To Trinity Faculty, Staff, and Students:

Our country continues its efforts to deal with adversity on an unprecedented scale. As the images of devastation from Katrina’s aftermath began to stream out of Louisiana and the Gulf Coast, we in the Trinity community, like millions of others, were stunned by the enormity of the tragedy and the scale of human suffering it has inflicted.

I am proud and heartened, however, by the immediate and generous responses of the Trinity community and the talents we are mobilizing to help alleviate the effects of the disaster. In addition to working closely with each vice president on the myriad issues to which we have responded, I have been working intensely with the various regional and national organizations that bind us to our sister institutions in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama – ranging from athletic conferences and regional consortia to national associations. Trinity, it is safe to say, has been a leader here and elsewhere, and I am confident our work, with the work of so many others, will make a difference.

Trinity has admitted 18 students whose universities were ravaged by the storm and 10 are already on our campus. More than 100 faculty responded to the invitation to add these students to one or more of their classes, opening up more than 240 course offerings to them for the fall semester. Trinity students have volunteered to share their residence hall rooms and student leaders have moved quickly to organize volunteer opportunities. These include work with the American Red Cross and neighboring Trinity Baptist Church, which has a facility that has been designated as a shelter for victims with special needs. Other students are collaborating with Alpha Phi Omega to help out long term at shelters across the city.

On Saturday night, men’s soccer coach Paul McGinlay took about 40 team members and other Trinity students to KellyUSA, where they worked until 3 a.m. setting up cots and distributing water, food, and other necessities to exhausted evacuees.

Laura Yeo, director of TUVAC, sends daily e-mails to program heads and their members advising them of volunteer outreach opportunities, donation and collection sites, and updates on the campus fundraiser. Campus organizations such as ASR, Greek Council, TIGER Council, and the University’s Office of Campus and Community Involvement have also organized a variety of relief efforts.
Counseling resources and other forms of support have been made available, and faculty will convene special forums to discuss issues and implications surrounding the disaster. Vice President for Student Affairs Gage Paine continues to make the specifics of these efforts available via e-mail.

Additionally, many faculty and staff have contributed time and money to the relief effort. Several alumni, parents, and University friends have offered donations to an emergency fund for members of our own community whose families and homes were affected by the storm.

Once again, as in the aftermath of 9/11, the Trinity community has risen to a formidable challenge, displaying an admirable ethos of community service and genuine concern for others. Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and treasure so generously and for the superb example of service you are setting for other institutions of higher education and the broader San Antonio community.

John R. Brazil
President