

Archdiocese of Baltimore raises \$545,000 for hurricane relief

The Archdiocese of Baltimore collected a total of \$545,000 from the emergency collections held after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

On Aug. 29, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, vice-president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) called on the bishops take up a special collection Sept. 2-3 to support victims of Hurricane Harvey and to provide pastoral and rebuilding support to impacted dioceses.

Archbishop William E. Lori responded to that request by asking the pastors of the 144 parishes in the Archdiocese of Baltimore to hold the collection at all Masses. He also asked principals of the nearly 70 Catholic schools to join the diocesan-wide effort and later called for a similar collection to support relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Irma.

The two natural disasters caused chaos and ruinous devastation in Texas, Puerto Rico and Caribbean islands.

“The response to the collections was amazing,” said Bishop Adam Parker, vicar general and moderator of the curia for the archdiocese. “It shows how the faithful of the archdiocese are open to help far beyond our own boundaries, quickly and eagerly.”

The funds are being directed to Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), an agency that has been on the ground since the beginning of the emergency providing housing, food and water to those affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

The archdiocese has designated that the U.S. Virgin Islands receive \$100,000 and Puerto Rico receive \$200,000 of the Baltimore collection.

“The situation of those dioceses is far more serious,” Bishop Parker said, “and receiving help has been much more difficult.”

In addition to pew collections, a few Baltimore donors reached out directly to Catholic Charities of Baltimore after the hurricanes.

“Catholic Charities of Baltimore did receive many calls from current and prospective donors who were interested in supporting disaster relief efforts following Hurricane Harvey, Irma and Maria,” said Rowena Daly, Communications Director for Catholic Charities of Baltimore. “We forwarded their donations and inquiries to Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) which was coordinating disaster relief efforts through respective local Catholic Charities in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.”

CCUSA has not yet received funds raised from the special collection but they will be released in the very near future, according to vice president of communications, Patricia Pincus Cole.

“The faithful (in Baltimore) have been responsive not only this time but in so many occasions,” said Bishop Parker, “which in return just shows how people are willing to assist others and be disciples of Jesus Christ by following his example of charity.”

CCUSA’s Text-to-Give campaign, which was launched in response to Hurricane Harvey, continues to accept donations for disaster relief. One hundred percent of donations are directed to Catholic Charities agencies in the areas impacted by disasters to assist people with shelter, food and other needs.

To donate, text CCUSADISASTER to 71777 or visit www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org.