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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN RAISES FUNDS

TO AID HURRICANE BATTERED CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Arlington, Virginia—"The National Council of Catholic Women [NCCW] has been assisting women and children for more than 85 years," says Ellen Bachman, NCCW president. "Our members have always been ready to help victims of natural disasters around the world through collaboration with Catholic Relief Services. It seemed natural that we would help U.S. residents who are suffering from last year's hurricane season. Through Catholic Charities, USA, we were led to Our Mother of Mercy School in Beaumont, Texas."

The school suffered significant damage from Hurricane Rita. With roof damage came water damage to textbooks and library materials. Currently, students meet in the social hall and portable classrooms.

Based on the needs identified by Bishop Curtis Guillory's office, the Beaumont Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the pastor, and school principal, the NCCW aims to raise nearly \$6,000 to cover the costs of replacing math textbooks for students in grades one through five.

In February, Bachman visited the school, along with Janie Southerland, NCCW secretary, and Eunice Washa, NCCW Galveston-Houston province director, to deliver a check for \$1,020, the first installment of this fund-raising project. "We went expecting to see the hurricane damage," said Bachman. "We also found fantastic kids, a principal with a vision and hope for the future, dedicated teachers, and parents struggling financially but committed to Catholic education. I am confident that our councils and individual members will generously support this project."

NCCW encourages social action and social justice throughout the U.S. and represents American Catholic women in national and international organizations. Through the work of local organizations, NCCW provides leadership, education, and advocacy in a variety of issues such as the dignity of all human life, economic and social justice, domestic violence, environmental justice and stewardship, and many others. In partnership with Catholic Relief Services, NCCW members support international programs for clean water, maternal and child health, micro-business development, and refugee assistance in developing countries.

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