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TO OUR
BROTHERS
IN THE
PHILIPPINES

November 12 , 2013

TO OUR BROTHERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

We are greatly saddened by the tragedy that struck the Philippines as a result of super typhoon Haiyan, considered to be one of the most powerful storms on record. As of the time of this writing, 9.5 million people are said to be adversely "affected" by the typhoon, with a death toll estimated at 10,000, more than 600,000 displaced, and nearly 80 percent of all structures in its path destroyed.

Many nations and humanitarian organizations are coming to their aid, along with personal donations and contributions by private citizens. Religious organizations around the world are offering prayers in support of the recovery of the Philippine nation, and are encouraging their members to give material assistance, if possible. We join them in this request. All of these efforts demonstrate the goodness of people and inspire hope that one day, we can set aside our differences and work together as the united family we are meant to be.

Of course, it is terrible when lives are prematurely taken whether it be at the hands of another or by way of so-called 'natural disasters.' But we must remember that nothing valuable is ever lost. The lives of the thousands who were killed as a result of the typhoon, and the millions who have been slaughtered in recent wars and uprisings, have not been forgotten by the Father. The vast majority of these people have stored up treasures in heaven by their kind actions toward others. Whether or not they had come to 'an accurate knowledge of truth,' their acts of kindness go with them. (*Matthew 10:41-42*) They can look forward to a resurrection in the heavenly abodes Jesus prepared for us (*John 14:2*), where Jesus will make up for any lack by working with all to 'perfect their faith.' (*Hebrews 12:2*) And, of course, those who accepted the hope of adoption as sons of God (*Ephesians 1:3-5*) will receive their reward and perhaps be used to assist those whose lives were cut short before they had an opportunity to make the ultimate divine decision.

There is a measure of peace in knowing that those loved ones are no longer suffering. Most are asleep waiting for the resurrection call at the end of the current dispensation (*John 6:40*), which will seem to them to pass in an instant. We are sure to reunite with our loved ones when we, too, are released from the bonds of the flesh (*Romans 8:23*) in the manner of our Lord, Christ Jesus.

"So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, **it is raised imperishable**; it is sown in dishonor, **it is raised in glory**; it is sown in weakness, **it is raised in power**; it is sown a natural body, **it is raised a spiritual body**. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. **And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.**" – *1 Corinthians 15:42-49*

We pray for the strength of our brothers in the Philippines and that they not lose

hope.

We know you are suffering, but these things, too, shall pass. Man is a resilient creation by a wise and loving God who knows that we can bear whatever calamity comes upon us. (*1 Corinthians 10:13*) And if we can but look to the riches of the Christ, we can stand knowing that the future held out to us is far greater than the calamity befalling us:

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

– *2 Corinthians 4:16-18*

Your brothers in the faith, along with the entire association of brothers and sons of the glorious Father worldwide.

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