

The presidency of Justice and Peace Europe on a solidarity visit to Ukraine

From 12 to 13 February, Maria Hammershoy and Archbishop Antoine Hérouard, the co-presidents of Justice and Peace Europe, visited Lviv in Ukraine. They were accompanied by Stefan Lunte, the secretary general of Justice and Peace Europe. The delegation responded to an invitation of Yuriy Pidlisny, the President of the Commission for Family and Society of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The commission is member of the network of thirty European Justice and Peace Commissions. In the course of their stay in Ukraine they were received by the Greek Catholic Archbishop Ihor Vozniak CSsR of Lviv and his auxiliary bishop Volodymyr Hrutsa CSsR. They met Father Bogdan Prach, the former rector and vice-president of the senate of the Ukrainian Catholic University, and the President of Caritas Ukraine Tetiana Stawnychy. They visited several military cemeteries and witnessed the damage done to buildings by Russian missile attacks. They prayed and celebrated Mass for the victims of the war. On their way back they were received by Archbishop Adam Szal and his predecessor Archbishop em Josef Michalik in Przemysl on the Polish side of the Polish Ukrainian border.

Resuming their visit, Archbishop Hérouard said: “Through our visit here we better understood how the Ukrainian people is not only defending its freedom. Through their sacrifice they also defend the idea of a free and democratic Europe as a whole.” Maria Hammershoy added: “Protecting the life and dignity of the human person, as well as sharing the grief of war is an ongoing concern. In caring for the victims of war, listening to their stories and supporting their basic needs, the Church in Ukraine demonstrates, through her structures, who she is.”

The delegation of Justice and Peace Europe thanked the commission for Family and Society for the invitation and explored the possibility to organise a larger gathering of the network in Ukraine in the forthcoming years. They had travelled to Ukraine after a meeting with secretaries general of national Justice and Peace commissions from 9 – 11 February in Berlin. The theme of this meeting was Solidarity with Ukrainian refugees and with Ukraine and the participants had adopted a [statement](#) on this theme.

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