



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF NASHVILLE

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September 9, 2020

Dear Pastors,

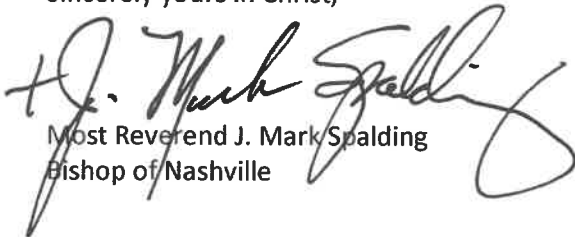
In recent weeks we have witnessed the devastating impact of Hurricane Laura along the Gulf Coast and in several Caribbean countries, as well as the destructive wildfires in California. Thousands of homes, businesses, and churches have been severely damaged or destroyed, and the impact will be long-lasting. During our own experience of recovering from natural disaster when tornados moved through our diocese in March, we were so blessed by the incredible outpouring of support from the Catholic community throughout the nation. Now, we have an opportunity to respond to that kindness with charity of our own to those in great need.

With that in mind, as our contribution to a broader effort by the entire Church in our country, I would like to arrange a special collection to assist those who have been affected by Hurricane Laura and the California wildfires. The funds collected in this special appeal will become part of the Bishops' Emergency Disaster Fund and will be used to support the efforts of Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services as they and their local agencies respond to immediate emergency needs for such necessities as water, food, shelter, and medical care, and to aid in long-term rebuilding and recovery efforts.

I recognize that your parish activities have been affected by COVID-19, and that the local capacity for fund-raising may be more challenging than with past emergency collections. For that reason, I am happy to provide you the flexibility **either take up a second collection in the normal fashion** at Masses on an upcoming weekend of your choice, **or you may choose to make a direct contribution from your general parish funds.** Funds that you collect or designate can either be included with your next monthly assessment payment to the Diocese or sent by special check, in either case with the funds identified for "Emergency Disaster Relief."

Thank you for your participation in this important act of charity, and know of my gratitude and admiration for the all the ways you are continuing to serve the People of God in these difficult times.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend J. Mark Spalding
Bishop of Nashville