

To the Faithful of the Diocese of Fukuoka

One month since the 2026 Kumamoto earthquake

The Peace of the Lord

Today marks one month since the 2026 Kumamoto Earthquake, which occurred on July 28, 2026, at 4:27 PM. We offer our prayers for those who lost their lives and for all who have suffered various forms of loss or damage.

The Diocese of Fukuoka has been organizing relief efforts with the cooperation of Caritas Japan and ERST; we are deeply grateful for everyone's support. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to the five priests from the diocese who participated in local volunteer activities, as well as to the parishioners of Yatsushiro Church who distributed relief supplies and engaged in various other forms of assistance.

The situation in the affected areas is changing day by day. Let me share a brief report on the current situation and the diocese's future initiatives.

Parishes within the diocese that sustained damages -such as cracks in walls or floors- include Tetori, Yatsushiro, Minamata, and Obiyama. At Yatsushiro parish, which suffered particularly severe damage, the water supply was recently restored, allowing the parish priest to stay in the presbytery.

We are currently making arrangements to start operating as a church open to the local community, as we established as one of the objectives of the "Policy for the relief work of the diocese of Fukuoka" published on August 10, and whose first point was "Engagement with Yatsushiro parish and the local community". As a parish community that was present in the area before the disaster and remains there now, we hope to stand close to those in need of support while cherishing our ties with the local community.

Additionally, the diocese is preparing to establish a "Kumamoto Support Center." This center is intended to coordinate volunteer activities and assess the needs of the affected areas. We will inform once preparations are completed.

Although one month has passed since the 2026 Kumamoto Earthquake, many people are still living in shelters. Furthermore, looking at the wider world, Nepal has also suffered significant damage due to mudslides. I ask that, during the Mass on August 30, you unite your hearts in prayer for the victims. I would be grateful if you could include this intention in the Prayers of the Faithful or recite the following prayer together at the conclusion of those prayers.

Prayer for those who suffer from natural disasters

God our Father,
who grant eternal love to all,
we pray with hope and trust
that you will shine upon the hearts of those who suffer
due to natural disasters.
Support them so that they not lose hope.
Grant eternal rest to those who have died.
May we give witness in prayer and action that Christ is always with us,
bearing the suffering of all.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Approved by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan on February 16, 2021)

Let us unite in prayer for those around the world who are currently suffering or in sorrow, asking that necessary aid reaches every single person and that they may regain a peaceful life as soon as possible.

With gratitude and prayers,

August 28, 2026



Josep M. Abella

Bishop of the diocese of Fukuoka

