



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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January 13, 2010

Dear Brother Priest,

On Tuesday, January 12 a major earthquake struck Haiti. Initial reports indicate major devastation to this impoverished nation, including thousands of injuries and deaths. Among those reported killed were the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince and many priests and seminarians of the Montfort religious community.

An estimated 20,000 Haitians live in the Washington metropolitan area. Many are our parishioners. In addition, more than a dozen of our local parishes have close ties with Haiti through medical mission and parish twinning relationships. At the time of the earthquake, Fr. Arsene Jasmin, chaplain to the Haitian community in the Archdiocese of Washington, was in Haiti on retreat. We are awaiting word of Fr. Jasmine's situation and ask that you keep him in prayer.

In response to the great need of the Haitian people during this difficult time, parishes are being asked to support relief efforts through a special collection over the next two weekends, by designating funds from the poor box or by undertaking another means of material support. All funds collected should be processed in the normal fashion for second collections and sent to the Lock Box with a deposit slip marked Haiti Relief. The funds will be forwarded to Catholic Relief Services, designated for Haiti.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and please keep the people affected by this terrible tragedy in your prayers, including in the prayers of the faithful this weekend.

Fraternally in Christ,

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Vicar General
Moderator of the Curia