

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS' ASTONISHING GENEROSITY TO THE TORNADO RELIEF FUND: A REPORT FOR OUR SUPPORTERS



Do you remember seeing the wreckage on television following the March 2, 2012, tornadoes in Southern Indiana? We saw school buses blown into buildings and houses and towns wiped off the map. We watched coverage of some buildings saved by the grace of God while the one next to it, which just happened to be empty that afternoon, was obliterated. We heard stories of mothers saving their children, but losing their own lives and heroic acts to save neighbors trapped under the weight of their homes.



Throughout the archdiocese, we responded to those images and stories with amazing generosity. To date, the donations received from individuals, corporations, parishes, and churches from across the country are now at \$910,000! At least one-third of these monies came from parishes' second collections in the Sundays following the storms. In addition, hundreds of families and individual pastors sent generous donations directly to the Tornado Relief Fund through Catholic Charities Indianapolis.

Time and time again, disasters destroy lives...and you and your parish respond with life-giving generosity. This generosity directly funds the repair, rebuilding, and relocating of families affected by these storms.

MOVING FORWARD...

Following a natural disaster, there are two key phases that move disaster victims toward long-term stability. First, immediate recovery efforts focus on finding survivors, stabilizing buildings, and removing debris. During this phase, Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis' focus was to ensure that residents of Southern Indiana were in safe housing, had basic necessities, and could access crisis counseling.

The second phase is long-term recovery. During this phase, the archdiocese's disaster coordinator works with several other community groups to create systems and processes so that families affected by the tornado can rebuild and repair their homes or relocate to a new community. During this phase, numerous pieces are brought together: construction experts, case management experts, and volunteer managers.

Rebuilding after a disaster is not for the faint of heart. We anticipate having our disaster coordinator stationed in Southern Indiana for up to two years.



As we move forward with long-term recovery, Catholic Charities is involved in two key ways:

- St. Elizabeth–Catholic Charities, located in New Albany, is providing case management for the more than 400 families affected by the tornadoes. The funding for this service comes from a local disaster fund. (This fund is administered by the Metro United Way in Louisville and is a separate funding source from our archdiocese's Tornado Disaster Fund.) Primarily, case managers are advocates for these families, helping them to create long-term plans and helping them navigate the various forms of funding they may be eligible for.
- Catholic Charities Disaster Coordinator, Jane Crady, serves on multiple disaster recovery committees in the Henryville area to guide these groups with her disaster management expertise. In addition, she will manage the volunteers who register through the archdiocese and manage the construction process for the homes that we will help rebuild from our disaster fund.

Donations to the Tornado Relief Fund are used strategically to meet unmet needs for those affected by these tornadoes in March:

- Medical expenses
- Vehicle replacement
- Funeral benefits
- Home rebuilding and repairing supplies such as lumber, shingles, drywall, and paint
- Relocation needs: moving expenses, rent and utility deposits

For many renters, remaining in the area is not an option; affordable rentals are no longer available. For homeowners, our disaster relief fund will fill the gap that FEMA awards and private insurance will not be able to cover to rebuild or repair their homes.

HOW YOU CAN HELP REBUILD HOMES...

As we solidify home rebuilding plans, we're going to need your help. Volunteer labor helps us keep rebuilding expenses down for homeowners and allows others to participate in a special experience. Consider signing up to volunteer with a team of five or more over the age of 15. We need at least one of those volunteers to be trained by hobby or by employment in some sort of home repair, such as drywalling, plumbing, roofing, etc.

We also ask you to remember these families, Catholic Charities staff, and all those affected in your prayers today and for years to come. Following a disaster such as this, a family will never be the same. You have helped to ease their burdens through giving of your financial treasure; please now consider volunteering. You can sign up at www.archindy.org/tornadoes.



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