

\$1 Billion Raised in Two Days to Rebuild Notre Dame Cathedral After Massive Fire

A fire broke out at the cathedral on Monday evening.

French President Emmanuel Macron promised to rebuild the Notre Dame Cathedral following a devastating fire that destroyed the Paris landmark's spire and roof on Monday. Overnight, donations have been flooding in in the hundreds of millions.

As of Wednesday morning, nearly €800 million (\$995 million) had been raised for what is sure to be a massive rebuilding project, Presidential cultural heritage envoy Stephane Bern told broadcaster France-Info.

Much of that money is coming from some wealthy French citizens, including Salma Hayek's husband François-Henri Pinault, who heads Kering SA, the fashion company behind Gucci and Alexander McQueen among other luxury designers. Pinault pledged a donation of €100 million (\$113 million).

However, the city is also getting creative in the way they're asking for funds. The French version of Google Maps is offering information on how to donate to the fund when you click on Notre Dame Cathedral, and many of the larger shops have an automatic question on their keypad at check out that asks customers if they want to round up their charged amount with the difference going toward the rebuild.

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Bernard Arnault, who heads Kering's rival company LVMH, which is the parent company of Louis Vuitton, Moët and Hennessy pledged that he and his company would donate €200 million (\$226 million) to the reconstruction.

"In the wake of this national tragedy, the Arnault family and the LVMH Group pledge their support for #NotreDame," LVMH posted on Twitter. "They will

donate a total of 200 million euros to the fund for reconstruction of this architectural work, which is an integral part of the history of France.”



Along with their monetary donation, the company offered to help in the rebuilding process with services from “all of its teams — including creative, architectural and financial specialists.”



Total SA, an energy company based in France, also stepped in with a €100 million (\$113 million) donation.

The heir of Lilliane Bettencourt, who headed L’Oreal and was considered the wealthiest woman in the world until she passed away two years ago at the age of 94, also announced a donation of €200 million euros (\$226 million), according to *Reuters*. The gift will be made through the Bettencourt Foundation in the name of Liliane’s daughter Francoise Bettencourt-Meyers.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo also announced a €50 million (\$56 million) donation from the City of Paris, while the regional government agreed to provide €10 million (\$11 million), the *Washington Post* reports.

“In 2024, Paris will host the world for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We need to do everything we can so that the Notre Dame cathedral is returned to all its splendor for this occasion,” Hidalgo said.



RELATED VIDEO: Salma Hayek’s Husband François-Henri Pinault Pledges \$113 Million to Rebuild Notre Dame Cathedral

Martin Bouygues who runs a French telecoms construction group and has helped renovate the Louvre and Musee d’Orsay, said that he and his brother Olivier would be offering €10 million (\$11 million) along with their construction services to rebuild, CNBC reports. Vinci construction group also said they would be willing to help repair the landmark and called on other building firms to donate their services.

Technology consulting firm Capgemini pledged €1 million (\$1.1 million), advertising group JCDecaux is donating €20 million (\$22.5 million), and financial

firm Societe Generale offered €10 million (\$11 million) in support.

Marc Ladreit de Lacharriere, the CEO of investment group Fimalac, pledged €10 million (\$11 million), Reuters reports.



According to CNBC, Air France and KLM issued a joint statement that their “teams around the world have been deeply affected and saddened since yesterday,” and said they would be providing free transportation for all of the official partners who are involved with rebuilding Notre Dame. The airlines are also setting up a donation fund for the cathedral.

Apple CEO Tim Cook also announced his support of the rebuilding efforts on Twitter on Tuesday, writing “We are heartbroken for the French people and those around the world for whom Notre Dame is a symbol of hope. Relieved that everyone is safe. Apple will be donating to the rebuilding efforts to help restore Notre Dame’s precious heritage for future generations.”

Cook did not elaborate on a monetary value of his donation.

Many groups are also asking for donations from the public, including The French Heritage Foundation, which is dedicated to preserving historic buildings. It has raised over €3.7 million (\$4.1 million) overnight.

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According to a tweet from the AFP on Monday night, a fire official confirmed that the main structure of the historic building had been “saved and preserved,” despite the spire and roof being consumed by flames and collapsing earlier in the evening.



“The worst has been avoided, but the battle isn’t fully won yet,” French President Emmanuel Macron told crowds in a speech given outside of the church Monday night.

He promised that the cathedral will be rebuilt. “It is with pride I tell you tonight we will rebuild this cathedral,” he said. “We will rebuild Notre Dame because it is what the French expect of us, it is what our history deserves, it is, in the deepest

sense, our destiny.”

Source: <https://people.com/travel/notre-dame-cathedral-fire-donations-raised/>

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