



Dear Friends,

Over the last two weeks, we have all been shocked by news from the war in Ukraine. I know that Christians across the Diocese will be feeling deep concern for the suffering of Ukrainians and the devastation that the invasion has caused.

On Saturday, Winchester Cathedral is holding a vigil of prayer, reflection and action for the people of Ukraine. The Cathedral is inviting everyone to bring a candle, or daffodil, which they can lay down in the cathedral to show that they stand in solidarity with those who are suffering. Hundreds of candles will be lit and laid out on the cathedral floor to create a large outline of the map of Ukraine - a symbol of hope that even in the depths of darkness, light will prevail. We would like to encourage as many people as possible to join us at this event at 11am on Saturday, further details are available [here](#). The vigil will also be streamed on the Cathedral's website [here](#).

As a Diocese, we are united in anguish for the plight of the people of Ukraine, whose country and lives are being devastated by this evil war. Thank you for all you are doing to lead our communities in lament, prayer, and generous giving as the crisis unfolds. There are some helpful prayer and other resources available [here](#). The Diocese in Europe and USPG have launched a joint emergency appeal, and if you would like to support the appeal, further details are available [here](#).

The Home Office is working to launch a Humanitarian Sponsorship scheme that will be the main route for Ukrainian refugees to gain entry to the UK. We are writing to you today to ask you to register your churches to be first in line to help, and you can do this through the Sanctuary Foundation, which was launched this weekend.

This is open to churches, business and schools too. It is not a scheme to house refugees - that will be the Government's responsibility. It is about being willing to be the Community Sponsor for a refugee family; e.g. to meet them at the airport, befriend them, and help them access services and support as they settle in or near your parish. It takes 30 seconds to register, and you can do so here:- [www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk](http://www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk)

If you do register, we would be pleased to know, so that our example can perhaps encourage others.

With our love and prayers,

+Debbie and +David