

## Letter of Information to Partners

Dear Partners in Central and Eastern Europe, dear Friends,

In March 1993, German Bishops and the Central Committee of German Catholics have established "Renovabis" as an "action for mutual solidarity of German Catholics with people in Central and Eastern Europe". Ever since then Catholics in Germany are supporting the action by means of donations and collections, which are annually gathered during the Pentecostal season.

With this letter we would like to introduce to you the „Aktion Renovabis“ and also to ask for your co-operation in our joint endeavour.

### **Our Intentions:**

Many people in Germany have witnessed with great interest, admiration and sympathy the radical political changes that have taken place in your countries, in central and eastern parts of our continent.

For many years the European Help-Fund (Europäischer Hilfsfonds, Vienna) has tried to mitigate with great readiness the wants of people in need in Central, Southeast and Eastern Europe. The Church in Need/Eastern-Priest-Help (Kirche in Not/Ostpriesterhilfe) continues to support you. Numerous groups and parishes in our country have undertaken all possible efforts to express their solidarity with you.

The Church in the Federal Republic of Germany - bishops, priests, religious orders as well as the laity - would like to reach you, the people in Central and Eastern Europe through Renovabis. This includes for Renovabis Siberia, Northern Caucasus territories and those territories being attached to the Apostolic Administration Kazakhstan (including other Central Asian Republics). For the last decades we felt obliged to Southern Continents – i.e. Africa, Asia and Latin America- now we would like to express by means of this action our solidarity with you, our neighbours in the East.

The radical political changes in your countries and the resulting large-scale freedom is a present to you, to Europe and to the entire world. At the same time this is a chance and challenge for you and for all of us, to seek new ways of justice and peace by the strength of the gospel.

Likewise, in our own country, due to the unification of Germany, we have been put into a process of learning, which made us realise how difficult the renewal of Church and society can be.

In such a situation, mutual acquaintance and learning from one another encourages us all. In "mutual exchange of gifts" practical solidarity is being seen and perceived, a solidarity grounded on people's attachment to prayer.

### **Our Name:**

Being Christians we know it well, this is the way the Universal Church has taught us, that we will not succeed in renewing ourselves in the spirit of God: "You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth", -"Emitte spiritum tuum, et creabuntur, et renovabis faciem terrae" (Ps.104.30). The name of the action Renovabis refers to this ancient prayer. In this spirit, trusting in the power of God, we would like to co-operate with you in renewing our world, especially renewing our mutual ecclesiastical, social and political areas.

### **Our Objectives and Principles:**

After detailed consultation with the boards responsible for the Action Renovabis following objectives and principles have been framed for mutual co-operation.

1. Renovabis is an action of mutual solidarity with people in Central and Eastern Europe. The action should as far as possible support people in Central and Eastern Europe in manifold ways together with already existing relief works, associations, religious orders, groups, agencies etc.
2. Renovabis endeavours especially to foster co-operation of actions and initiatives, existing in the Federal Republic of Germany, which are engaged in Central and Eastern Europe.
3. Renovabis is striving for "mutual exchange of gifts", in order to represent in our Church the rich spiritual inheritance of Churches in Central and Eastern Europe. We would like to learn from the faith experience of our sister-churches they have gathered during the time of oppression and persecution and to introduce this in our church and society.

4. Renovabis intends to be active in its entity and therefore promotes pastoral as well as social projects, especially with following objectives:

- \* Building up living churches, which after years of persecution and oppression can perceive new prospects and duties in pastoral and social fields. Due to the fact that living church is being supported by people, and considering that Renovabis has limited means, it is given preference to build personnel infrastructure rather than material one. This applies especially to extensive measures of construction and renovation.
- \* Renovabis is bound to the leading idea of Pope John Paul II: "Man is the way of Church". This implies to aid people in all spheres of life, in education and training, also in organising social-caritative services, as well as associations and groups for social and economical development. In that context fostering of lay-apostolate is extremely important.
- \* Contribution to the survival of people in cases of emergency.

The International Emergency- and Disaster-units are working on behalf of the German Caritas-Association. As far as Renovabis considers necessary supplementary measures, they will be reconciled with the Caritas-Associations.

