



Catholic Courier

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ VOL. 105 NO. 17 ■ THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1994 ■ 75¢ ■ 16 PAGES

Mother nature's wrath



AP/Wide World Photos

Jeremy Haas, 20, of Ithaca, is helped from the Mount Washington Observatory snow machine in New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest while enroute to Littleton Hospital in Little, N.H., Jan. 18. Haas sustained severe frostbite after he had to leave his climbing partner on nearby Mount Jefferson Jan. 14. Bad weather forced rescue officials to wait three days before bringing Haas down the mountain.

Quake, frigid weather leave regions reeling

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Two acts of nature — the Southern California earthquake and the Arctic freeze in the Midwest and East — took the lives of scores of people and disrupted the lives of thousands more in the United States during January.

For the church, the quake and the freeze meant ministering to those who were affected and thanking God that things hadn't been worse.

Despite the devastation, hundreds of earthquake survivors flocked to church services Jan. 23 in the Los Angeles area to give thanks for being saved and to pray for the strength to rebuild their shattered lives. The earthquake, which caused at least \$30 billion in damages, left 20,000 people homeless.

Government officials said they were doing all they could to streamline the largest urban relief effort ever mounted by the federal government in the aftermath of the Jan. 17 quake. Measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale, the temblor and its aftershocks jolted the Los Angeles metro area and left at least 57 people dead.

On the other side of the country, as temperatures warmed somewhat from the winter cold snap, officials estimated a death toll of more than 130 people. The record cold weather forced closure Jan. 20 of the federal government and public and private businesses in the District of Columbia in an unprecedented move to conserve energy. Countless schools, public and Catholic, also were closed during late January.

Many of the Los Angeles-area services on the first Sunday after the earthquake were held in makeshift places of worship. Badly damaged churches were closed because they were deemed dangerous by building inspectors.

Standing before a sign that read, "We Will

Rise Again," Los Angeles Cardinal Roger M. Mahony celebrated a Jan. 23 Mass in the parish hall of St. John Eudes Catholic Church in suburban Chatsworth.

"We have found great strength this week," Cardinal Mahony told the congregation, which spilled out of the hall into a courtyard. "I see a lot of good things coming out of a devastating rumble of the earth."

The cardinal said the quake had "a great ripple effect," bringing families and communities closer together.

"Just as the earthquake itself had its damage go outward ... so the good effect of caring for one another also has had that same ripple effect," he told the congregation.

"A lot of us got down on our knees during these days. Probably a lot more prayer went up from Los Angeles than in a long, long time."

In a letter to his fellow bishops Jan. 19, Cardinal Mahony said that his top priorities included "continuous prayers for our priests, religious and ministry personnel," and "crisis intervention specialists to assist the thousands of people



AP/Wide World Photos

A work crew Jan. 21 removes a 2,000-pound marble statue from St. Monica's Church in Santa Monica, Calif. The statue's head is missing as a result of the Jan. 17 earthquake in California.

deal with this total disruption of their families and their lives."

He said more than 100 churches had substantial damage, with six judged "possibly beyond repair." One Catholic high school and one elementary school will have to be torn down and rebuilt, with another 35 schools and two Catholic hospitals needing major repair work.

Both short-term and long-term financial assistance would be needed to meet immediate relief needs and to repair and rebuild churches, schools and other buildings, he added.

Structural damage caused by the earthquake forced 18 California hospitals to close or curtail services, including St. John's Catholic Hospital and Medical Center in Santa Monica. St. John's was forced to evacuate 1,300 employees and

send 191 patients to other area hospitals.

By Jan. 21, Catholic Charities USA, the agency that represents the Catholic community in times of domestic disaster, had donated \$10,000 in short-term emergency funding to Catholic Charities of Los Angeles to help earthquake survivors.

Continued on page 14