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General view of flood water covering the area as a powerful storm and heavy rainfall hit Al-Mu

General view of flood water covering the area as a powerful storm and heavy rainfall hit Al-Mukhaili, Libya, Sept. 11, 2023. At least 2,000 people have died and 10,000 are believed missing after Storm Daniel dumped so much rain on Libya's northeast that two dams collapsed sending water flowing into already inundated areas. (OSV News/Reuters/Libya Al-Hadath)



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"His Holiness Pope Francis was deeply saddened to learn of the immense loss of life and destruction caused by the flooding in the eastern part of Libya, and he sends the assurance of his prayers for the souls of the deceased and all who mourn their loss," said a telegram sent Sept. 12 to Archbishop Savio Hon Tai-Fai, the nuncio to Libya.

"His Holiness also expresses heartfelt spiritual closeness to the injured, to those who fear for their missing loved ones and to the emergency personnel providing rescue and relief assistance," said the telegram signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state.

Tamer Ramadan, head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Libya, told reporters the death toll is likely to be "huge," the BBC reported Sept. 12. The number of people reported missing is about 10,000 and

the number of people confirmed dead already was 1,500 and expected to rise sharply.

The rains from Storm Daniel, which made landfall in Libya Sept. 10, led to two dams bursting near the city of Derna, unleashing torrents of water that wiped out a huge section of the city.

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