

Blessed  
Trinity's

## Outreach To Devastated Areas

One of the outstanding characteristics of being a stewardship parish is having a deep concern for those in need. It has often been said that we see Christ in His most desperate form when we encounter Him in the homeless or those devastated by natural disasters.

Blessed Trinity has a long history of aiding those struck by natural disasters. Whether it be flood or hurricane or famine our parish seems to follow a very simple protocol. The Bishop asks all his parishes to take up a relief collection. So we label envelopes and put them into the pews. The pastor encourages us to make an offering.

Our response is usually very generous. Whether the disaster is local or international we send the Bishop our response. But what is unique in our assistance is that we use some of the offerings in a special way. Often for international aid we funnel some of the money to Catholic Relief Services because they have such an outstanding ratio of funds being used directly for the people — 97% of what is collected is used for the relief effort. Our largest collection, spearheaded by Fr. Mike, was when we collected \$80,000 for famine relief in the Sudan.

We also have had instances where there is a “local” disaster and Fr. Pat somehow knows a priest or sister (usually Irish) in the area and funds directly their greatest need. This happened with Hurricane Katrina where a parish had its roof repaired thanks to you.

So, the next time there is a disaster just



Sudan Famine Relief — 2017



Hurricane Andrew— August 24, 1992



Northridge Quake—January 17, 1994



Hurricane Matthew (Haiti) - October 4, 2016



Hurricane Maria — September 20, 2017



Earthquake in Mexico — September 20, 2017

wait a week and then look for that envelope in the pew.

Here are some other examples of our response to recent disasters whether here in the U.S. or international:

For Hurricane Andrew in Miami we sent over \$20,000 to Habitat for Humanity in that area to re-build houses.

For the earthquake in Northridge (LA) California we sent over \$40,000 to the Catholic pastor (yes – Irish) for families left destitute with no insurance.

For Hurricane Katrina, Gulfport, MS we sent \$40,000+ to a nun (yes – Irish) in a parish that was blown away by the storm.

To a children's wing in a hospital in Haiti, after the hurricane we sent \$35,000 to a nun (yes – Irish) to set up emergency care for injured children. We had already sent \$15,000 to the diocese to go into a big fund for relief by Catholic Charities.

To Puerto Rico and Dominica we sent \$7,000 each to priests in individual parishes there for the repair of family homes whose roofs were blown away.

To Mexico we sent \$7,000, after their devastating earthquake, to a priest known by Fr. Raul, for the repair of damaged family homes.

Generally speaking, if possible, we try to isolate a very specific need in a devastated area and find that need – rather than put our hard earned charitable funds into a major fund where we seldom if ever see the concrete results achieved by that “major fund.” Within the US it so happens God always comes up with a very reliable contact in the devastated area. Then we know for sure where all our charitable funds are spent.

For international causes, if we do not have a specific contact, we go through the proven, very reliable Catholic Relief Services.

*“As long as you did it for one of these, the least of my people, you did it for me.”*