

Catholic Bishops call for national day of prayer for Burma cyclone victims

The Catholic Bishops of Australia have called for a national day of prayer this Sunday, in solidarity with the people of Burma who are suffering so greatly from the tragic effects of Cyclone Nargis.

Meeting together in Sydney, the Bishops called on Catholic parishes around the nation to include a prayer for the Burmese people in their Masses as they observed Pentecost Sunday this weekend.

“We call on people of faith to pray for all the people in Burma, for the enormous suffering they have endured with the great tragedy that is emerging to us in the wake of Cyclone Nargis,” the Bishops said.

“We know that a million people are homeless and tens of thousands have been killed. Tragically, we may not yet have heard the worst of this crisis.”

The Bishops, who have written a letter of solidarity to their counterparts in Burma, said that the Catholic Church, through its international aid agency, Caritas, is delivering assistance to the needy.

“The urgent need for clean water, food, shelter and medical attention remains severely hindered in many of the worst affected areas in the Irrawaddy Delta,” they said.

Caritas’ partnership across the world with grassroots organisations is also strong in Burma and faith communities, including Catholic, Buddhist, and others are among the first to deliver assistance.

The Bishops asked parishes to pray for those who had died and for those who were suffering.

“May the Spirit who came into the world on Pentecost Sunday fill those who are mourning their loved ones and those who are suffering dislocation, injury and devastation in Burma, with strength to endure their great burden.”