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Holy Thursday collection for Japan disaster relief

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | Apr. 15, 2011

VATICAN CITY -- Pope Benedict XVI has decided the collection taken up at his Holy Thursday evening Mass will be used to help those affected by the devastating earthquake and tsunami in northeast Japan.

The March 11 disaster left more than 13,000 people dead and another 13,700 unaccounted for. More than 150,000 were made homeless and many lost their jobs, especially in the fishing industry.

Each year, the pope chooses where to send the collection taken up during the Mass of the Lord's Supper at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of the Diocese of Rome.

Pope Benedict's decision to use the collection from the Mass April 21 to support Japanese earthquake and tsunami victims was announced by the Vatican April 14.

In announcing the pope's decision to use the Holy Thursday collection for Japan, the Vatican also published the pope's Holy Week schedule.

The pope was to celebrate the usual slate of Holy Week and Easter liturgies: Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square April 17; the chrism Mass in the morning April 21 in St. Peter's Basilica; the Mass of the Lord's Supper that evening; on Good Friday, April 22, the afternoon liturgy of the Lord's Passion in St. Peter's Basilica, followed by the nighttime Way of the Cross; the Easter Vigil April 23 in St. Peter's Basilica; and Easter morning Mass April 24 in St. Peter's Square.

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