

Annual report 2017



Aid to the Church in Need

www.aidtochurch.org

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Dear Friends,

The Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, likes to quote the artist André Heller who, during his widely acclaimed address to mark the 80th anniversary of the Nazi occupation of Austria, noted that the universal language of mankind is compassion, or at least should be. We're sure you'd agree that giving practical expression to compassion is a decisive step in the direction of living Christian charity. Especially when the reason for it lies in our desire to respond in some small way to the love of God for us and imitate the love of Christ.

As you can read in this annual report, in 2017 hundreds of thousands of benefactors around the world once again gave practical expression to this spirit of compassion and love, following the example of Jesus himself. This has enabled us, through over 5,300 projects, to further reinforce the bridge that links you and us to our suffering brothers and sisters in material and spiritual need.

For this generosity and for your accompanying prayers we, as the trustees of your loving offerings, pass on our sincere and heartfelt thanks to you.



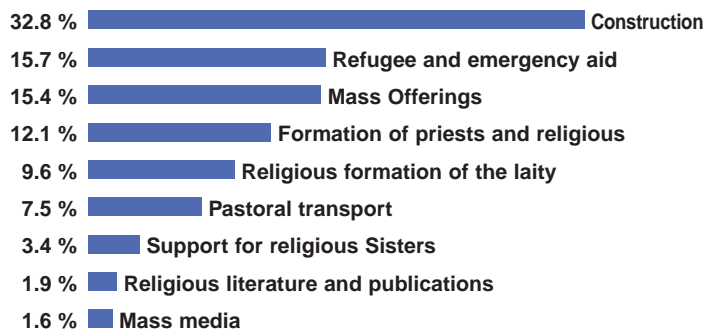
Bernard Toutounji,
National Director



Thomas Heine-Geldern,
International
Executive President

Bernard Toutounji Thomas Heine-Geldern

Where your help went:



• 1,212 construction projects

You helped to build chapels, churches, cathedrals, convents, presbyteries and seminaries, many in regions devastated by natural disasters. One third of these projects were for churches.

• 1,504,105 Mass Offerings

You helped one priest in every 10 with your offerings (40,383 priests in total), especially in Africa (15,440) and Asia (10,748). Every 21 seconds Mass was celebrated somewhere in the world for the intentions of our benefactors.

• 13,643 seminarians helped by you in 2017

This was the most we've helped in the last 20 years. You supported one in every nine seminarians around the world (in 2016 it was one in 11). Most of them were in Africa (5,486), Latin America (2,919) and Asia (2,101).

• 12,801 religious Sisters supported in their training and/or apostolate

That equates to one Sister in every 52 (in 2016 it was 1 in 62). In most cases it was a matter of basic or ongoing formation.

• 424 cars – 257 motorcycles – 429 bicycles – 4 trucks – 3 buses – 3 boats

Most of the cars were for Africa and Eastern Europe; most of the bicycles for Africa and Latin America.



In 2017 you funded a total of 5,357 projects

That was 54 projects more than the previous year. Yet sadly, despite this, one quarter of all project requests received (1,933 projects precisely) had to be rejected.

Since 2011, the year of the so-called "Arab Spring", ACN has sent around AUD\$110.5 million to the crisis regions of the Middle East – 25.5 million of this in the last year (2017) alone. This aid is likely to have to continue again at the same level this year.

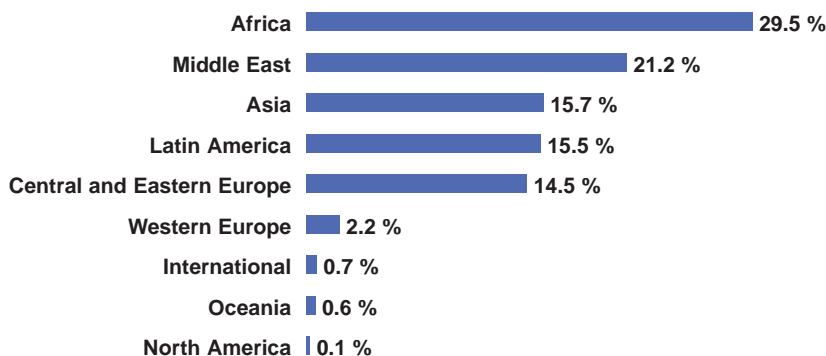
As in previous years, the largest proportion of our funding was for construction projects. It accounted for 32.8% of the total, followed by refugee and other emergency aid, and by support for religious formation. This included support for 37,797 catechists and lay pastoral helpers.



