



# ccme

churches' commission for migrants in europe

## beyond borders

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Press Release 4 July 2014

**I run for fun – Refugees don't – Thomas Stephan dedicates his participation in the Iron Man Tournament 6 July 2014 to the refugee work of CCME**



Training at the Main photo: Rolf Oeser

IronMan, European Championship, Frankfurt/Main, Sunday, 6th July 2014: Rev Thomas W. Stephan, working in the Protestant Paul-Gerhardt-parish in Frankfurt-Niederrad will participate: „I swim – bike- run for fun –Refugees don't” is his slogan. For the 45-year-old man, this is a long run towards himself, to engagement for his faith and support for refugees.

Thomas W. Stephan requests to take the IronMan, the high-performance race in three disciplines, running a marathon, 3,8 km swimming, 180 km biking, as an opportunity so support the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe CCME with a donation. Thomas Stephan stated: „I have the choice and opportunity to swim, bike and run, I thank God that I am able to do this. Refugees do not have the choice, they have to find a safe place. „We are honoured by Thomas Stephan's dedication and perseverance”, General Secretary of

Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe – Commission des Églises auprès des Migrants en Europe – Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa

CCME, Doris Peschke stated. „Of course, the whole CCME team wishes him strength and blessings for this challenging competition. We are proud he is wearing the CCME logo and we hope that many people will think about the refugees who indeed run for their lives seeking protection.“

The Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe CCME was founded in 1964 by the World Council of Churches in Geneva. In 1978 the Commission became an ecumenical organisation of its own based in Brussels, in 1999, it became the ecumenical agency on migration and integration, refugees and migrants, and against racism and discrimination in Europe. Members are Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant Churches as well as national Councils of Churches and church-related agencies specialised in services for migrants and refugees. Stephan got to know the organisation during his pastor's training when he was working in Brussels for a year – the relations continue to date.

CCME advocates for migrants, refugees and asylum applicants at political and church levels and functions as interlocutor between national churches and European and EU institutions. Based on the Christian faith, CCME represents churches' positions in the discourse and political decision making processes. Through intensive lobby and advocacy work, CCME points to problems which are raised by its member organisations working directly with refugees and migrants in European countries.

Current topics are particularly advocating for safe passage of refugees on their way out of crises regions such as Syria and Eritrea, and the fight against trafficking in human beings.

Thomas Stephan requests donations for the work of CCME mentioning „I run for fun“:  
Account holder: CCME, Bank: BNP Paribas Fortis Bank, Brussels, *International Bank*  
*Account Number IBAN: BE76 0010 7929 9495*, BIC: GEBABEBB.

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