

the storm went through. We got our electricity back on Friday evening after five days (then it went off again during Saturday evening mass for about an hour). Lots of people in Tucker and in Conehatta were without power for two weeks (the church and the houses along the highway got power Saturday afternoon).

People here made the best of the situation — some camping out or cooking out; some going to relatives that have A/C; some going to food distribution centers but going home at night to sleep.

Last week, I visited a family who was without electricity for about two weeks after the hurricane. They were at the end of the line quite literally. Their relatives got power a couple days before them and brought a small generator to their house. This gave them a few lights and got the refrigerator going. They were still cooking outside (a

skill that they have not lost). This same family has a vegetable garden. The first thing they said to us was that they lost all their peas (purple hull peas, black-eyed peas etc). This is a staple for them throughout the winter. Some purple hull peas and some biscuits sound pretty good right now.

There were a number of people from Louisiana in the area. About 20 people were at St. Therese this Sunday who had lost their homes in N.O., Slidell, or other parts near New Orleans. We had an extended family of nine people staying here at the upstairs of the office for about three weeks. They are from St. Bernard Parish in

Louisiana which had 17 feet of flood water. So they know that their houses are flooded out.

Thank everyone for their prayers and keep them coming, as we adjust to the post-Katrina situation. V

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## from Mike Barth in Camden

As news of the impending Hurricane approached, folks here didn't think much of it - hurricanes had come and gone many times but never reached this far up into the state. We sent everyone home at noon on Monday, Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>, since the storm was due to hit here about 3 or 4pm. Everyone assumed we would be back at work the next day after a little rain.

At about 2 P.M. the winds and the rain began, just gusts at first and then harder and harder. The rain came at such an angle and with such force that we had to lay towels across the windows on the one side of the Cenacle because it was coming in despite our best efforts.

At 3 P.M. the power went off and was not to return - little did we know - for eight days. The phones stayed on through the storm but went dead by the next morning. Later that night we tried to get out of the Cenacle to check on the other buildings

but found ourselves blocked in on both sides of the road by large pine and oak trees that had fallen across the roads taking power lines with them.

The next several days were a bit of a blur made up of cutting trees across roads, hooking up generators and searching for gasoline to run them (we were even siphoning gas out of cars and gas tanks), checking on staff and elderly who lived alone and trying to save the freezers full of food for our daily hot meal program.

The heat became oppressive as the days and especially the nights wore on without the comfort of air conditioning or even a fan. Here in Camden we sent up some prayers to Fr. Sebastian (died 1984) who had all the windows in the Cenacle shut, screwed, and caulked closed way back when air conditioning was first installed by him in the 1970s.

The emergency response here was rather quick, and within a few days trucks were delivering ice, water