



# *The Diocese of Knoxville*

*Living our Roman Catholic faith in East Tennessee*

MEDIA ADVISORY  
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## **Bishop announces \$25,000 grant for fire victims St. Mary's Legacy Foundation to give \$735,000 in 2017**

The St. Mary's Legacy Foundation has announced a grant of \$25,000 for victims of the recent wildfires in Gatlinburg and other communities across the region.

The grant was announced by Bishop Richard F. Stika and is in addition to the St. Mary's Legacy Foundation's grant distributions of \$735,000 announced today for local charities and nonprofit organizations serving Catholics and non-Catholics across East Tennessee in 2017.

"What happened in the Gatlinburg area this week was unexpected, and each day we're hearing about more lives lost, more property destroyed, and more heartache for many, many people. The St. Mary's Legacy Foundation has a very precise way of evaluating grant distributions before they're announced. In this case, the foundation felt it was best to react to this tragedy immediately," said Bishop Stika.

"The St. Mary's Legacy Foundation also recognizes that many communities across our entire diocese have been affected by wildfires and more recently, tornadoes. For this reason, the \$25,000 grant will be channeled into our diocesan Fund for Wildfire Victims. We want to make sure we can help everyone who needs assistance," said Bishop Stika.

The St. Mary's Legacy Foundation was established through the sale of the former St. Mary's Hospital and has distributed nearly \$4 million in grants since its creation by Bishop Stika in 2011.

Other organizations receiving SMLF grants for 2017 include:

- **\$46,700 to the St. Vincent de Paul societies in Townsend, Newport, Chattanooga, and Soddy-Daisy** to continue their missions to provide food/rent/utility assistance to those in need.
- **\$30,000 to St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Mountain City** for a food pantry building that will allow the parish to serve approximately 450 families and 1,200 individuals, many of whom are elderly or disabled.
- **\$39,000 to Notre Dame High School in Chattanooga** to replace an aging HVAC system in a classroom wing.
- **\$230,700 for the Diocese of Knoxville Schools Office** for student tuition support.

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