



Office of the President

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Daniel Cardinal DiNardo
Archbishop of Galveston-Houston
President

September 24, 2018

Your Eminence/Excellency:

The traditional storm season has only just begun and already we have witnessed the devastating impact of Hurricane Florence in the Carolinas. Five days after land-fall, torrential rain was still falling, and catastrophic flooding is predicted. Already, thousands of homes, businesses, and churches have been severely damaged or destroyed.

We offer our prayers to families who have lost loved ones or are among those injured. As is often the case, the poor are the hardest hit by these conditions, but many will have immense unmet needs. Staff of our Office for National Collections has been in touch with several bishops to learn about their situations and to offer our prayers and our desire to be of assistance in this time of need.

Given the patterns of recent years, it is reasonable to expect much more unpredictable weather and an increasing number of natural disasters. As we often do in these situations, I suggest we take up a special collection for the humanitarian, long-term recovery, and Church needs arising from these storms. In anticipation of more disasters awaiting us this year, I ask that we make a special appeal for the ongoing disasters of 2018 and that we each take up the collection as soon as possible so that those most in need can receive assistance quickly. I recommend the special collection be taken up on the weekend of September 29-30 or October 6-7 if at all possible.

The funds collected in this special appeal for ***2018 Disasters*** will be used to support the efforts of Catholic Charities USA and/or Catholic Relief Services, the official relief agencies of the U.S. Catholic Church, as they and their local agencies respond to immediate emergency needs for such necessities as water, food, shelter, and medical care and aid in long-term rebuilding and recovery efforts, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for pastoral and reconstruction needs of the Church. Funds will be used in response to Hurricane Florence and any other natural disasters that occur this year.

Your finance staff will be provided with information on this special collection and directions for remitting funds. Additional information on the U.S. Catholic community's response to this latest emergency and how U.S. Catholics can help can be found at www.catholiccharities.org and www.usccb.org.

Fraternaly yours in our Lord,

+Daniel Cardinal DiNardo

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President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops