

# St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Church

VIEWS FROM THE PEWS | MAY 5, 2019



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## CNEWA

I would like to introduce you to CNEWA – Catholic Near East Welfare Association, a Canadian agency that receives donations and in turn directs them to CARITAS UKRAINE.

Caritas Ukraine work first began in 1992, a year after Ukraine declared independence. It was set up by local Greek Catholic communities to distribute humanitarian assistance to poor families. However, the needs of society forced Caritas' activity in Ukraine to expand which led to the formation of the international charitable foundation Caritas Ukraine in 1994.

Today, it works to coordinate the efforts of charitable organisations run by local Ukrainian Greek Catholic churches and it is endorsed by our Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk. Caritas Ukraine provides humanitarian assistance in the form of clothing, footwear and other necessary items to hundreds of people a week in Ukraine. Its winter assistance programme provided nearly 2,500 individuals assistance during the winters of 2012 and 2013, distributing clothing and fuel during the extended period of below average temperatures.

Caritas Ukraine's social service programmes have established rehabilitation centres for individuals struggling with substance abuse, they provide reintegration assistance for Ukrainian migrants, render direct assistance and seminars to prevent human trafficking, assist incarcerated individuals and provide home care to the elderly and those living with HIV/AIDS. Moreover, their soup kitchens at the regional Caritas organisations feed hundreds of disadvantaged individuals every week.

St Stephen's distributed funds from its International Charity Trust Fund to this organization and I would like to share with you a letter below we received from CNEWA about Yuriy. By Mary Chudyk

*"I have shewed you  
all things, how that  
so labouring ye  
ought to support the  
weak, and to  
remember the words  
of the Lord Jesus,  
how he said, it is  
more blessed to give  
than to receive."  
Acts 20:25*

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Dear Friends,

**His name is Yuriy, a Ukrainian man who under Soviet rule was locked up for 25 years in an institution for the intellectually challenged.** There he was left totally isolated and abandoned. He was seen as a disgrace to society, something to be hidden, and this lack of care left him tormented with behavioural issues. It was a dark time for those with disabilities; and there were thousands of others like him.

After Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, the attitude started to change towards people like Yuriy; thanks to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church who created the Emmaus Centre, which gave him a place to socialize and reach his full potential.



*Yuriy with Carl Hétu at the Emmaus Centre in Ukraine.*

**Today, Yuriy is a totally different person. He is full of love from the care he receives at the Emmaus Centre. And Yuriy is devoted to the tasks he is given during the daily workshops he attends with 70 others like him.**