- \* Renovabis is working in close co-operation in different fields and in several countries with other relief organisations, i.e. Kirche in Not/Ostpriesterhilfe, Bonifatiuswerk, Diasporakommissariat, Misereor, Missio, other similar European and Non-European organisations.
5. Renovabis wants to support partners in Central and Eastern European countries, not only by projects but also by advice, e.g. in architectural measures, organisational programs and media works.
6. Renovabis is also helping to build up contacts and partnerships with German groups and parishes.

#### **We Ask for Your Solidarity:**

Renovabis has limited resources. Therefore we can by no means support financially every project that is being submitted to us. We hope you will understand our situation. Usually we cannot finance programs in the long run, but render financial help in order to assist in self-help. By this means we want to guarantee to help others, who also need help or are even more needy.

Since Renovabis is obliged to present statements of account to German Catholics, who make the basis for our help by their donations, we will jointly try with you, our project-partners, to invest these resources in the best possible ways according to our principles.

Our benefactors as well as ecclesiastical and state agencies, who place their money at our disposal, expect legitimately documentations of our expenditures. In doing so, we therefore count on your co-operation.

A concrete promotion of a project however can only be an impetus for renewal and permanent development. Promotion of a project demands therefore essential participation and personal performance of the partner. Our help will certainly not substitute local responsibility and commitment nor will it endanger them.

With great pleasure Renovabis is ready to place further information at your disposal.

February 2023

Looking forward to your co-operation.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Thomas Schwartz  
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosed:  
Guidelines for the promotion of a project

## **Guidelines for the promotion of a project**

For the sake of mutual cooperation in promoting projects we request following points for consideration:

**a)** Only those Applications that are coming directly from Central and Eastern Europe can be placed before the selection committee; however, mediation from a group in the western Europe will be accepted and it may be even considered as helpful.

**b)** An Application should contain:

- \* The Name and address of a project-partner (Institution/Juridical Person).
- \* The name and address of an applicant (Person).
- \* A reference from the local Bishop or of the Bishops' conference; Projects from religious Orders will also require an approval of the major superior.

**c)** The description of the project should contain following data:

- \* A short summary stating the aims of the project.
- \* The necessity of the project.
- \* The measures to be taken for the realization of objectives of the project
- \* The cost of the entire project in the local currency (or Euro/US-Dollar) -
- \* What are the essential areas of expenditure?
- \* How reliable is the cost estimation?
- \* Time-scale of the project.
- \* In case of construction project: Technical data required for the evaluation of the project.
- \* How the entire project will be financed.

**d)** The financial plan should refer:

- \* Total cost (see, c).
- \* The local contribution (your contribution either in form of money, labour, material etc.).
- \* Contribution from other donors.
- \* How reliable are the financial confirmations?
- \* The concrete amount requested from Renovabis.

e) The project will be processed by Renovabis in the following manner:

- \* After the submission of the project, the project-partner will receive confirmation along with a project number. At all further correspondence the project-number is to be stated.
- \* The Project-department will process the project for the selecting committee. Here delay may occur because usually there are many applications and the selecting committee meets at irregular intervals.
- \* Decisions of the selecting committee will be communicated to the concerned partner in writing.
- \* The project partner will state before the transfer of subsidy with his signature that the subsidy will be used only for the sanctioned purpose and the statement of expenditure will be given in detail.
- \* The subsidy will generally be paid in several instalments in accordance with agreement of the project and certainly not for a period that will extend more than a half year.
- \* After the receipt of money the project-partner will immediately send the confirmation of the receipt of money to Renovabis.
- \* The written statements about the use of funds and the progress of the project are necessary. In case of the project that will last for many months, the project-partner will send a report on the running of the project and on the financial expenditure after half a year. Further reports will be submitted semiannually, too. The financial report should also contain the receipts of expenditure.
- \* At the completion of the project and/or the expense of the Renovabis' grant respectively Renovabis will receive the report of completion and also that of finances with the corresponding receipts of expenditure.

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Hoping for your cooperation.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Thomas Schwartz  
Chief Executive Officer