



AMERICA/VENEZUELA - Bishops: in response to the violence we should promote love and respect for life

Caracas (Agenzia Fides) – The Archbishops and Bishops of Venezuela, at the end of their XCIII Ordinary Assembly, sent a statement to all the people of Venezuela. The document is divided into 3 parts and a conclusion. In the first part, entitled "Our Situation," the Bishops state that "our country is experiencing a social, political, and economic situation that suggests a moving away from God," and continues: "We are very concerned about the actions and statements of government representatives which undermine the democratic spirit." They then denote the lack of honesty in the use of public funds, and at the same time, the growth in violence, insecurity, and crime. As for the "necessary criteria", set out in the second part, the Venezuelan Bishops recalls that theirs is a country that seeks peace and social harmony. The faith of Christians must have a clear demonstration, not only in an intimate encounter with Jesus Christ. The construction of a new society not only depends on those who have some authority, but on everyone. One must always seek fruitful dialogue.

The proposals of the bishops are: promote the principles and Christian values; the need for dialogue as the only way to solve problems; respect for the decisions made by the people in the referendum of December 2007, with the rejection of the proposed constitutional reform; monitoring the use of public funds; common commitment of all to promote love and respect for life. Thus, the episcopate makes several recommendations: "To our people we say: we must maintain the civic spirit of patriotism which is also shown in denouncing injustices. To the authorities we say: one must act properly by following due process, use restraint and objectivity in criminal penalties. We remind all of the due respect for human dignity and the promotion of rights and duties." They also refer to the need to urgently consider a policy of respect for the environment.

At the end of the document, the Bishops reaffirm their pastoral commitment "to walk with everyone, making our best efforts to achieve this goal." (EC) (Agenzia Fides 26/01/2010)

> LINKS

Complete text (in Spanish): http://www.fides.org/spa/documents/XCIII_Asamblea_CEV_Ene2010.doc: