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**Archbishop John C. Wester on the
Natural Disasters of Summer 2017**

ALBUQUERQUE – Friday, September 22, 2017—IMMEDIATE RELEASE—Archbishop John C. Wester has issued the following statement regarding the Natural Disasters of Summer 2017.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

More “breaking news” announcements were made recently: Authorities say it could be four to six months before electricity is returned to Puerto Rico and its nearly 3.5 million people after being decimated by Hurricane Maria. At least 286 people have died as a result of the 7.1 magnitude earthquake in Mexico on September 19, 2017.

The phrase “breaking news” has become a central element in our daily news cycle. Today and throughout these last few months, our brothers and sisters in the United States and abroad have faced deadly disasters, turning their worlds upside down. Let not our hearts be hardened by this daily barrage of disasters, but open to hope and healing during this time of turmoil and despair.

Our parishes in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe have been participating in special collections for those suffering from the recent disasters resulting from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Today, I also sent out another request to the faithful of the archdiocese to please be generous in their offerings in an upcoming second collection the weekend of September 30 and October 1, 2017 to assist our brothers and sisters recovering from the earthquake in Mexico and Hurricane Maria. Please note, all monies donated to these special collections will be sent to Catholic Relief Services which directs 100% to disaster relief.

On behalf of the clergy, religious and faithful of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, I extend our prayers and deepest condolences.

A Few of the Natural Disasters of Summer 2017

- Mexico: Earthquake

- South Sudan: Floods

According to the State Ministry of Health, it is estimated that over 119,000 people have been affected by flooding caused by heavy rainfall in 11 payams of Aweil North and Aweil West of former Northern Bahr el Ghazal State. More flooding also caused some deaths and injuries and has deeply affected the daily lives of over 650 households in eight villages of Bunj payam, Maban County, Upper Nile State.

- Hurricane Maria

Affected areas: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba (The Netherlands), British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe (France), Martinique (France), Montserrat, Puerto Rico (The United States of America), Saint Barthélemy (France), Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten (The Netherlands), United States Virgin Islands

- Mexico/Guatemala: Earthquake

- Hurricane Irma

Affected areas: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba (The Netherlands), British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guadeloupe (France), Haiti, Martinique (France), Montserrat, Puerto Rico (The United States of America), Saint Barthélemy (France), Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Martin (France), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten (The Netherlands), Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands

- Hurricane Harvey

Affected areas: Southern and Eastern United States (especially Texas, Louisiana), Belize, Windward Islands, Suriname, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua, Yucatán Peninsula,

- Africa: Floods – Mali, Niger, Ghana, Nigeria, Central African Republic, South Sudan
- Philippine's: Earthquakes--END

Our Lady of Guadalupe,
Comforter of the Afflicted and Mother Most Merciful,
pray for us.