

CHURCH RESTORATION PROJECT ALSO HELPS RESTORE PRAYER IN REMOTE CHURCHES ON NATIVITY AND PASCHA



Not content simply to restore and rebuild village churches, the Common Cause project of the Russian Orthodox Church is also working to restore prayer in them.

Common Cause was founded in 2006 as a project dedicated to restoring and rebuilding wooden churches of the Russian north that were neglected, repurposed, and destroyed during the long years of soviet rule. Work has been carried out on more than 150 churches in 370 trips over the years.

And thanks to its “Pascha in Every Church” and “Nativity of Christ in Every Church” initiatives, the Orthodox faithful of remote villages with dilapidated churches, and often no priest, still have the necessary materials to gather in prayer on the

greatest feasts of the Church year.

“Each such church, according to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, is ‘the only thing that connects us with the past, the only thing that is a real monument of architecture and culture.’ If we don’t save these churches, ‘we will become a scorched earth in terms of history, with little to remind us of our past,’” Common Cause wrote in preparation for the celebration of Nativity this year.

“It might seem impossible to restore destroyed and abandoned churches, but, as St. Paisios the Athonite said: ‘We are required to do everything possible so that God can do the impossible.’ Churches were built with prayer and for prayer. And therefore, any business related to the church must necessarily begin with prayer,” the article continues.

Prayer in such churches will be a joy for all those who built and preserved them, who shed their blood for their churches in the soviet years, Common Cause emphasizes. “Experience shows that where churches are revived, life is revived: people return to the village, new houses are built.”



Thus, together with the Commission for Missionary Work and Catechism of the Moscow Diocesan Council, Common Cause developed a short Nativity Reader's service to be prayed in churches where the faithful could not attend a full Liturgy.

The service consists of the opening Trisagion Prayers, O come let us worship, the Troparion and Kontakion of Nativity, the Gospel reading, the Irmos of the first ode of the Nativity Canon, a prayer for the restoration of the church, and the magnification for the feast.

Nativity services were organized in 148 such abandoned churches last year, Common Cause founder and director Archpriest Alexei Yakovlev said on Moscow's Radio Vera (Faith) last year.

Packages were sent to the parishioners of these churches including an icon of the Nativity of Christ, candles, the text of the Reader's service, and small gifts.

orthochristian.com