



Diocese of Richmond

Office of the Bishop

September 26, 2018

Dear Pastors and Administrators,

As you know, on September 14th Hurricane Florence made landfall in North Carolina and in the ensuing days its widespread flooding devastated that region. We offer our prayers to families who have lost loved ones or are among those injured.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops asked that we take up a special collection for the humanitarian, long-term recovery and Church needs arising from these storms. Given the patterns of recent years, it is reasonable to expect additional weather-related disasters. Therefore, we are asked to make a special appeal for the ongoing disasters of 2018 and that we take up the collection during the weekend of September 29-30 or October 6-7. The funds collected will be used to support the efforts of Catholic Charities USA and/or Catholic Relief Services, the official relief agencies of the U.S. Catholic Church, and for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for pastoral and reconstruction needs of the Church. Funds will be used in response to Hurricane Florence and any other natural disasters that occur this year.

In addition to this collection, I am asking that special prayers for our brothers and sisters impacted by this devastating storm are included at all Masses.

When conducting this collection in your parish for disaster relief, please follow the usual procedure: Have your parishioners make their checks to your parish with a memo that it is for *2018 Disaster Fund*. Send the entire parish donation in a single check to the Diocese Finance Office with a memo that it is for *2018 Disaster Fund*. The Diocese will collect all the parishes' donations and send a single check to the USCCB for the *2018 Disaster Fund*. Alternatively, individuals can send donations directly to Catholic Charities USA at www.catholiccharities.org

Additional information on the U.S. Catholic community's response to this latest emergency and how U.S. Catholics can help can be found at www.catholiccharities.org and www.usccb.org.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Bishop Knestout
Bishop of Richmond