Vatican
Vatican News



Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for the Service of Charity, is seen on March 23, 2025, blessing a group of doctors in Romanina, a suburb of Rome. On the same day Pope Francis was discharged from Rome's Gemelli hospital after a five-week stay for treatment, a group of Vatican doctors took their Lenten alms initiative a step further, drove two ambulances from the Vatican to Romanina and helped provide medical care to a group of migrants. (OSV News/Courtesy of Dicastery for the Service of Charity)

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Rome — March 24, 2025

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The same day Pope Francis was discharged from Rome's Gemelli hospital after a five-week stay for treatment for double pneumonia, a group of Vatican doctors took their Lenten alms initiative a step further and helped provide medical care to a group of migrants.

"The time of Lent is a special time of almsgiving, when we share ourselves with others. This almsgiving must cost us, must hurt us," Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for the Service of Charity, told OSV News .

For the whole day March 23, 12 doctors served migrants on the outskirts of Rome.

"There is a huge skyscraper inhabited by about 500 migrants who have no access to medical care, often have no documents, often run away and do not want to be seen, recognized," Krajewski said.

"That's why we arrived in two ambulances from the Vatican, and throughout the day we were trying to put alms into action," the pope's charity point man told OSV News.

Giving alms is "not to think about ourselves, but to help others," Krajewski said as he returned from Italy's capital Romanina suburb, where he coordinated a group of medics.

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The Vatican health clinic for the needy was opened in St. Peter's Square next to St. Peter's Basilica right before Christmas in 2018 to assist the homeless and those impoverished, furthering Francis' commitment to supporting those in need at the very heart of the Catholic Church.

The Mother of Mercy clinic followed previous efforts by Krajewski — the installation of showers and a barbershop.

All doctors volunteering in the clinic are working in Roman hospitals on a daily basis. In February alone, they treated 1,300 people in need of medical care.

"We have 82 volunteers and we are open all week long," Krajewski said, adding that each doctor has one or two on-calls in the clinic, and that the Lenten initiative was an extra activity for them.

"It is a beautiful time, especially for those people who can be examined and receive the most important first aid," Krajewski said.

He added: "But it is also a time when we become more beautiful by sharing what we have received from God and his gifts with others."

This story appears in the **Lent 2025** feature series. View the full series.