# Russian Church Abroad raises funds in aid to refugees who found asylum at Svyatogorsk Monastery

Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York has appealed to his flock to help people who have become refugees as a result of the confrontation in southeast Ukraine ad have found refuge at the Svyatogorsk Monastery.

‘It has been already three years since Ukraine is engrossed in terrible internecine strife. Civil people are dying, migrating, and becoming internally displaced’, he states in his appeal published on the site of the Russian Church Abroad, ‘Many residents of the Donetsk region are being forced to seek refuge in the Holy Dormition Lavra in Svyatogorsk. The Svyatogorsk Monastery has always been the spiritual heart of Eastern Ukraine, and nowadays, it is also a mercy center for all Donbas’.

His Eminence Hilarion reminded his flock that as soon as the fighting broke out, the Svyatogorsk Lavra, with the blessing of the Father Superior of the monastery, Metropolitan Arseny, started taking in civilians whose lives were in danger. The Pilgrims’ guesthouse was given over for housing refugees. In the midst of the warfare, up to 1,000 refugees have lived in the Lavra, the majority of which were also fed in the monastery for free.

At present, the Svyatogorsk Lavra hosts 200 people, who, due to various circumstances, find it impossible to return home. Among them are children with their mothers, elderly women, the disabled, and those who have nowhere to return – their houses have been destroyed or it is still very dangerous with continued fighting, for instance, at the outskirts of Donetsk. Many people have been living in the Lavra for almost two years already.

‘Dear brothers and sisters! At this sorrowful moment for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, we can’t remain on the sidelines’, the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad appeals to his flock, ‘I urge you to intensify your prayers for peace in the long-suffering Ukrainian land, to provide all possible assistance, and collect donations for the Svyatogorsk Holy Dormition Lavra, which became home for many refugees’.

*DECR Communication Service*

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