NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (https://www.ncronline.org)

Haitians bury their archbishop, church leaders

Catholic News Service | Jan. 23, 2010

Prelates pay their respects to Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot during his funeral in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 23. Hundreds of people gathered at the ruins of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption to mourn the Port-au-Prince archbishop, the archdiocese's vicar general and other victims killed in the catastrophic Jan. 12 earthquake. (CNS photo/Eliana Aponte, Reuters)

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti -- Amid the rubble of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption, Haitians celebrated the lives of the archbishop and vicar general of Port-au-Prince, both of whom were killed in the country's earthquake.

Church officials -- including some from the United States -- joined ordinary Haitians Jan. 23 for the funerals of Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot, who died when the impact of the Jan. 12 quake hurled him from a balcony, and Msgr. Charles Benoit, the vicar general whose body was pulled from the cathedral debris.

They were among more than 100,000 Haitians killed in the magnitude 7 quake; U.N. officials have said the final death toll might never be known.

In a message read on behalf of Chicago Cardinal Francis E. George, the U.S. bishops' conference president told Haitians, "The church in the United States stands with you."

"In our prayer, we recall that Jesus, too, wept before the tomb of one whom he loved," said the cardinal's message. "With you, we recall in trust that he is the resurrection and the life, offering himself to us and calling us to himself, even in our darkest hour."

Cardinal George's message to the Haitians was contained in a letter was addressed to Archbishop Louis Kebreau of Cap-Haitien, president of the Haitian bishops' conference.

"In the United States, our televisions, computers and newspapers have been filled with images of your unspeakable pain, suffering and loss," he told them. "Each hour we see the faces of the widows and orphans and all of those who have lost family and friends and all of their life's possessions."

He said the U.S. church was committed to "doing everything we can so that you may rebuild and renew and

begin again your lives of faith and family and service to Haiti."

New York Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, chairman of the board of Catholic Relief Services, represented the U.S. bishops' conference at the funeral. He was accompanied by Msgr. David Malloy, general secretary of the conference.

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski of Orlando, Fla., and Oblate Father Andrew Small, director of the U.S. bishops' Church in Latin America office, also attended.

Archbishop Miot's body was one of the first recovered after the earthquake. Archbishop Bernardito Auza, papal nuncio to Haiti, asked that it be taken to the coastal city of St. Marc because there was no electricity in Port-au-Prince. Local clergy asked that the archbishop's funeral be at the cathedral.

A statement from Caritas, the church's network of charitable aid agencies, said when Msgr. Benoit's body was found, his hands were around a reliquary with a host inside.

Source URL (retrieved on *12/10/2016 - 03:54*): https://www.ncronline.org/news/global/haitians-bury-their-archbishop-church-leaders