



Eparchy workers with refugees at the border crossing into Slovakia. As of March 11, 2022, this was now the busiest border crossing from Ukraine into the European Union.

<https://img43-ua.redtram.com/news/610583314.jpg>

As of March 12, Transcarpathia Oblast is now home to 300,000 people who have fled from other parts of Ukraine. Because the Oblast is behind the Carpathian Mountains and the westernmost province, people see it as a safe refuge from the assaults of the Russian army and air force. In addition, over 400,000 people have crossed into Slovakia or Hungary through the oblast.

The Eparchy (diocese) of Mukachevo is ministering to this enormous wave of desperate people. The province normally is home to only 1.2 million people, and the eparchy serves 320,000 parishioners in 457 parishes and missions. The eparchy's relief efforts are coordinated with the Latin rite diocese of Mukachevo, the Reformed Church, Evangelical Church, the Hungarian Roman and Greek Catholic Churches, the Knights of Malta, and Caritas Austria and Caritas Hungary. Cardinal Michael Czerny was sent by Pope Francis to report on the situation in Transcarpathia, and he met with the Catholic and

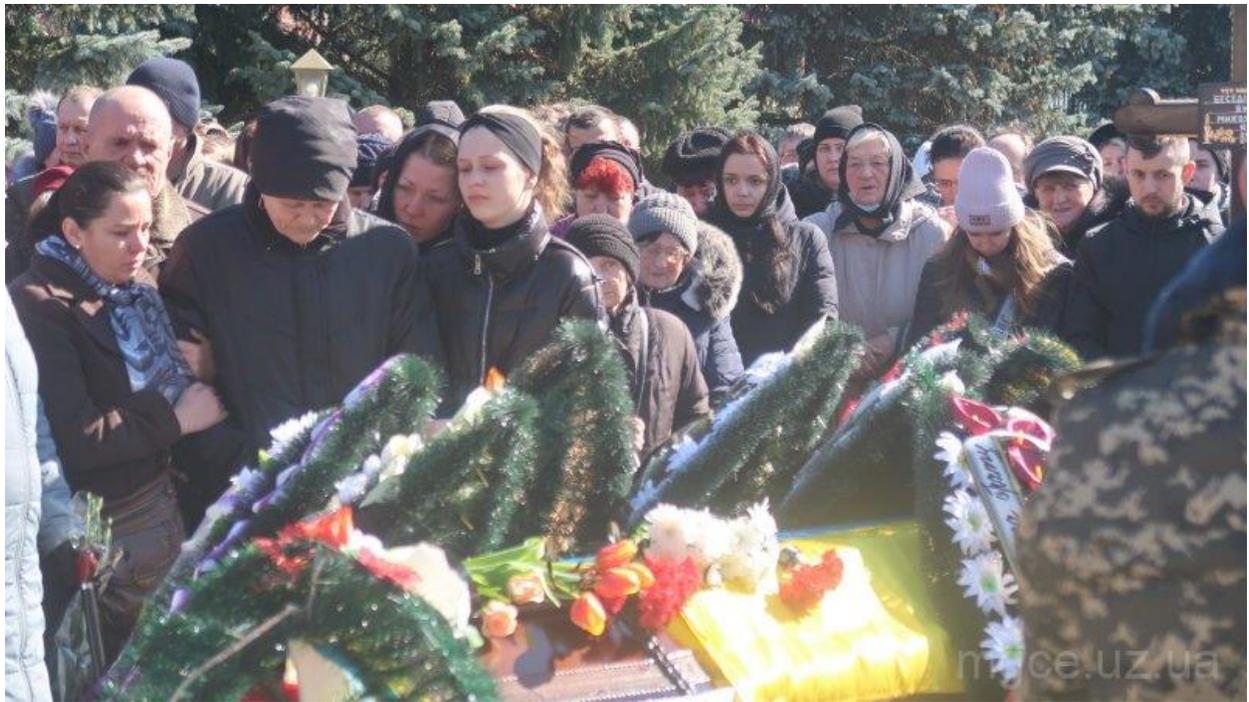
Reformed bishops along with the parish clergy and government workers. The head of Caritas Ukraine emphasized to the cardinal ***“We do not want to return to Soviet slavery.”*** The eparchy is housing refugees in parish houses in towns all across the Transcarpathia Oblast and in the Father Elemir Ortutai College in Berehove.

Unfortunately, there are also funerals for local soldiers. Huge crowds go to the cemeteries to join the mourning families and those members of their units able to travel from the front lines to attend. Although Transcarpathia has escaped bombing and sabotage, it has not escaped loss.

Photos are from the joint funeral for soldiers Taras Haiduk, age 21, and Jan Besedovsky, age 23, celebrated by Bishop Lushchak on March 11, 2022. They were buried side-by-side. Both men would be alive today if not for this unnecessary war.



[https://mgce.uz.ua/wp-content/gallery/pohoron-uzh/img\\_4881.jpg](https://mgce.uz.ua/wp-content/gallery/pohoron-uzh/img_4881.jpg)



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