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From: Don & Lisa Thatcher <thatchers1@gmail.com>

Dear Friends,

I wanted to send out an update to let you know about the latest happenings going on here in Ireland, ultimately in connection with the war in Iran. There are plenty of political views of all sorts in this day and age. I won't get into those here.

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has definitely had an impact on the world but particularly for Asia and Europe. Between the Ukrainian war and now the Iranian war, Ireland is facing some serious challenges on multiple fronts. The latest is the fuel crisis. Our petrol/diesel is running around \$9-\$10 per gallon depending on location in the country. The price of home heating oil has doubled in the last 6 weeks. This has brought on a nationwide fuel protest which began on Tuesday. Dublin city has been brought to a near standstill.

Truckers and farmers with their tractors and equipment have taken to the motorways and have not only driven in and blocked up Dublin and a few other large cities but they have also blocked the major motorways. You can google all of this and for the most part the gridlock that you will see is the case here on the ground. Motorways with traffic halted and going nowhere are backed up for 8-10 miles. Some of this we saw firsthand and were caught for nearly an hour in a 10mph convoy when we took an exit (which are few and far between on Irish motorways) and took to the back roads.

There is one refinery on the island, and it is blocked by the protest. Cargo tankers at sea are not able to dock in the ports and off load oil. As of last night, over 100 service stations were out of fuel and that number will certainly increase again today. The farmers cannot afford the fuel to keep going. The truckers cannot afford the fuel to keep hauling. Many will have no choice but to close and go out of business if the government does not budge. This will impact food and goods in the days ahead. On top of that, the government wants to increase the already overbearing carbon tax again. We will soon be closing out day 4 and tomorrow heading into day 5, and at this point it is a pure standoff as neither side is looking to budge.

In the midst of things like this, God is still good and still on the throne — not presidents, kings, or prime ministers. We appreciate your continued prayers for us as we minister here in Ireland.

May the Lord find us faithful,

Don and Lisa Thatcher