



PHOTOS BY DAN MORRIS-YOUNG/CATHOLIC SAN FRANCISCO

Paulist Father Charles Kullmann, left, pastor of San Francisco's Old St. Mary's Cathedral Parish, was among speakers to address the May 9 seminar, "Creating a Culture of Preparedness" held at St. Mary's Cathedral and attended by 170 persons. At right, a KTVU Channel 2 reporter interviews Father John Talesfore, Cathedral rector.

Religious congregations discuss disaster preparedness

About 170 persons representing nearly 100 churches, synagogues, temples and other places of worship addressed the challenge of their potential role in the event a disaster

strikes the Bay Area during a four-hour morning workshop May 9 at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco.

Underwritten by the San Francisco Foundation and the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management, the event was coordinated by the San Francisco Interfaith Council and the Faiths Initiative of the San Francisco Foundation, according to Michael Pappas, Interfaith Council executive director.

Presentations included reports from congregation leaders on what some church communities are already doing to prepare for potential catastrophes, outlining approaches to neighborhood planning and clustering, and descriptions of area emergency assets that are in place.

"New relationships among neighborhood congregations were formed and potential clusters are now in the making," Pappas said

after the meeting. "Our contribution in this important arena, as well as the relevance of faith communities as stakeholders in the San Francisco disaster preparedness and response equation, was clearly evident. If anything, today's assembly was a reminder of the critical stewardship entrusted to the interfaith community and our potential to make a difference."

Among those addressing the gathering was Paulist Father Charles Kullmann, pastor of Old St. Mary's Cathedral Parish, San Francisco, who described the parish's "partnering with the American Red Cross to serve as a shelter site in the event of a disaster." The Red Cross has "pre-positioned" 100 cots, 200 blankets, a ham radio, sanitation supplies and other materials at the parish.

The workshop title was "Creating a Culture of Preparedness."