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Priest in Charge

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Kerala Flood Relief – An appeal

In the recent weeks, the state of Kerala in India was subjected to severe destruction caused by unprecedented flooding. At least 350 people lost their lives, (there are many more that are not recorded) thousands watched their homes washed away in floods and landslides and thousands, particularly the poor people living in fragile houses in rural areas, lost everything they had, swept away.

The Church of South India (CSI) and the other churches in the region have been actively engaged in rescue operations and in organising provisions of shelter and basic supplies to the displaced. Churches and their colleges and schools have been turned into emergency shelters and medical camps. Our colleagues and friends, who are priests and leaders of churches in these areas, are seeking the prayers and help of the global community as they continue their rescue and relief efforts for the affected people.

I have been in touch with a few of my friends (priests in the CSI Central Kerala Diocese), who are continuing to be directly involved in rescue, relief and rehabilitation work. They report:

All six Dioceses in Kerala were affected. East Kerala Diocese, Kochi Diocese and Madhya Kerala Diocese were the worst affected. Churches in the region are heavily involved in helping the affected people in various ways, alongside government's response teams, other faith communities and volunteer groups. Work is coordinated by the Clergy with the active involvement of the Youth.

During the flooding itself, a team of volunteers from churches worked online connecting those needed rescues with those involved in the rescue operations and saved many lives. As people are starting to return to their houses, (or what is left of their houses) volunteers from churches are engaged in cleaning the mud-filled houses.

The CSI Central Kerala Diocese has formed 'Flood Rescue-Relief-Rehabilitation Facilitating Committee' to coordinate the assessment of need and relief and rehabilitation activities, which would involve repair and rebuilding of houses, replacement of furniture and home appliances, books for school and college students, in addition to continuing to provide food and clothes. With all sources of freshwater contaminated, health issues are emerging, and churches contribute to the responses to such needs as well.

It would be a timely help if we can offer our support to our brothers and sisters in Kerala who are trying their best to assist the most affected and the neediest in the aftermath of the disastrous floods.

I will be happy to furnish further details if necessary.

In Christ,

(Hamilton.)