



AMERICA/UNITED STATES - Religious Freedom and the New Evangelization on the Bishops' agenda

Washington (Agenzia Fides) - Today, June 13, the Assembly of Bishops of the United States of America begins, after a long campaign in the local Churches so that the Bishops can officially express their worries about violations concerning religious freedom on behalf of governments and courts. On this issue the U.S. Bishops will dedicate a significant part of their spring meeting in Atlanta, which begins today and ends on June 15. The Bishops also received a report prepared by the National Review Board on the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" which examines the past ten years, and listened to the recommendations of the Audit Committee arising from the study on "The causes and the context of sexual abuse on minors by Catholic priests in the United States, 1950-2010."

The debate on religious freedom include the analysis of national and international events, and ways in which the Bishops must continue to raise public awareness on violations of religious rights, in the United States and abroad. Central in this regard is the provision of the Department of Health and Human Services of the United States, according to which Catholic institutions should provide health insurance coverage to employees, who at the same time are required to obey certain provisions contrary to the principles of the Catholic Church (it speaks of abortion, artificial contraception, sterilization). The regulation was announced on August 1, 2011, as part of a series of rules of the Health and Human Services (HHS), but not yet entered into force.

Other Bishops' concerns arise from the judgments and political decisions that have forced Catholic institutions to outsource the examination of cases of adoption and foster care, which were managed by them. On the agenda there is also a space to organize the pastoral plans related to the theme "New Evangelization: Faith, Worship, Testimony." (CE) (Agenzia Fides 13/6/2012)