

**From:** Most Reverend Gregory John Hartmayer, OFM, Conv.,  
Archbishop of Atlanta

**RE:** Disaster relief response

Hurricane Laura is another tragic reminder of the suffering that can be caused by natural disasters. Whether these catastrophes occur in slow motion as Laura has or with little or no warning at any hour of the day or night, people of faith naturally want to offer assistance.

While special collections are still a wonderful way for our parish communities to express their solidarity with and support for those affected, more and more people choose to contribute electronically when these needs arise, and there is often confusion as to where donations should be directed.

When a natural disaster occurs in the United States, electronic donations may be made and parish collections may be directed to Catholic Charities USA. They and their member agencies respond to immediate emergency needs for such necessities as water, food, shelter and medical care, as well as to the long-term need to rebuild and recover after widespread destruction. They also assist the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops with pastoral and reconstruction needs of the Church. Their address information follows:

Catholic Charities USA

Online: <https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/>

Mail: Catholic Charities USA, P.O. Box 17066, Baltimore MD 21297-1066

Phone: 800-919-9338

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When a disaster happens in another country, collections and individual donations should be directed to Catholic Relief Services (CRS):

Catholic Relief Services

Online: <https://www.crs.org/>

Mail: Catholic Relief Services, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, MD 21297-0303 (Please write the specific incident in the memo line)

Phone: 877-Help-CRS

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In some instances, particularly in the case of a hurricane like Laura, domestic and international aid are both desperately needed.

The important thing is not the way in which people participate, but rather that they do. The people of God in our Archdiocese are always incredibly generous in responding during these difficult moments. On behalf of Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services, thank you in advance for your promotion of and your participation in these important efforts.

May God bless you and all those in your pastoral care!

