



## DIOCESE OF OWENSBORO

McRaith Catholic Center

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

August 21, 2018

Dear Father,

You may have recently heard reports on the news of the historic flooding happening in Kerala state in southwest India. Most of the Heralds of Good News priests serving in our diocese come from this region of India, and the flooding is having a direct and devastating impact on their families and loved ones. It seems that most of our brothers have been able recently to communicate with their families or to at least identify their current location. The effects on them, however, and on the 14 districts of Kerala state will be extreme and long-lasting.

It is being referred to as “the flood of the century”. Hundreds of people are dead and more than a million individuals displaced and living in camps. People have lost all their possessions except for what they could carry with them to higher ground. For many, their homes have been swept away in landslides. As you can imagine, food and clean water have become scarce. The government of India estimates that the damage caused by the flooding and landslides will cost more than \$1.1 billion U.S. dollars. The loss of life and property is extensive and the human suffering profound.

The Catholic Church in India, including the Heralds of Good News, has joined in relief efforts. Local Church authorities have opened church schools and other institutions to the displaced people and are distributing food, clothing and other relief materials. Many parishes, schools and other Church institutions have become the centers of aid and assistance to people in need.

Catholic Relief Services is on the ground as well providing assistance to more than 2,000 families in Wayanad District, one of the hardest hit and isolated areas impacted by the flooding. CRS is distributing water purifying tablets, buckets for safe water storage, hygiene items and shelter kits which include tarps and blankets.

I am asking that you inform the people of your parish of the tragedy happening in Kerala and of our direct connection through the Heralds of Good News serving among us here. I would ask as well that, if possible, you take up a special collection on either the weekend of August 25-26 or September 1-2. Please send the proceeds of your collection to the Diocese of Owensboro marked for “Kerala relief”. The Diocese will forward the contributions to the Heralds and to Catholic Relief Services to support their efforts in providing for the needs of the people of Kerala.

There is never a shortage of human need in our world. I pray that in this moment, when we observe the devastation of so many, we may all continue the rich Gospel tradition of responding to those in need. Thank you and all God’s people for your generosity.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend William F. Medley  
Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro

A message from Father Sinoj:

Dear Friends,

Please pray for Kerala. My family, relatives and people of my native country are affected by flood and had to move to relief camps at higher places. Some of them moved to the top floors of the neighboring buildings, but still in danger of rising water. The heavy rain continues.

The whole state of Kerala is facing a great disasters of very heavy rains, landslides and flood. We have 7 priests in our diocese from Kerala.

I request all of you to join with us and raise our hearts to God praying for the rain to stop and bring consolation to the people affected.

Father Sinoj Pynadath is the Associate Pastor at St. Stephen Cathedral in Owensboro.

