

---

## **Poland: an ecumenical and supportive Lent. Help for old people affected by Covid**

“Support for old people who suffer because of the pandemic and promotion of personal growth, in a spirit of love for one’s neighbour”: these are two of the goals of the Lenten ecumenical initiative “The Time of Mercy” launched for the 15<sup>th</sup> time by Caritas Poland, along with the Eleos organisation of the Orthodox Church and the deaconships of the Augustan and reformed evangelical Churches. On Ash Wednesday, 350 thousand money-boxes were placed in Polish schools to raise funds for old people. The initiative, which is expected to end on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April, Mercy Sunday, will last all through Lent and all of Mercy Week. “Our goal is to attract public interest to old people who have been directly or indirectly affected by Covid-19, but it is also a special call for us not to lose sight of the needy people who are just close to us, whom we often do not even notice, besieged by the compelling problems of everyday life”, father Marcin Izycki, director of Caritas Polska, stated. In addition, the priest emphasised the spiritual dimension of the concrete proofs of mercy that are “built into the nature of Lent itself”. “The virus that locked us all up at home cannot quash Christian love”, father Doroteusz Sawicki, director of Eleos, pointed out, instead.

Valentina Bombelli