

Catholic Relief Services commits \$100,000 for earthquake

Baltimore-based Catholic Relief Services is committing an initial \$100,000 toward relief efforts for thousands of people struggling in the aftermath of Peru's worst earthquake in more than 30 years.

All CRS staff in Peru and many from across South America have been dispatched to help deliver life-saving supplies to thousands in need of food, shelter, and medical care. With its local partner, Caritas Peru, CRS is providing water, shelter, blankets, hygiene kits and kitchen utensils to families who have lost their homes.

Some 17,000 homes were demolished in the department of Ica by the devastating 8.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Aug. 15. The government of Peru has declared a state of emergency as hospitals still struggle to provide care. Roads remain blocked and the destruction of phone lines and cellular towers make access even more difficult.

"Right now we have to focus on the most immediate needs of the Peruvian people," said Brian Goonan, regional representative for South America. "Once the immediate needs are met, CRS' long-term response will include permanent shelters, continued access to clean water, infrastructure improvements and the recovery and rehabilitation of livelihoods."

The earthquake toppled homes, churches and buildings from Ica to the capital city Lima, more than 90 miles away. Thus far, 85,000 people are reportedly affected and at least 510 are dead.