

RUSSIAN CHURCH OPENS REHAB CENTER FOR ADDICTED WOMEN WITH CHILDREN



A free Orthodox rehabilitation center for drug and alcohol dependent women with children, “Tenderness,” was opened near Voronezh. It is the 18th such rehab center opened in Russia with the participation of the Church over the past four years and the first Church project aimed at helping dependent women with children, reports the site of the Synodal Department for Charity and Social Services of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Up to 10 people can live in the center at a time, undergoing the year-long treatment program. The rural private house features four bedrooms, a consulting room, a room for group classes, and a dining room. The program includes work with professional psychologists and addiction consultants.

The Synodal Department has been receiving requests for such a center for a long time, and is overjoyed to be finally be able to respond to the requests, said Alexei Lazarev, the head of the Department’s work with drug addicts.

“The new center is a unique project for the rehabilitation of drug addicts... It

combines programs and practices that have proven their effectiveness, as well as models for re-socializing women with children,” Lazarev added.

The center was created with funds from a presidential grant and the building was provided by the municipal authorities. The center was organized by the St. Anthony (Smirinsky) Charitable Foundation and the Pokrov Orthodox crisis center.

The center’s work is focused on helping women recover from addiction and restoring the family, commented Fr. Evgeny Lischenyuk, the head of the Voronezh Diocese Department for Combating Drug Addiction.

“We want women not just to get the necessary help, but to become full-fledged mothers again, to think about what their children need. Our main goal in implementing this project is to restore families,” he said.

According to data from the UN, about 5 million people systematically used psychoactive substances in Russia in 2018, 60% of whom were aged 16 to 30.

Today, there are more than 300 Church centers for helping drug addicts in Russia, including 61 rehab centers, 17 resocialization centers, 61 counseling centers, 12 outpatient programs, and 5 motivational centers, as well as 69 support groups for addicts. Another 73 Church organizations systematically work at helping drug addicts.

At least 10 new structures for helping drug addicts are opened every year with the support of the Church. In August, the Russian Church opened a new rehab center in Moscow at the Church of the Life-creating Trinity in the Zamoskvorecheye District.

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