



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on March 4, 2022

Ukraine's Bishops Appeal to Pope for Help Ending War

Ukraine's Catholic bishops are asking Pope Francis to consecrate their country and Russia in the midst of the current invasion. In a short [letter](#) posted on their website the bishops referenced a 100-year-old prophesy recognized by the Catholic Church as holding the key to peace. They specifically asked the pontiff to fulfill a condition established in the revelation. A translated copy of their letter reads:

Holy Father!

In these hours of immeasurable pain and terrible ordeal for our people, we, the bishops of the Episcopal Conference of Ukraine, are spokesmen for the unceasing and heartfelt prayer, supported by our priests and consecrated persons, which comes to us from all Christian people, for Your Holiness to dedicate our Motherland and Russia.

Responding to this prayer, we humbly ask Your Holiness to publicly perform the act of consecration of Ukraine and Russia to the Sacred Immaculate Heart of Mary, as requested by the Blessed Virgin in Fatima.

May the Mother of God, Queen of Peace, accept our prayer: Regina pacis, ora pro nobis! [Queen of Peace, pray for us!]



Pope Francis (AP Images)

The reference to [Fatima](#) denotes what many believe to be a series of apparitions of Mary, the mother of Jesus, to three children in Portugal in 1917. Pope Francis often mentions the events, most recently citing one of them in a [general audience](#) on October 13 when he said, "Today we recall the last apparition of Our Lady of Fatima."

The Fatima Center, located in Ontario, Canada, [explains](#) that in these apparitions "the Blessed Virgin Mary ... foretold that the world would be punished for its sins by wars, famines," and other calamities. She accurately predicted the second World War to begin "in the reign of Pius XI," who was pope from 1922 until 1939, and warned of further chastisements beyond that.



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The child seers reported her to have said, “To prevent this I come to ask the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart ...” along with other prayers and penances. She promised, “If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, she [Russia] will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church ... various nations will be annihilated.” She later specified that God wants the pope to make the consecration of Russia “in union with all the bishops of the world... promising to save it by this means.”

Despite the remarkably simple request and attractive payoff, no pope has stepped up, though some have performed consecrations of the world: Pius XII in 1942; John Paul II in 1982, 1983 and 1984; Benedict XVI in 2019 and Francis in 2013. It is a logical question to ask why these popes, all of whom approved of the messages of Fatima and professed belief in them, snub that one part.

LifeSiteNews, which is gathering signatures on a petition about the issue, [reported](#) that a “growing number of Catholics and high-ranking prelates have been asking Pope Francis to perform the consecration in recent years.” It [quoted](#) American Cardinal Raymond Burke’s 2017 appeal in which he said that by the consecration, Christ would “bring peace to the whole world.” He underscored the need during the Covid-19 pandemic, saying in 2020, “The consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is more needed today than ever.”

There is no indication yet that Pope Francis shares Cardinal Burke’s sense of urgency, or that he intends to respond to his Ukrainian bishops’ request. The same day those prelates sent their appeal — March 2, which was Ash Wednesday and marked the beginning of the penitential season of Lent — the pope called for a world-wide day of fasting and prayer for peace in Ukraine. According to an [Inside the Vatican podcast](#), “The Vatican believes it can be a mediator for peace in this war, but it also has to negotiate through the treacherous and sensitive terrain of interchurch politics as Putin moves to manipulate the split between Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox believers.” Francis even made an unpublicized visit last week to the Russian Federation ambassador in Rome, asking for a truce to allow for negotiations.

The result? “Ukrainians have made very clear that they would welcome the mediation of the Holy See,” a senior Vatican official told one reporter. “No such indication has come from Russia.”

Francis may have a long wait for a response from Putin, but for those who believe in the Fatima apparitions, heaven has been waiting longer for a response from the pope. It is reasonable for Catholics to wonder why their pontiff cannot find time to fit in a simple prayer in the meantime.



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