

# Catholic Charities is ‘ready to be a part of’ Alabama tornado recovery

MOBILE, Ala. (CNS) — With search and rescue efforts underway for the tornado that whipped through Alabama and other parts of the South March 3, Mobile Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi asked for prayers for “those who lost their lives and their loved ones as well as those who have lost homes and businesses.”

“The catastrophic tornadoes which occurred yesterday in the Archdiocese of Mobile have brought loss of life and devastating damage,” said the archbishop in a March 4 statement.

He added that as recovery efforts begin, Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Mobile has reached out to the pastors of the affected areas to offer assistance for those in need and Catholic Social Services “stands ready” to be a part of the recovery.

The violent storms caused at least 23 deaths and scattered debris across parts of Alabama, Georgia, Florida and parts of South Carolina, knocking out power for more than 10,000 homes.

In Lee County, Alabama, where the tornado hit ground in the town of Beauregard, the sheriff’s office told reporters March 4 that 50 people were injured and that the number of missing was in the double digits. Sheriff Jay Jones said he expected the number of fatalities to rise.

“It’s extremely upsetting to me to see these people hurting like this and the families who have lost loved ones,” Jones said in a Weather Channel report. “This is a very tight-knit community. These people are tough. They’re resilient people, and it’s knocked them down. But they’ll be back.”

He also described the devastation as shocking, adding: “It looks almost as if someone took a giant knife and just scraped the ground. There are slabs where homes formerly stood, debris everywhere, trees snapped, whole forested areas where trees are snapped and lying on the ground.”

The threat of severe weather continued late into the night March 3 when a tornado watch was in effect for much of eastern Georgia and a large portion of South Carolina.

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