

July 30, 2026

To all who hold the victims of the Kumamoto earthquake in their hearts,

The peace of the Lord be with you.

This year, marking the tenth anniversary of the major earthquakes that struck Kumamoto on April 14 and 16, 2016, we have once again experienced a massive earthquake. The cities of Uto, Uki, and Yatsushiro, as well as the town of Hikawa in Kumamoto Prefecture, sustained particularly severe damage. We remember those who lost their lives and join their bereaved families in praying for the repose of their souls. We also offer our heartfelt sympathies to the many people who have been affected by the earthquake.

On July 29, accompanied by Father Terahama (in charge of Fukuoka Caritas) and Father Totoki (Diocesan Chancellor), I visited several churches and communities in Kumamoto Prefecture. Regarding church structures, we confirmed significant damage to the Yatsushiro Church building, the rectory, and the parish hall. Fortunately, damage to other churches, religious houses, and facilities appears to be minimal. We have not yet fully grasped the situation regarding the parishioners and are currently gathering information.

We will determine the Diocese of Fukuoka's course of action moving forward, under the coordination of the Fukuoka Caritas Committee. As the situation becomes clearer, we will decide on specific measures to take and share the information with you.

For now, we ask for your cooperation in making donations to meet the needs of those affected and of the damaged facilities, and to support the various relief activities to come. If you are able to contribute, please transfer your donation to the following account:

2026 KUMAMOTO EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND	
Postal Transfer Account Number:	01760-6-20729
Account Name:	カトリック福岡司教区 (Catholic Diocese of Fukuoka)
*Please clearly state " For the 2026 Kumamoto Earthquake " in the message space	

We understand that some of you may wish to join volunteer groups; we will provide further information regarding this at a later date. We are currently working with Caritas Japan to assess the damage in the affected areas and consider our future response.

Supported by your prayers, we wish to stand by those who are suffering the consequences of the earthquake and do everything within our power to help.

With gratitude and prayers,



Joseph M. Abella

Bishop of the Diocese of Fukuoka

