News



Firefighters work at the site of a Russian missile strike in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, Aug. 18, 2025. (OSV News/Reuters)

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As the Trump administration seeks to end Russia's multiyear war on Ukraine, Russian attacks on Ukrainian civilians continue, said Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia.

Gudziak traveled to Ukraine two days after the Aug. 15 summit between President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska.

Ahead of an Aug. 18 White House meeting among Trump, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and several European leaders, Russia launched attacks on multiple Ukrainian regions — including an apartment building in Kharkiv, the ruins of which Gudziak visited Aug. 19.

In a video provided directly to OSV News and posted on his Facebook page, Gudziak stood before the remains of the structure, which had been struck Aug. 18 along with several other buildings in the city of Kharkiv.

The attack left seven dead, most from a single family, and some two dozen injured, with three people still missing.

"Thirty-six hours after the Trump-Putin summit in Alaska, and a day before the summit with President Zelenskyy and the European leaders in Washington, this building of a hundred apartments of families was hit by five Iranian-style drones, killing seven people, five of them members of one family, father, mother, two children and a grandmother," said Gudziak in his video, with the blackened, crumbling remains of the apartment building behind him.

One of the slain children was a toddler, while the other was her 16-year-old brother, said Ukrainian authorities.

Gudziak noted that "all hundred families have lost their homes" as a result of Russia's attack, which also targeted several other sites throughout Ukraine,

including the city of Zaporizhzhia, where three were killed and 23 wounded in a ballistic missile strike on an apartment building.

Reuters said one of its reporters had seen medics attempt to revive a toddler at the scene, with the child's body covered in dust.

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Basilian Sr. Lucia Murashko — who along with two fellow women religious has remained at their Zaporizhzhia monastery throughout the full-scale invasion to serve the war-torn city — told OSV News in a message after the attack, "We are well, if I can say so."

Previously, Sr. Lucia and some 80 children had narrowly avoided being killed in a deadly Dec. 6, 2024, strike on Zaporizhzhia as they celebrated a liturgy marking the feast of St. Nicholas. That attack killed 10 and wounded more than 20.

Russia's overnight Aug. 17-18 attacks also targeted the city of Odesa, where a previously damaged oil depot owned by Azerbaijan was hit again for the second time in as many weeks.

Hours after the Washington summit, Russia launched additional attacks, launching 270 drones and 10 ballistic missiles on central Ukraine and striking the city of Kremenchuk. While authorities did not report casualties, Ukraine's air force said despite downing 230 drones, 16 locations were hit.

"This, dear brothers and sisters, is the daily image of Russia's war against Ukraine," said Gudziak in his video.

In a second Aug. 19 video he shared with OSV News and posted to Facebook, Gudziak traveled to the remains of Kharkiv's former Epicenter home improvement mall, which Russia struck with two glide bombs May 25, 2024, killing 19 and wounding 54.

Among those slain were Iryna Myronenko, a first-year catechetical student at Ukrainian Catholic University, and her 12-year-old daughter Mariya. The family had been shopping for a faucet at the store when the missile hit.

Speaking Aug. 19 before an on-site memorial dedicated to the mother and daughter, Gudziak — who in September 2024 had visited the gutted structure prior to its demolition — said, "Iryna and Maria ask that you continue to pray, to be informed, to act, to help … stop this war."

In a nod to Moscow's oft-repeated calls to address what it calls the "root causes" of its attacks on Ukraine — specifically, a belief that Ukraine's sovereignty does not exist despite international recognition — Gudziak said, "Help people understand what the root causes of this war are: the desire to possess and control the other.

"The victims are innocent," he said. "Those who oppress should be named."

Amid Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine — which continues attacks initiated in 2014 and which has been declared a genocide in two joint reports from the New Lines Institute and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights — "the people hold out," said Gudziak in his first Aug. 19 video.

"They believe in the fact that God's truth will prevail. They help each other. They're in solidarity," said Gudziak. "And they are grateful to all Americans, to all people of goodwill who support them, with prayer, with accurate information, and with aid."

He called for unity in bringing a just end to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which continues attacks initiated in 2014 and which has been declared a genocide in two joint reports from the New Lines Institute and the Raoul Wallenberg Center for Human Rights.

"Let us stand together. Let us stand for the victory of God's truth, and not this kind of barbarity — the killing of children, the killing of families, the killing of innocent people who just want to live and be free," said Gudziak.

This story appears in the **War in Ukraine** feature series. View the full series.