



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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OFFICE of the METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP

July 27, 2026

Dear Brother Priests, Deacons, and Parish Life Directors,

The powerful earthquakes last month in Venezuela ravaged vast regions of that country resulting in a devastating loss of life, thousands of injuries, and destruction of personal property and infrastructure on a massive scale.

In the wake of this natural disaster, I am asking that parishes throughout our local Church consider assisting the Venezuelan people in two ways. First, we lift up in prayer all those who are suffering and mourning at this time. Second, we can provide for the many needs of those reeling in the wake of the earthquakes by financially supporting the work of Catholic Relief Services, the official overseas relief agency of the Catholic Church in the United States.

To that end, I am asking all parishes to take up a special second collection during the weekend of August 15-16, 2026 to bolster the essential humanitarian work being undertaken by CRS in Venezuela at this time. This collection provides an opportunity for all in the Catholic Church of Philadelphia to serve as the compassionate hands of Christ for our brothers and sisters facing immense hardship in South America.

Funds collected for this purpose can be remitted to the Archdiocesan Office for Financial Services, which will send one blanket donation to CRS on behalf of the people of the Archdiocese. You and your parishioners can learn more about the critical work of CRS around the world by visiting www.CRS.org.

Please be assured of my gratitude for your dedicated service to all those entrusted to your pastoral care and of my prayers for you.

May Our Lady of Coromoto, Patroness of Venezuela, be especially close to her children at this time.

Fraternally in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nelson J. Pérez".

Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.
Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia