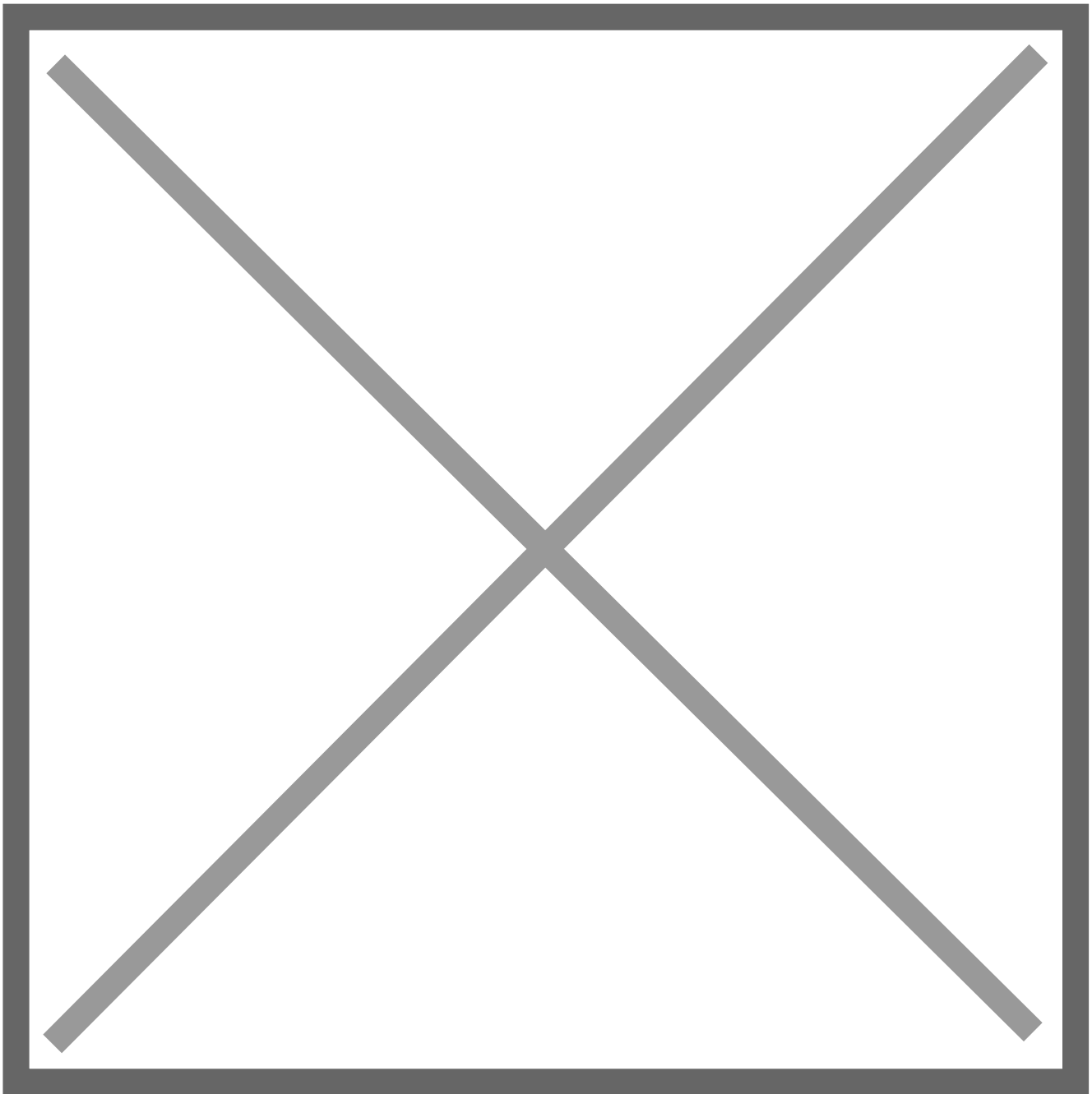




Rescuers work at the site of a collapsed building following an earthquake in Cali, Colombia, Aug. 10, 2026. (OSV News/Reuters/Sergio Acero)

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Bogotá, Colombia — August 13, 2026

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Messages of solidarity from bishops' conferences across Latin America poured in as rescue workers race against time to save victims still trapped beneath the rubble in multiple cities across Colombia.

In a letter signed Aug. 11 by its leadership, the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopal Council, known as CELAM, expressed its solidarity with the Colombian people and mourned the loss of life from the deadly earthquake that struck the country.

"As a Church that journeys synodally in Latin America and the Caribbean, we reaffirm our communion with the Church that journeys in Colombia. The pain of a sister nation is also the pain of the entire Latin American and Caribbean Church," the bishops' council wrote.

The 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck in the morning Aug. 10 and is considered one of the strongest earthquakes in Colombia's history. According to Reuters, reports from cities affected by the quake estimated the death toll at 254, as of the morning of Aug. 11.

Rescue workers in Pereira and Cali, Reuters reported, continued to work around the clock to save people still trapped underneath the rubble of collapsed buildings. The Associated Press reported that those two cities, as well as the cities of Manizales and Quibdó, had the highest concentrations of deaths in the country.

"In these trying times, we stand in spirit with those who mourn the loss of their loved ones, those who remain hospitalized, the families who have had to leave their homes, and all the communities facing uncertainty and suffering," the message from CELAM read.

CELAM also expressed its desire to assist in providing aid and care to the most vulnerable communities affected by this tragedy, especially children, the elderly, displaced persons, as well as Afro-descendant and indigenous communities, particularly those in remote areas.

The bishops' council also urged bishops' conferences across Latin America "to accompany, pray and collaborate in solidarity so that communities can rebuild not only their homes and infrastructure, but also hope and confidence in the future."

"May Christ, Lord of life, sustain Colombia in this moment of sorrow and grant all the grace to remain united in faith, charity, and fraternal solidarity," CELAM said.

Not long after the Aug. 10 earthquake struck, the Colombian bishops' conference announced it was activating its aid network and opening collection points for food, water and essential items across the country.

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Caritas Colombia also launched its National Emergency Service to raise money for areas most affected by the natural disaster.

Since then, bishops' conferences in Latin America have sent messages of support and pledged financial and material assistance to aid those in need.

In a letter published Aug. 11, the Mexican bishops' conference said it was praying for the victims and their loved ones.

The bishops also expressed their closeness with Colombia's clergy "for their constant prayer, their generous service, their testimony of faith, and the tireless accompaniment with which they support and encourage their people today in the midst of this difficult trial."

The bishops' conference also announced that it would coordinate humanitarian assistance to Colombia through its Caritas office.

"We inform the community that, in the coming days and in close coordination with the Embassy of Colombia in Mexico, Cáritas Mexicana will announce collection centers and official channels to direct humanitarian aid for our brothers and sisters in need," the bishops said.

The bishops' conference of Ecuador also assured their prayers for the country and invited Catholics in the country to join in prayer and "to remain attentive to aid initiatives that may be channeled through secure means and in communion with the Church."

"Ecuador and Colombia are brother nations, united by a common history, by ties of blood, culture, and faith that transcend the border we share," the bishops said in a message signed Aug. 11.

"The pilgrim Church in Ecuador, which has also known firsthand the pain caused by an earthquake and the strength of solidarity in times of trial, spiritually accompanies the Colombian people and, in a particular way, the Colombian residents in our country, whose families live through these hours amid uncertainty, anxiety, and the hope of finding their loved ones safe from harm," the message read.

The bishops' conferences of Brazil, Argentina, Peru, and Chile issued similar messages of support and prayer for the people of Colombia.