



On the Support for the Victims of the Storm *Vinta*

Greetings during the blessed octave of the Feast of Christmas!

As I recently wrote to you about the tragedy of the tropical cyclone *Urduja*, that storm was followed by the storm *Vinta* that cut through Mindanao and left over 200 dead, tens of thousands homeless, and many still missing. Even as I write now, recovery efforts are still ongoing in Zamboanga Peninsula. Many have not yet been able to return to their homes.

Again, this is another very sad situation for many of our people who will be, for sure, in difficult circumstances as we continue to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Thus, may we again enjoin our Catholic faithful and all people of goodwill to offer our sincere prayers to the Lord, especially for those who have died. We also continue to pray for all of those people whose lives have been made more difficult that they may experience the care and love, mercy and compassion of the Savior.

At the same time, we can be with the Lord by extending all we can – our help and assistance to these people.

In addition to our help for the victims of typhoon *Urduja*, we ask that we do not tire to continue to aid the victims of *Vinta* also.



We know that many government and civic agencies have responded and continue to respond; may they continue. May I enjoin again all our dioceses and their social action centers and CARITAS offices to continue what we have been doing in the past when such tragedies struck. We organize and offer our help and assistance to the people of these areas through the bishops of these places.

Let us demonstrate by our actions that the true light has come into the world, and that the darkness, as much darkness as there is at our present time, cannot overcome the true light.

From the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 28 December 2017

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