

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



MEDIA RELATIONS
RYAN LILYENGREN
714-282-3075
RYANL@RCBO.ORG

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DIOCESE OF ORANGE DELEGATION EMBARKS ON PILGRIMAGE TO THE GULF COAST IN SUPPORT OF HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIMS

The Diocese of Orange has raised more than \$1.5 million for Hurricane Relief

ORANGE, Calif., (May 3, 2006) – The Most Rev. Dominic Luong, auxiliary bishop of Orange, will lead a delegation of clergy and laity to New Orleans and Biloxi, May 10-13 and celebrate a joint mass with Alfred C. Hughes, archbishop of New Orleans at Mary Queen of Vietnam Church, May 13, at 10:00 a.m. This joint mass seeks to bring together eight hurricane damaged parishes that the Diocese of Orange has sponsored through its “Twin Parish Program.”

“This pilgrimage is part of our ongoing commitment to the Gulf Coast region and demonstrates the empathy of all Catholics within the Diocese of Orange who have pledged to aid their brothers and sisters who are suffering,” said Bishop Luong.

The Twin Parish Program consists of eight hurricane damaged parishes in New Orleans, Biloxi, Marrero and Belle Chasse, and eight parishes in the Diocese of Orange. These eight communities within the Diocese of Orange have sent financial assistance, computer equipment, clothing and other supplies to their counterparts on the Gulf Coast. The Diocese of Orange has raised more than \$1.5 million for hurricane Katrina, Rita and Wilma relief.

“I’m encouraged by the generosity our parishioners have shown to the hurricane victims of New Orleans and surrounding cities. Our community has risen to the challenge presented by this national emergency. We’re blessed as a diocese in supporting the Twin Parish Program, and the continued financial and spiritual connection between our communities of faith,” said Bishop Luong.

Bishop Luong spearheaded the Twin Parish Program and has been instrumental in directing support from the Diocese of Orange to the Gulf Coast. He has deep ties to New Orleans, having served as director of the Vietnamese Apostolate from 1976-1983. He was also a former pastor of Mary Queen of Vietnam parish, New Orleans, in 1983, a member of the New Orleans Archdiocesan Priests' Council from 1987 to 2003, and dean of New Orleans East from 2002-2003.

The diocesan delegation of clergy and laity who will travel to New Orleans includes: The Most Rev. Dominic Luong, auxiliary bishop of Orange; Rev. Joseph Fenton, OSM, director of Communications; Sr. Maurine Sheehan, BVM; Shelley Sinclair, junior at Rosary High School; Tom Markel, CEO of Ibank and his daughter Anne Markel, sophomore at Loyola Mary Mount University; and Shirl Giacomi, chancellor of the Diocese of Orange.

Participating parish partnerships:

Mary Queen of Vietnam, New Orleans - La Purisima, Orange
Resurrection of Our Lord, New Orleans - Our Lady Queen of Angels, Newport Beach
St. Mark, Chalmette - Saint Norbert, Orange
Immaculate Conception, Marrero - Our Lady of Fatima, San Clemente
Nativity BVM Cathedral, Biloxi - Our Lady of Guadalupe, La Habra
St. Michael Parish, Biloxi - St. Catherine of Siena, Laguna Beach
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Belle Chass - St. Edward the Confessor, Dana Point
St. Paul The Apostle, New Orleans - St. Simons & Jude, Huntington Beach

Hurricane Katrina:

Biloxi, Miss., was right in the center of where Hurricane Katrina made landfall, making it the worst affected area on the US Gulf shoreline. The hurricane destroyed 90 percent of the buildings along the coast in Biloxi and neighboring Gulfport. In New Orleans, La., the floodwaters breached two levees and several pumps failed; ultimately, the flooding covered approximately 80 percent of the city. Experts fear the total cost of damages cause by the storm could be \$200 billion, which would make Katrina the costliest hurricane and natural disaster in United States History.

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THE MARYWOOD CENTER
2811 E. VILLA REAL DRIVE
P. O. BOX 14195
ORANGE, CALIFORNIA 92863-1595
PHONE: (714) 282-3000
FAX: (714) 282-3029