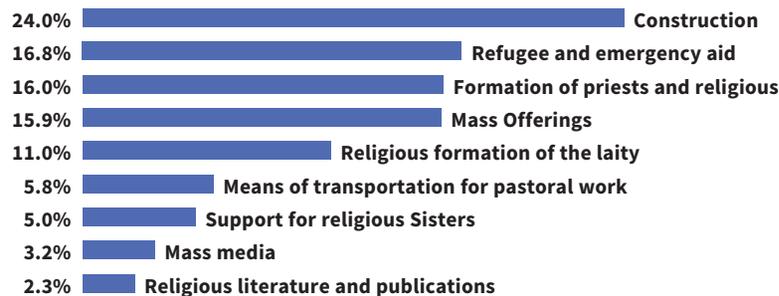
Thomas Heine-Geldern,
International
Executive President



Marie-Claude Lalonde,
National Director



Where your help went:



• 1,315 construction projects

A good third of all our construction projects were in the Middle East and involved the rebuilding and repair of churches, religious houses, pastoral centers and family homes for the returning Christian refugees. Most of the other projects for churches, religious houses and retreat centers that we supported were in Africa.

• 1,378,635 Mass Offerings

Almost 1.4 million Masses—that means that Holy Mass was celebrated approximately every 23 seconds somewhere in the world for the intentions of our benefactors. At the same time, we were able to help roughly 1 in 10 of the 414,582 Catholic priests around the world. Around 38% of these Mass offerings went to the Church in Africa.

• 16,206 Seminarians supported

Altogether there are 115,328 Catholic seminarians around the world. One in seven of them receives support from ACN, most of these are in Africa (8,039), followed by Latin America (3,061) and Eastern Europe (3,254). Once again, this year particular emphasis was laid on formation and growth in maturity.

• 13,862 religious Sisters supported in their apostolate or training

Most projects were for religious formation and other studies for a total of 4,416 Sisters and 1,035 novices. Subsistence aid for religious Sisters was divided among 3,529 active and 2,190 contemplative religious.

• 663 means of transportation for pastoral work

This included bicycles, motorcycles, cars and boats. In 2019, as before, most of these were for priests, religious Sisters and catechists engaged in the pastoral and missionary outreach.

Altogether we supported 5,230 projects in 2019, 211 more than in the previous year.

Overall, the number of requests and applications rose slightly (to 7,154) but sadly, over one in four of these projects, or 2,041 in total, had to be declined. The average cost of the projects supported was 21,596 dollars*. We were able to provide help in 139 countries and 1,162 dioceses—over one third of all the 3,017 dioceses in the world. We helped over 24,000 catechists and other pastoral workers. And we supplied some 1.7 million Bibles and other religious books in numerous languages, thereby helping millions of people to come to know God better, to pray to him, sing His praises and deepen their personal faith. Once again, this year most of these books and publications went to Latin America and Africa. 24% of the total aid given was for construction projects, followed by emergency aid, particularly for refugees, and support for training and formation.

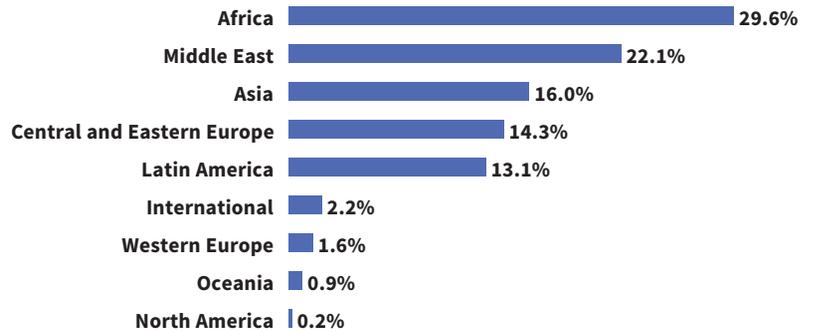
*Figures in Canadian dollars



Facts and figures

- Offices in **23** countries
- More than **330,000** benefactors worldwide
- **\$157,954,432** donations and legacies
- Additionally **\$7.28** million surplus from previous years used in 2019
- Project partners in **139** countries
- **5,230** supported projects worldwide
- **80.4%** of the donations used are allocated in mission-related expenditures

Aid allocated per region



Income from donations and legacies came to \$157.95 million. Together with \$7.28 million carried over from previous years we were able to fund ACN's work to a value of \$165.2 million.*

Four-fifths of this amount (80.4%, or \$132.8 million) was expenditure relating to the Church's mission. Of this, 84.9% (\$112.7 million) enabled us to support 5,230 of the 7,154 project requests received from around the globe. 15.1% of it (\$20.1 million) went on informing about, and advocating for, the plight of the persecuted and suffering Church worldwide.

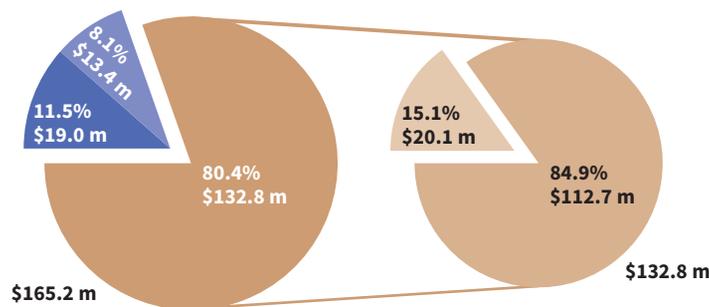
Essential administrative expenditure accounted for 8.1% (\$13.4 million) of the total, while fundraising and publicity made up 11.5% (\$19.0 million). Once again in 2019, legacies accounted for a significant proportion of your contributions for the support of the Church (\$29.9 million, or 18.9% of our income in 2019). Together with our project partners in the suffering Church, we remember these departed benefactors with gratitude.

A detailed activities report is available to consult on demand, please call 1-800-585-6333.

These international financial statements have been audited and certified by KPMG.

Detailed use of donations

- Mission-related expenditures
- Administration
- Fundraising and information work



Mission-related expenditures

- Project work
- Information, Evangelization and Advocacy

*Other activities, not funded by donations (e.g. sale of religious literature and other items), yielded additional income of \$5.2 million. The initial amounts have been calculated in Euro. The exchange rate used for Canadian dollars in this report is **1.4858 CAD**.

Martyrdom and survival

Once again last year Africa and the Middle East were the regions receiving most of our aid, although the focus in the Middle East shifted from Iraq (\$8.3 million) to Syria (\$11.3 million). After helping rebuild the homes of returning Christians in the region, we began to address the rebuilding of Church infrastructure. Churches and religious houses were repaired and restored—including Al-Tahira Cathedral in Qaraqosh, the largest church in Iraq. In Qaraqosh alone, Islamic State terrorists desecrated and burned no fewer than 11 churches and 70 religious houses belonging to the Christian communities. Yet these structures are traditionally at the centre of Christian life in this region. In Syria, where the war was still raging during 2019, our aid aimed to ensure the survival of the Christians in the country.

New and dangerous trends are now emerging in Africa. In the north of Nigeria they are already a Church of martyrs. Throughout the Sahel region many missionaries and catechists have paid with their lives for their commitment to Christ. Yet, despite the persecution and oppression, particularly by Islamism, the youthful Church in Africa is growing as nowhere else. Last year, in Nigeria, Cameroon and Burkina Faso alone, we supported a range of small projects amounting to \$4.5 million. And the Democratic Republic of the Congo is likewise a priority country for our aid in Africa, receiving funding of no less than \$4.9 million.

Another emerging hotspot for our aid was Venezuela. Unlike Brazil, where fundamentalist sectarian groups in particular make life difficult for the Church, Venezuela, a once wealthy and potentially still prosperous country, suffers from a bankrupt political system and a lack of basic necessities and medical care. For many people, the Church is the only source of security. Something similar could be said of Pakistan and India, where Islamic and Hindu religious extremism are threatening the lives of Christians.



Gathered together for a baptism in Benin. And right at the front a young boy is holding a message of thanks to ACN. Thanks for your support for the Church's mission.