



# ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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January 13, 2010

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Dear Fathers and Pastoral Life Directors,

The news of the devastating earthquake that struck Haiti this past Tuesday is a cause for great sadness and empathy, especially for those who have lost loved ones, homes and are in the midst of great suffering. Here in our Archdiocese, the faithful are calling the Catholic Center and parish offices expressing their concern for their sisters and brothers in our sister diocese of Gonaives and wanting to know how they can provide financial and spiritual support.

Just as we have done following similar tragedies, we ask that you consider taking up a special collection or to use the parish poor box to collect funds to aid in the recovery effort in Haiti. Proceeds from the collection are to be sent to the Division of Fiscal Services at the Catholic Center.

We will be working with our partners at Catholic Relief Services to insure that the funds directly reach those in need.

We also ask that you pray for those suffering in Haiti, especially the dead, including Archbishop Joseph Serge Milot, the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince who was killed in the earthquake.

Deacon Rod Mortel, Director of our Missions Office and the Haiti Outreach Project, is in contact with relatives in Haiti and spoke to his sister immediately after the earthquake. She informed Deacon Mortel that she believes the Diocese of Gonaives was largely spared by the devastation, located approximately 75 miles from Port-au-Prince, including the parishes and schools we support there. He will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as more information becomes available.

Thank you for considering this request and please thank your parishioners for so generously giving of their spiritual and temporal wealth for the benefit of our sisters and brothers in faith, God's people in Haiti.

In the Lord,

+Edwin F. O'Brien  
Archbishop of Baltimore