

Statement on the situation in Haiti

By

Most Reverend George V. Murry, SJ

Bishop of Youngstown

Every day we see the pictures of great devastation in Haiti. The aftershocks and consequences of the massive earthquake in that island nation shattered the homes of many people, causing much death and suffering. But we Americans are a people of hope and of love. Consequently, it is no surprise to see that the outpouring of support for our Haitian brothers and sisters has been overwhelming.

Lifesaving supplies from Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are reaching desperate survivors in quake-shattered Port-au-Prince. CRS is distributing food and water from its warehouses in the Haitian capital and the city of Les Cayes. Catholic Relief Services is the official US Catholic Bishops' international relief and development agency.

CRS has increased its original funding commitment and is planning an emergency response with an expectation of raising \$25 million from its generous supporters. To date, CRS has already received more than \$6 million in cash and commitments, including a \$1-million disaster response donation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and a \$225,000 gift from the New York Yankees baseball team.

CRS has been working in Haiti for 55 years, often responding to disasters such as the hurricanes that hit the country in 2008. The agency has an extensive network of aid partners in the country, including Catholic schools, hospitals and health centers.

In response to this natural disaster, I ask you, the faithful of the Diocese of Youngstown, for your assistance in two ways.

- 1) Pray. We need to continue to pray for those who are struggling and for those who have died. We also should pray for those relief workers who have been the first responders.
- 2) Donate. Currently, Catholic Relief Services has asked for monetary donations. Your cash donation will give CRS the flexibility to provide needed water, medical supplies, temporary housing and food to areas hardest hit by the earthquake. There will also be a great need for monetary assistance for long term reconstruction, an action in which CRS will take a leading role.

You can make a donation through your parish or through the Diocese. Please mail your check as soon as possible to:

Catholic Relief Services – Diocese of Youngstown

144 W. Wood Street

Youngstown, OH 44503

I thank you in advance for your generosity of spirit and material aid. Our prayers and donations matter.