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Antilles Episcopal Conference of Catholic Bishops Issues Pastoral Letter Calling Caribbean People to Face Natural Disasters with Faith, Solidarity, and Hope

As the Caribbean enters another hurricane season, the Bishops of the Antilles Episcopal Conference (AEC) have released a powerful new pastoral letter, *In the Eye of the Hurricane: Living the Rhythm of Natural Disasters in the Caribbean with Faith, Solidarity, and Hope*.

In the letter, the bishops remind the people of the Caribbean that hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters are not distant possibilities but annual realities which especially impact the poor and vulnerable. Drawing from Scripture, Catholic social teaching, and the region's lived experience, the bishops call on all Caribbean Catholics to reject fear, deepen solidarity, and build a culture of preparedness rooted in faith.

"We proclaim a God who journeys alongside us rather than above us," the bishops write, urging faithful to recognise Christ's presence in neighbours helping neighbours, shelters providing refuge, and communities rebuilding together.

The pastoral letter challenges the region to move away from last-minute preparations towards proactive readiness at every level — in homes, parishes, schools, communities, dioceses, and across the wider Caribbean. The bishops stress that true preparation is spiritual as well as practical, echoing Pope Francis' call in *Laudato Si'* to care for creation and protect the most vulnerable.

The letter outlines concrete steps that every household, community, parish, diocese can take, from forming disaster response teams and stocking emergency kits to checking on elderly neighbours and supporting the work of Caritas Antilles and the AEC Disaster Fund.

A formal press launch of the pastoral letter will be hosted on *Trinity TV* at a date to be announced. The bishops invite all Catholics and people of goodwill to tune in and join this regional conversation on faith, preparedness, and hope.

In addition, the AEC is ensuring that French and Dutch translations of the Pastoral Letter will be made available in a timely manner, so that all communities across the Caribbean may reflect on and share this message together.

“With storms as our classroom,” the bishops write, “we are called to learn resilience, compassion, interdependence, and resourcefulness. Even in the eye of the hurricane, we hold on to hope — a hope that does not disappoint.”

The full Pastoral Letter, including practical guidelines for preparedness and recovery, is available on the AEC website: <https://aecbishops.org>

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