

U.S. bishops' Migration chairman welcomes Temporary Protected Status designation for Ukraine, urges support for refugees

WASHINGTON - On March 3, 2022, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas designated Ukraine for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). TPS allows foreign nationals to remain and work in the United States during a period in which it is deemed unsafe for them to return to their home country.

In response to this designation and the growing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, issued the following statement:

"I have watched with deep concern, along with so many others around the world, the unfolding events in Ukraine and the devastation facing the Ukrainian people. Many Ukrainians have demonstrated incredible resolve and bravery in the face of danger over recent days. Many others, especially children and the elderly, have been forced to seek safety, either within Ukraine or in neighboring countries. In these internally displaced persons and refugees, we are reminded of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt and the vulnerability of our infant Lord.

"We welcome the Secretary's designation of TPS for Ukraine, which provides important protections for Ukrainians already in the United States. As Catholics, we believe wholeheartedly in protecting the sanctity of every human life. This includes addressing situations in which people are needlessly put into harm's way.

"The United Nations has indicated that this conflict could result in five million refugees fleeing Ukraine. As we have for many decades, the Catholic Church in the United States will continue to welcome and serve refugees from all walks of life. Though the importance of humanitarian assistance cannot be understated, we also call on the Biden Administration and Congress to ensure that the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program receives all necessary resources to reflect our country's true capacity for providing refuge and welcome.

"I join my brother, Archbishop Gomez, in his solidarity with our Holy Father and the Church around the world in praying for peace to prevail. May Saint Joseph, who once sought safety for his own family, intercede for us and all those forced to leave their homes in the face of violence."