

Bishops express prayers, pastoral solidarity with all affected by spill

WASHINGTON – The U.S. bishops publicly expressed their “heartfelt prayers and pastoral solidarity with all those affected by the oil that continues to leak into the Gulf of Mexico.”

“We pray first and foremost for those who died in the initial explosion and for the grieving members of their families,” they said.

“We express our prayerful support as well for the families and individuals whose lives and livelihoods have been so negatively impacted by the oil that daily contaminates water, beaches and God’s creation in the Gulf Coast area,” the bishops said in a statement written during their spring gathering in St. Petersburg, Fla.

It was released by their press office in Washington June 18.

Because of the nation’s ongoing economic crisis, the bishops said they have special concern for those who have lost jobs and income because of the man-made disaster, the worst environmental catastrophe in U.S. history.

“We offer our prayers for our government leaders and for the industry leaders and experts who are working to cap the leak and repair this damage,” they said. “May God give them wisdom and strength in this trying hour, and may he move them to seek lasting solutions benefiting the common good of our society.”

After meeting with President Barack Obama, BP executives agreed to set up a \$20 billion relief fund for victims of the spill. The company continued to work on a way to plug the damaged well, which has spilled millions of gallons of oil and methane gas into the Gulf.