

# EL SALVADOR: IN PUBLIC CALAMITY AND NATIONAL DISASTER

NATIONAL MOURNING FOR 3 DAYS  
AS OF OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup>

## NATIONAL MOURNING

- ✓ The National Legislative Assembly decreed on October 17th 3 days of national mourning: October 18-20, 2011.
- ✓ The assembly has also declared that, for 60 days, the country of El Salvador is in a state of public calamity and national disaster.

## THE STATISTICS

- ✓ 32 deaths
- ✓ 3 missing persons
- ✓ More than 20 thousand people in shelters
- ✓ 10 of 14 departments affected
- ✓ 267 shelters at a national level
- ✓ 139 education centers used as shelters
- ✓ Declaration of national mourning for 3 days, October 18-20
- ✓ Declaration of national state of public calamity and national disaster for 60 days
- ✓ More than 2 thousand damaged dwellings
- ✓ 14 highways out
- ✓ Landslides, floods, others
- ✓ President on national channel sends message of solidarity to families mourning for loved ones
- ✓ Our church deploys support to pastors with greatest emergencies: Cara Sucia, Usulután, Jayaque, La Paz, El Paisnal, Opico, Santa Ana, San Salvador

## BLESSINGS





## CHILD BURIED IN LANDSLIDE, DEPUTIZED FOR ONE DAY DIES

Cecilia Esmeralda Méndez, a child age 12, who was deputized for one day in the National Legislative Palace, died near her parents on October 16th, buried in a landslide that fell on their small tin home.

Cecilia functioned as deputy for one day in a plenary session the prior Thursday of this month, along with 83 other children in the country.

The Legislative Assembly began their work this Monday with a minute of silence in honor of the child, and decreed 3 days of mourning in recognition of her labor and for all the mourning of the families that had lost loved ones.

Cecilia Esmeralda Méndez, lived in the municipality of Ciudad Arce, some 45 kilometers west of the Salvadoran capital. "Today we say goodbye to her with honor, because she was, and served the country," they expressed in the legislative Blue Room.

Again, by this means we extend our actions to confront the national emergency.

On this day, the 17th of October, 2011, the Legislative Assembly has declared El Salvador to be in a state of PUBLIC CALAMITY AND NATIONAL DISASTER for 60 days as of October 18th, 2011.

In the same way, the Legislative Assembly also has declared, as of the same October 18th, 2011, 3 days of national mourning, for which it has been ordered that the national flag in public places be at half-staff, and has requested prayer, and requested that all join together in this situation.

The president of the Republic of El Salvador, Mauricio Funes, on a national channel at 9:00 pm on October 17th confirmed the statistics we are delivering to you today by this means.

The president also called for national unity, solidarity, and that we work as a team to act without personal interests to confront the crisis we're living in this country.

According to the president, this situation is one of the worst that has occurred in this country. In the end, he thanked everyone for all the help and support that the institutions and security organizations, relief agencies, churches, and NGOs that made their resources and actions available. He also called for all to not take advantage of the emergency and suffering of the people.

## BISHOP MEDARDO GOMEZ CALLS FOR EMERGENCY NOT TO BE POLITICIZED

The bishop of our Salvadoran Lutheran Church today called us to be responsible in the management of the national emergency not to utilize the suffering of the people for patronizing the political elections.

“We are in the setting of an electoral campaign, and it is important that we concentrate on help without political hints to the people crying for assistance,” he expressed. “We must be very careful, because when suffering abates and things begin to return to normal, there will be those who will desire to take advantage of the emergency and the misfortune of the people to improve their political face and electability, and that is not just.

“It is very interesting, as in this phase of the emergency, there is much focus, coordination, and attention to the larger provisions issued officially, and for that, progress is made, because in this moment the differences are not seen except as they contribute to a single objective...to help.”

“Thanks be to God, the government, through established bodies, has managed this phase well. It is admirable and blessed that the relief agencies donate their time and wisdom, we bless them because they are heroes and heroines that donate their time and knowledge even at the expense of their own families and lives. In the same way, the autonomous organizations of security, military, policy, and ministry look like an organized, well-intentioned effort...again, thank you for that.

However, we have been able to see some instances where they want to be the star and carry in front of them their institutional logo or supporters. That isn't evil, but it doesn't help to generate a sense of only crisis and hope. It is most correct to act under the precept of...thy neighbor as thyself.

We as a church do not seek to be stars and are with the people forever, day and night, because we are part of the communities and, in this emergency, we have deployed teams, support, and assistance in our style, which is to say, as a family in God.

We have organized in brigades at a national level to provide pastoral and spiritual accompaniment to our pastors and the families of the communities.

For us, the people are most important, for that we cry when misfortune occurs, and most of all, when children and elderly die, because they are the most vulnerable and require all the attention and aid.

In this sense, it makes us indignant when we see that, for the sake of stardom, concentration is lost, and rivalries arise even between brothers and sisters of the same family.

God sends us to be transparent and act responsibly in this phase of the national emergency, as well as in the final steps of reconstruction and healing that lie ahead.

Brothers and sisters, there will yet be time to learn lessons day by day, suffice it to say, thank you for making hope possible, and to confirm our message:

Where there is more suffering...there is more hope.

## INSTITUTIONAL SCHEDULE IN LIGHT OF THE EMERGENCY

Tuesday, October 18th:

- ✓ Teams deployed to support Cara Sucia, Ahuachapán.
- ✓ Teams deployed to support communities in Jayaque.
- ✓ Bishop will visit communities of Jayaque and San Juan Opico.
- ✓ Churches in the southern and north central micro-regions will take a census in the local churches to inspect the emergency and damages.

Friday, October 21st:

- ✓ Bishop will visit communities in the western zone: Santa Ana, Ahuachapán, and Sonsonate.

Wednesday, October 19th:

- ✓ Bishop and pastoral team will visit communities in the northern zone of the country affected by the event.
- ✓ Teams continue in the assigned zones.

Thursday, October 20th:

- ✓ Bishop will visit communities in the eastern zone of the country.

Lutheran Bishopric  
Sister Church Unit  
Communications Unit

# PSALM

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The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul;  
He leads me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley  
of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
For You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
My cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
All the days of my life;  
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
Forever.

**WE ARE**



**UNITED**

