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After the deadly storm: prayers for the Philippines

Der stärkste Wirbelsturm aller Zeiten...

Zurich/Manila. At wind speeds of over 300 kilometres per hour, super typhoon Haiyan swept through the Philippine Islands with a power never before encountered, leaving death and grief, destruction and chaos in its wake. To date, authorities are estimating over 10,000 fatalities, and many people are still missing. Some four million people have been affected by this most serious natural disaster ever.

District Apostle Urs Hebeisen, who is responsible for the New Apostolic Church in South East Asia is shocked. He writes: "The situation is truly catastrophic. We fear the worst!" At present it is still impossible to obtain clear facts and information from the parts of the country affected. "Our communications have been interrupted. We are trying to reach Bishop Puso."

The scope of the damage is not yet known

International media are reporting that the city of Tacloban on the island of Leyte has been practically obliterated—it no longer exists. Here alone, authorities are estimating over 10,000 victims. The South East Asian aid agency of the Church, known as "NACSEARelief", is currently still in the process of helping people in the earthquake region of Bohol, which had been shaken by a serious earthquake only a month before—and now this new disaster has struck! District Apostle Hebeisen writes: "We have recalled our employee in the relief agency from Bohol, and he is now on his way to Tacloban in order to locate our members. In the meantime, young

people in Makati have begun to prepare emergency packages. We are also in contact with the New Apostolic relief agencies in Europe.”

Prayers are welcome

His current assessment sounds very unsettling: “The way we see it, the situation is so precarious that only the army is capable of taking action at the moment.” The international and national relief agencies are presently “on standby”. He concludes with the statement: “Many thanks for all your prayers!”

Most powerful typhoon of all time

Haiyan, the most powerful tropical storm of all times, struck the East Philippine Island of Leyte last Friday with full force. In the coastal regions, entire villages were inundated by metre-high waves. Many areas are completely cut off from contact with the outside world. According to government sources, some four million people in 36 provinces are affected. In many areas, communications have been interrupted, and power and telephone lines are down.

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