
DISASTER RECOVERY CORNER



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JANUARY 11, 2018

CANOVANAS, PUERTO RICO

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VINCENTIANS FROM NJ TO PR



Saint Vincent de Paul Society
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Conference
103 Center Avenue
Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716
732-291-0272 Ext. 120

December 14, 2017

Rev. Fr. Njoku Canice Chukwuemeka
Parroquia La Resurrección del Señor
Canovanas, Puerto Rico

Dear Father Canice,

We pray that these backpacks will bring some joy and comfort to the children in your parish who have lost so much from Hurricane Maria.

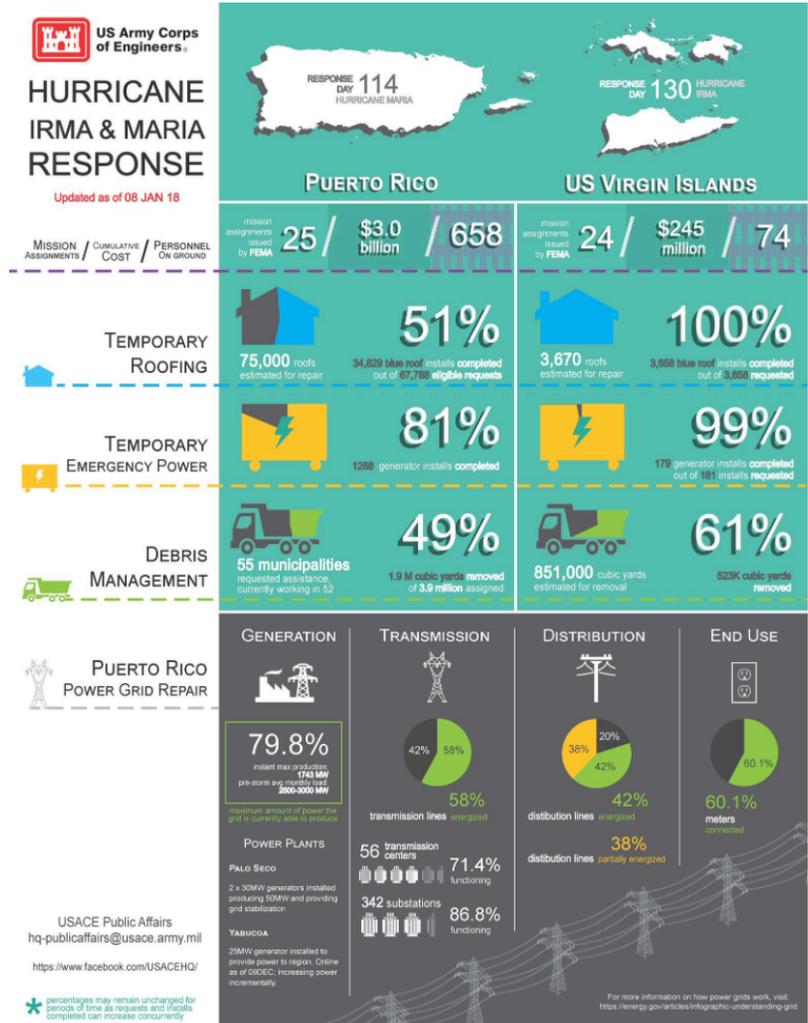
The funds for these gifts were donated by parishioners to the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society here in Highlands New Jersey. Many of them suffered from Hurricane Sandy here 5 years ago so we understand how damaging hurricanes can be. These backpacks were filled and notes written in each by the Confirmandi children and youth group in our parish.

We are grateful that Elizabeth Disco-Shearer, the CEO of the St. Vincent Paul Society Disaster Services Corp. told us about the needs in your parish.

Please be assured that you and your parishioners have our continued prayers for recovery from the hurricane.

May God especially bless your parish in this special time of our Lord's birth,

**Members of the Our Lady of Help St. Vincent de Paul Conference
-Highlands NJ**



PUERTO RICO

Maria Gonzales prepares to depart for the local P-RAC operations in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She made her destination yesterday and will be there for the week.

Vincentians, Maria Gonzales and Terry Taylor of Indiana are on the ground in Puerto Rico supporting local Vincentians facilitate two additional P-RAC Operations.

The local Council of SVDP in San Juan, Puerto Rico are operating two P-RAC operations this week. Maria Gonzales and Terry Taylor, DSC certified Vincentians of Indiana, are on the ground there to support the local Vincentian's efforts. Please pray for all those involved that are supporting the community on the ground. The recovery will be a long one and the needs there are great.



U P C O M I N G U S V I D E P L O Y M E N T

Alma Wells of St. Thomas, USVI and fellow Vincentian are shown to the left providing backpacks filled with supplies that were donated from Fort Wayne, Indiana. Alma is truly inspiring and we are so grateful for all she has done to serve others as she too is a disaster survivor and has been personally impacted by the hurricanes .

A small team of 12 that has been selected and confirmed will be deploying down to the US Virgin Islands February 3rd through the 11th pending approval of the Bishop's office. Terrance Taylor, Logistics Program Manager, will be deploying down this week to make preparations and plans prior to the team's arrival for the P-RAC Operations that will take place outside of St. Thomas. He is working closely with the local Council, the local Archdiocese, as well as with FEMA, American Red Cross and national VOAD partners. Members for the deployment team have been secured. Please pray for our Vincentians that will be deploying down to serve others, for our Vincentians there who have been responding and supporting their community despite being personally affected, and for all of the survivors there. Please consider donating to our cause to support our efforts and mission at hand. The man hours, the travel costs, the funding support to the Vincentians who in turn support their communities, and reimbursements to all those who deploy cannot continue without your assistance. Please donate to the disaster fund at www.svdpdisaster.org





U P D A T E S F R O M T H E E A S T

Anthony Pluchino, of the Disaster Services Corp, SVDP-USA and East Region Vincentian Disaster Chair Shares an update and call for donation supplies to send to Puerto Rico.

The Northeast was hit by a major winter storm, I have not had any reports returned back with issues related to this Winter storm at this time.

SVDP and Catholic Charities Diocese of Trenton have collected one-half a container with hygiene kits and various supplies. I am trying to get a full container before we ship to Puerto Rico. We need to fill the rest of the container with supplies before we ship to Puerto Rico. SVDP and Catholic Charities will share the cost of shipping. Anyone who is willing to donate to this cause, please contact Anthony Pluchino at APluchino@svdpdisaster.org for more information.

UPDATES FROM TEXAS

Gail Bertrand, South Central Regional Chair works with Cathy Garcia of Victoria, Texas on long term recovery efforts with SVDP. Cathy shares her experience in Texas. Shown to the right is Cathy with a group of Vincentian volunteers who unloaded a truck of donated new mattresses.

SVDP and the Diocese of Victoria has completed over 2,000 in-takes since Hurricane Harvey hit. We have opened up 26 long term recovery cases of the 2,000 in-takes, and of those 8 are now fully recovered. Victoria County Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is structured with all committees in place. SVDP has two case managers in place one working specifically in the Bloomington area with the MDS.

The Wharton County LTRG is structured but struggling in moving forward with committees especially with the unmet needs table to hear vetted cases we have opened. Wharton County has no volunteers to do repairs/rebuilt but SVDP have contacted the MDS in our local area to see what they can do to address repairs/rebuilds.

This is especially in the city of Wharton. SVDP is covering the entire Diocese of Victoria but struggling to address the call with only two Case Managers working on a volunteer basis. We have been struggling due to not having an office space, the right equipment and even resources, to address the magnitude of the unmet needs we have in our area. The House in a Box[®] Program has begun and we have distributed 14 kits in December across the Diocese. The Diocese of Victoria is ready to order another 20 HIB[®] kits. Matagorda, Calhoun, Dewitt, Colorado, Jackson, Lavaca, Goliad counties have not established their LTRGs, however as cases are opened Case Managers will go directly to funders to cover those counties with case presentations to the unmet needs tables to move forward.



CALIFORNIA

**Mudslides impact areas after flooding hits fire impacted zones.
DSC is assessing the situation and waiting to receive more
information from local conferences impacted.**

**Shown below: A home in California
that was impacted by the mudslide.**

Currently, a total of 17 people have died in the California mudslides and 13 people are still missing. The avalanche buried homes and swept others from their foundations, which in addition to the dead left at least 25 people injured, 24 missing and hundreds marooned, authorities said. Heavy rains caused large amounts of mud and debris to cascade down hillsides and through homes in southern California, and a random sort of debris has cut people off from escaping the area. Wildfires that raged through the area late last year have possibly made the mudslides more devastating. Vegetation that could have held soil in place was burned away by the rampant flames, rendering the area barren and more flood-prone. Without roots to keep dirt in place, nothing was able to stop rain from sweeping away the landscape. Please pray for all those affected.



NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Vincentian leadership Joe Butkovitch and Mark Kwiat have taken the lead on Disaster Recovery work in the region.

The North Central Region has closed out work in Ottawa and Neplate, Illinois due to politics within the Long Term Recovery Group. Our work in Wisconsin is now complete. We are still very active in Northern Illinois where we are serving and assisting over 1,000 families from the devastating July flooding that occurred. Some of the families we have been meeting with still do not have furnaces and the funds for assisting them are low. SVDP is also still active in our role with supporting the Indian reservation in South Dakota, Pine Ridge that was impacted by major flooding in 2015.

Image shown below: Cuba Township between McHenry and Algonquin Dam on the Fox River.

Please consider donating to the disaster relief effort for the North Central Region. Joe Butkovitch has been a true champion in serving his community as a Vincentian in disaster relief efforts. Please contact Joe if you are interested in volunteering as a Vincentian active in Disaster Relief as he could greatly use the assistance and support. You can reach Joe at: joepatpaul@yahoo.com. We urge anyone who is able to support Joe and provide him with resources so that he can continue to serve the community as the needs are great there as well. Please pray for Joe and Mark as their work continues on and for all the families who have been impacted by disaster in their region.



HDI provides insight on the connection between disasters and human trafficking.



Dr. Jamie Aten of Humanitarian Disaster Institute provided a webinar interview with Let My People Go Network about the connection between disasters and human trafficking and how churches can help support vulnerable people and communities: <http://ow.ly/LLF730hG5hx>. Dr. Aten spoke at last years DSC Annual Preparedness Conference in Chicago to share information about HDI.

January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

What Disaster Responders Need To Know

As a disaster responder and/or a healthcare provider, the likelihood that you will come in contact with a human trafficking victim is very high! Remember that anyone can be trafficked—men and boys, women and girls.

Disasters Increase the Risks of Human Trafficking

BEGINNING OF DISASTERS

- Disruption and chaos make it easy to exploit disaster survivors
- Perpetrators of trafficking may pose as responders offering survivors help with housing, food, or water

DURING DISASTERS

- Disaster survivors may engage in survival strategies that make them vulnerable to being taken advantage of
- Children may be separated, sometimes permanently, from their parents

AFTER DISASTERS

- Rebuilding and cleanup create new markets for cheap or free labor
- Disaster survivors may lose their main source of income and look for new types of work, including commercial sex

Recognize the Signs of Human Trafficking

LABOR TRAFFICKING

- Reports performing work duties in exchange for basic necessities (food, water, housing), rather than money
- Unable to freely choose where they live
- Identification documents are held by employer

SEX TRAFFICKING

- Reports providing sex in exchange for basic necessities (food, water, housing)
- Unexplainable injuries
- Reports being forced to engage in commercial sex
- Aged <18 and involved in commercial sex
- Reports unusually high number of sex partners



If you think someone may be a victim of human trafficking, call and/or

encourage them to call the **National Human Trafficking Hotline:**

(888) 373-7888 to receive help, resources, and information.



FOR MORE INFORMATION



Please consider supporting our mission by donating your time, providing financial support, and/or becoming active in your local community on disaster preparedness and recovery as a Vincentian.

Please stop by our newly updated website: www.svdpcdisaster.org

An online store and training resources will soon be available exclusively for Vincentians active in disaster recovery.

Follow us on Twitter: [@svdpcusadisaster](https://twitter.com/svdpcusadisaster)

Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/DisasterServicesCorp/

Follow us on LinkedIn: Disaster Services Corporation, SVDP-USA

Brooke Newton, Deputy Director: bnewton@svdpcdisaster.org

For those of you interested in volunteering, please stop by our website at www.svdpcdisaster.org and click on the volunteer button at the top right corner. It will take you to a webform to complete. This information will help us gain better insight on you and be able to better pair you with what we have open and available to volunteer with. We will set up a one on one phone call shortly after the form has been completed. As a reminder, we cannot continue all these great works without your help. Please consider donating to the general disaster fund at www.svdpcdisaster.org to keep our programs running so that we can in turn support those who have been impacted by disaster here in the United States.