Facts and figures

- Offices in **23** countries
- More than **368,000** benefactors worldwide
- AUD\$**182,736,571** donations, legacies and other income
- Surplus of AUD\$**2.8** million to be used in 2018
- Project partners in **149** countries
- **5,357** approved projects worldwide
- **82.5** % of the funds used are allocated in mission-related expenditures

Aid allocated per region



In 2017 we received over 7,500 aid requests from all over the world. Thanks to our generous benefactors, we were able to allocate a total of AUD\$179.9 million in aid monies. The vast majority of this – 82.5% of our annual budget – was for mission-related expenses, specifically project work, information and media work, and spiritual activities.

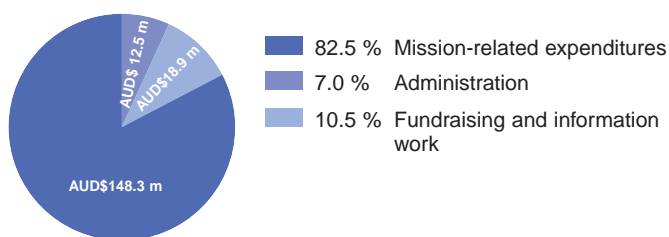
Needless to say, we cannot achieve this without administrative, publicity and fundraising expenses, but we strive to use these as efficiently as possible so that we can pass on the greatest possible proportion to our Christian brothers and sisters in need.

Which is why in 2017 we were able to support a total of 5,357 projects in 149 countries with a total of AUD\$124.6 million.

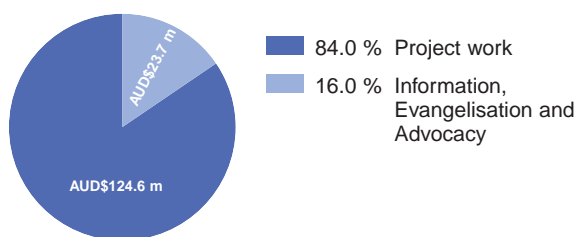
An additional AUD\$23.7 million enabled us to campaign worldwide, reporting on the situation of the persecuted and suffering Church, publicising her testimonies of faith and campaigning for her rights through political channels.

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

Detailed use of funds



Mission-related expenditures



“Go into all the world” (Mk 16:15)

In 2017 the largest single slice of our funding went to the Middle East – Iraq and Syria. This surely needs little explanation – rebuilding the Christian towns and villages in Iraq, help the Church respond to the civil war in Syria, where over half a million have been killed, by providing emergency aid for the refugees (over half the population)... Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, our “Marshall plan” for the Nineveh Plains was able to provide AUD\$10.52 million, so that by this spring almost half of the Christians forced to flee in 2014 had returned home. Altogether, our aid to Iraq came to around AUD\$13.7 million, including the reconstruction programme, support for religious Sisters, Mass offerings, and emergency aid for internal refugees and others in dire needs. For Syria the figure was AUD\$8.5 million. Iraq received more aid than any other country, followed by India in second place (with 8.63 million), Syria in third place, Ukraine in fourth (6.9 million), Brazil in fifth (5.72 million) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in sixth (5 million). Analysing our aid region by region, we see that the need is greatest where the Church witnesses to Christ in a hostile environment. As in the Middle East, she survives in those places thanks to the support of the universal Church. And she is growing in places such as in Africa and India. In India between 500 and 1,000 priests are ordained each year. And the number of seminarians is also rising; at the moment there are over 15,000. But Africa is the continent where the Church is growing fastest. This is where most of the aid goes and where most of the requests come from. In Eastern Europe, Ukraine remains the main priority country. As for Latin America, while it remains the “most Catholic continent”, on account of the rapid growth of the sects, it particularly needs catechetical resources.



Nowhere is there a greater wealth of vocations than in Africa, and nowhere are there more seminarians than on this continent. Africa's priests depend on your Mass offerings and your financial support. On behalf of all of them, Father Aimé Mobwete, from the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville) says a big thank you.