



AMERICA/HAITI - Steps forward for Jesuit reconstruction effort

Port-au-Prince (Agenzia Fides) – Soon after the first emergency situations were caused by the earthquake that devastated Haiti on 12 January, the Jesuits, along with other collaborators, established a Haitian-Dominican Republic Emergency Committee, which meets periodically to consider the needs and adapt operations to offer aid in food and healthcare, according to the evolution of the situation. According to information from the Jesuit General Curia sent to Fides, the Jesuits have also established a small committee of five people, with headquarters at the Novitiate in Tabarre, for the development of a reconstruction project, once the emergency phase is over. On Sunday, February 21, a preliminary draft of this project was the subject of a conference/debate in the presence of numerous guests and representatives of the media in Port-au-Prince. "This document - says Fr. François Kawas, coordinator of the Emergency Committee - will be sent to policy makers and others. They will also arrange meetings with heads of the United Nations agencies to hear the voice of the population, especially the poorest who have no voice, both on urgent aid, as well as on the future reconstruction of the country." In another press statement, Fr. Kawas, once again referring to the work of the committee, said: "We reviewed all the difficulties, successes, and issues that need to be improved. The big concern is how to find housing for the population. The situation remains very precarious at the shelters. The health care in emergency treatment has been excellent, but the sanitary conditions are precarious." As is evident, along with immediate aid, a plan for the future and for the rebirth of hope was also set in motion. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 22/02/2010)