

**Richard**



**Bishop of Arundel & Brighton**

## **MESSAGE CONCERNING THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The conflict in Ukraine is bringing immense suffering to so many thousands of people and a deep crisis to the world. Our hearts go out to all those who are affected and especially to those who are living with the tragic loss of a loved one.

This conflict demands our action, in a number of ways. As followers of Christ, our first response must always be one of prayer – out of which all else flows. Our prayers are so very necessary: for those caught up in the conflict, for those who have died, families mourning the loss of family members and for those now facing lives scarred by the physical and mental impact of warfare. We must pray also for a fruitful outcome to the diplomatic efforts and negotiations taking place to bring about an end to the conflict.

I shall be leading the Rosary in the Cathedral on Ash Wednesday at 6.00pm, prior to the Evening Mass and on Saturday, after the 6.00pm Mass I shall preside at Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – both times of prayer focussing on prayer for peace in Ukraine. I encourage you to join in these times of prayer, both of which will be livestreamed.

I ask that parishes hold Holy Hours this coming Sunday and, if possible, on each Sunday in Lent, praying for peace in the world, especially in Ukraine. Please pray for the mission of the Ukrainian Church in this country in all the care and support it gives to the Ukrainian community.

In addition to such times of prayer in our parishes and homes, I ask you to reach out very specially to Ukrainian families in our parish communities, schools and in your locality, all of whom will be especially anxious in these difficult times. There has been much talk nationally about the need to welcome refugees fleeing the war. We have our refugee project already in place and I do urge you to be ready to offer a welcome to those who may arrive in our area in the time ahead.

Let us be committed and resolute in our support and care for our sisters and brothers in these dark days as we respond to the call to be instruments of the peace that is the gift of the Risen Lord.

With every Blessing.

*+Richard*

28<sup>th</sup> February 2022