



December 7, 2005 - Thank You from the Archdiocese Of New Orleans Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the Catholic community's generous response in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the greatest natural disaster ever experienced in the United States. The outpouring of love and concern for the welfare of our local church both in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast has been extraordinary and humbling. Dioceses, parishes, lay organizations, corporations, individuals, and even young school children have generously contributed thousands of hours of volunteer time and funds in excess of \$12 million to rebuild our parishes and schools.

Through the graces of God, the commitment of our administration, priests and leadership, and with tremendous assistance of the entire church, we have made some great strides in re-establishing our pastoral and ministerial presence in the archdiocese.

- Over 120 parishes throughout the country are "twinned" with parishes and schools in our archdiocese to help them rebuild.
- Through Operation Helping Hands over 2,400 local and out-of-state volunteers ages 18 and up to help will clean-up and restore of homes of the poor and elderly.
- Nearly 100 of our 142 church parishes and missions are celebrating Mass at least weekly.
- 66 Catholic schools have reopened in the archdiocese educating 37,000 students.
- 8 Catholic Charities community assistance centers are open in the Greater New Orleans Area distributing \$200,000 in direct humanitarian assistance weekly.
- Catholic Charities continues to serve its clients in the New Orleans area in our residential programs, the mentally ill, victims of domestic violence, abused and neglected children, the elderly, the deaf, foster children, families in crisis, women facing unplanned pregnancies and adoption services.
- Second Harvesters Food Bank is now the largest food bank in the country having distributed over 30 million pounds of food in the months following Katrina.

The need continues to be great, and the future holds unprecedented challenges for us all. It is projected, by year's end, the archdiocese will face a multi-million dollar deficit with still much damage to our property to contend with. Yet, through the blessings of our Lord and your constant prayer and assistance, we will rebuild an archdiocese stronger in faith than ever before.

You can continue to receive updates on our progress and learn more about how to help our archdiocese rebuild online at www.archdiocese-no.org.

May our good Lord pour out His blessings on each of you for your service to our archdiocese.

Gratefully in the Lord,

Most Reverend Alfred C. Hughes
Archbishop of New Orleans

To organize a volunteer trip for your group through Operation Helping Hands, contact Denise Chetta at 225-336-8700 ext. 422 or dchetta@archdiocese-no.org. To make a contribution to the Archdiocese of New Orleans, contact Peter Quirk at 225-279-4921 or pquirk@archdiocese-no.org.

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