



Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

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Office of the Bishop

December 15, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am sure you are aware of the terrible tragedies resulting from the tornadoes that struck the Midwest this past weekend. We grieve for the families of those who lost their lives and pray for the souls of the departed. In our diocese, destruction of an Amazon warehouse in Edwardsville took the lives of 6 people and injured many more. Through our Catholic Charities, we will continue to seek out and assist any families in our diocese who may have been impacted by the storms.

At this time, I ask you to consider the plight of our neighbors to the south. The destruction caused by a tornado along a 200-mile path in western Kentucky is horrific. The images from towns like Mayfield and Bowling Green are unimaginable and reports of so many children losing their lives is heartbreaking. Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear declared it, "the most devastating tornado event in our history." Relief efforts of many government and social aid agencies, including Catholic Charities USA, are already in action delivering emergency service to the affected areas.

We have been in contact with the Diocese of Owensboro. They are overwhelmed with requests for assistance and the pain and suffering of so many people has taken its toll on everyone. The best way we can help is to provide financial assistance that allows the most flexibility in responding to changing needs. To that end, I am asking our parishes to consider a special collection this weekend, December 18-19, to assist in the recovery efforts for our brothers and sisters in Kentucky. Please forward the funds for this one-time special appeal to the Catholic Charities Administration Office in Springfield. Any questions can be addressed to Elaine Perine at perine@cc.dio.org. **Donations can also be made online at cc.dio.org under the Tornado Relief Fund option.** You can also donate online through dio.org. All proceeds from this appeal will be sent to Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky. I ask for your continued prayers for all of those impacted by this terrible natural disaster.

With every best wish and gratitude, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois