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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

**Re: Special Collection for Haiti Hurricane Relief fund (Development and Peace) in November, 19 and 20th**

As we have followed the devastation left by Hurricane Matthew on Caribbean in October, we are reminded that we must keep the victims of this disaster in our prayers and make efforts to tangibly relieve their distress, when and where we are given the opportunity.

The small island nation of Haiti has been particularly ravaged by the powerful storm – the most powerful one in a decade. The death toll rose beyond 840 with more than 350,000 needing immediate humanitarian assistance. A Development and Peace emergency fund will be used to meet needs in health, water, and provide shelter, food and non-food items in the most affected regions.

Our Holy Father Pope Francis has shared his special concern for those affected by Hurricane Matthew in Haiti:

*“His Holiness Pope Francis wishes to express his sorrow and to join in prayer in the suffering of all those who have lost loved ones. He conveys to them his sincerest condolences and assures them of his deep sympathy in these painful circumstances. He entrusts the departed to the mercy of God, that He welcome them in His light... Welcoming and encouraging solidarity in this new hardship the country must face, the Holy Father entrusts all Haitians to the maternal protection of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and imparts to them, as a sign of consolation and hope, a special apostolic blessing”.*

Let us keep watch beside our Catholic community across the distance, just as Christ asked the disciples to stay with him in his hour of need, “Remain here and keep watch with me” (Matthew 26:38). We do this in humility knowing that we have great needs in the Yukon and require the assistance and help of others near and far to continue our work here: “Give, and it will be given unto you” (Matthew 6:38).

A special collection will be taken up in the weekend masses of November 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. throughout the Diocese of Whitehorse. Any offerings marked for “Development and Peace Haiti Relief Collection” on or before this date will be given to Development and Peace for the Emergency Relief Fund.

This a timely opportunity to complete an act of mercy marking the end of the Year of Mercy on November 20<sup>th</sup>. May God bless you and grant you a hundredfold in your generosity and kindness.

  
+Bishop Héctor Vila