



## *Office of the President*

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His Eminence Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo  
Archbishop of Galveston-Houston  
*President*

August 28, 2017  
Memorial of Saint Augustine

Your Eminence/Excellency:

Over the past several days, all of us have been following the historic flooding in southeast Texas. Hurricane Harvey has created an unprecedented and catastrophic weather event of immense proportions. The hurricane may now, quite possibly, also strike Louisiana. Our partners at Catholic Charities USA have conveyed that, along with Category 4 hurricane winds, 14-28 inches of rain fell in the Houston area on Saturday night alone. In some areas, it is anticipated that a total of 50 inches will fall, as the rains are expected to continue for at least another two days. Twelve million persons were under a flash flood warning over the weekend. Rivers will be rising and will be at historic flood stages for some time.

Given that our president, His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, leads one of the dioceses most significantly affected, I have been asked to take the lead on this matter. It is with the support of the Most Reverend Thomas J. Rodi, Chairman of the Committee on National Collections, that I announce a USCCB emergency collection to assist the victims of Hurricane Harvey.

Our hearts and prayers go out to the families that have lost loved ones and to all who have lost homes and businesses along with their sense of peace and normalcy. We also stand with our brother bishops in the region who have the difficult task of providing pastoral care in these most trying times while managing their own losses. Our prayerful and financial support is urgently needed.

Since the annual collection for The Catholic University of America (CUA) is scheduled for one of the first two weekends in September, I ask that this emergency collection for Hurricane Harvey be taken on the weekend alternate to the weekend your diocese is taking up the CUA Collection and that funds be remitted to USCCB as soon as possible. This emergency collection will be used both to support the humanitarian and recovery efforts of Catholic Charities USA and to provide pastoral and rebuilding support to impacted dioceses through the USCCB. Together with Cardinal DiNardo and the bishops throughout the affected region I express deep gratitude to the first responders and countless volunteers who are assisting the Gulf Coast region in countless ways.

Please know that I am grateful for your many actions of generosity and prayerful solidarity.

Fraternally yours in our Lord,

+ José H. Gomez

Most Reverend José H. Gomez  
Archbishop of Los Angeles  
Vice President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops