



# RESTORE THE CHURCH BUILD THE FUTURE



Dear Diocesan Director,

Communist rule was a devastating era for people of faith in Central and Eastern Europe. During this time, churches were confiscated and many were forced to practice the faith in secret. The Church suffered under this religious persecution, but the light of faith could not be extinguished. The people are now able to worship freely once again, but they still find themselves facing the challenges of rebuilding communities that were dismantled during decades of oppression. The Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe (CCEE) is one way for your parishioners to continue building the future and sharing the Gospel in this region.

Although the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina ended over 20 years ago, many wounds have not yet healed and peace is sometimes fragile. Uncertainty, a weak democracy, and an economy that does not meet the needs of the citizenry are affecting the lives of many young people. The affected youth need role models and support as they navigate relationships between Christians, Orthodox, and Muslims. The support of your parishioners to CCEE has helped to build the John Paul II Youth Center in Sarajevo. This youth center provides a space for young people to gather, get to know one another, and share their faith. It is a place where tolerant and peaceful coexistence is practiced and lived. Generous contributions to the collection prepare young Catholics living and studying in Bosnia and Herzegovina to remain in the country and be pillars of the future of dialogue in the Catholic Church.

Collection materials are available and free for download at [www.usccb.org/ccee/collection](http://www.usccb.org/ccee/collection). There, you will find a sample letter from the bishop, web banners, and a social media tool kit, among other resources. Please use these materials, and encourage your parish staff to use these items as well to support their work to promote the collection.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-541-3365 or at [ngermain@usccb.org](mailto:ngermain@usccb.org).

With gratitude,

Nicole Germain  
Assistant Director, Promotions, Office of National Collections



## Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe

OFFICE OF NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON, DC 20017-1194

202-541-3400 • FAX 202-541-3460 • [WWW.USCCB.ORG/NATIONALCOLLECTIONS](http://WWW.USCCB.ORG/NATIONALCOLLECTIONS)

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