



Diocese of Palm Beach

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Office of
THE BISHOP

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March 15, 2011

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

During this season of Lent, one of the central lessons of the Cross of Christ is compassion: appreciating the suffering in others, and helping those who suffer from poverty, hunger, loneliness, fear, and brokenness in body or spirit. This is especially true for those who have been hurt by natural disasters of any kind.

We all remember that the year 2010 was definitely a year of great sorrow for Haiti: first the earthquake, then a hurricane and a cholera outbreak. A year after this unspeakable tragedy, the situation in Haiti continues to be one of devastation. As always, the people of our Diocese have been most generous in responding to this disaster. The special collection taken in January, 2010, totaled \$728,000 and was given to CRS for direct Haitian relief. Many individuals and groups within our Diocese also gave direct aid in the form of food, medical supplies, water and clothing for the victims.

I call upon you now to continue to demonstrate that generosity and love for your sisters and brothers by coming together as one diocesan family, to help in the reconstruction of Haiti by starting with the spiritual welfare of the Haitian people. Upon the recommendation of our Haitian ministry and with the enthusiastic endorsement of our Council of Priests, we are adopting one very needy parish to assist in rebuilding its church structure, which was demolished in the earthquake: St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Jacmel. It will be a sister parish to us.

All donations from this special collection will be channeled through an entity called "PROCHE", newly created by a group of Bishops from Haiti and the United States, whose mission is to strictly monitor the reconstruction of Church buildings in Haiti, to provide total transparency and strict principles of accounting, and to oversee all construction sites in order to ensure that international codes of construction will be rigidly applied.

Be assured that your past efforts and donations are appreciated by me and by all of our brothers and sisters in Haiti. And I am grateful for whatever you can contribute to this new effort to help Haiti's reconstruction. Although suffering greatly, the Haitian people remain strong and resilient, and possess a very strong spirituality and faith in God. Having a place to gather and worship together will go a long way in their healing.

With gratitude for your continued support and generosity, and with assurance of my prayers, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito
Bishop of Palm Beach