



## **AMERICA/GUATEMALA - Literacy as a guarantee of peace; 64% of the illiterate are women and girls**

Guatemala City (Agenzia Fides) - "Literacy and Peace" is the theme of this year's Literacy Day that will highlight the link between unstable democratic systems, conflict and lack of education. In this regard, the work done so far by the Guatemalan Radio Tezulutlán is important, the early years were directed by Bishop Juan Gerardi, who was assassinated on April 26, 1998. The station is part of the Social Pastoral of the Diocese of Las Verapaces and has always played a key role in defending the rights of indigenous peoples and their promotion. Through its programs of human development, knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples, training in the fields of agriculture, food, medicine and education programs, provides a valuable social service for rural communities, women, youth and children, who are systematically marginalized by the state institutions and by the media for commercial purposes. The radio project has been going on in the departments of Alta y Baja Verapaz in northern Guatemala, where more than 50% of the population, mostly indigenous, live in poverty, with an illiteracy rate of about 60%. In the country, social exclusion and lack of opportunity have encouraged the spread of drug trafficking, with all its negative consequences. Although in the last decade illiterate people have decreased, there are still 793 million adults in the world, of whom 64% are women and girls, who are deprived of the basic elements for reading and writing. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 06/092012)