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AMERICA/HAITI - 3 years after the earthquake, the Redemptorist reorganize Popular Missions

Port-Au-Prince (Agenzia Fides) - Fr. Jeffrey Rolle and Fr. João Pedro Fernandes, General Consultors of the Redemptorists, visited Haiti 3 years after the earthquake that destroyed much of the island and structures. The following is the testimony sent to Fides Agency. "When one arrives at our home and Parish of St. Gerard in Port-Au-Prince, one is struck by the visible signs of the terrible earthquake of January 12, 2010: what is left of the big church is only some walls (a shed acts temporarily as a temple); the school, completely destroyed, operates thanks to temporary structures; the 'monastery' (the former residence of the Redemptorists in Haiti) is still waiting to be rebuilt. However, many young people come every day to study in these crumbling buildings, perhaps thanks to the tranquility and shade offered by many trees ...
This can certainly be the image of Haiti, despite the devastation of the earthquake, poverty and bad policy that slows down the reconstruction even more. Haitians are dignified people who are struggling to get ahead and to dream of a better future. The population sees the commitment of the Redemptorists who have always a lot to offer to give people hope and motivation. Most of the Confreres have a great missionary vitality.
A special experience is the preaching of popular Missions in the framework of the Alfonsiana Family. The Redemptorists work in partnership with the Society of Jesus (native congregation of nuns, founded by Fr. Josef Claessens, a Redemptorist of Belgian origin) and the Holy Family, a secular movement of missionary animation in parishes (also founded by Josef Claessens in the '70s). It is a service much appreciated by the Church in Haiti. "
The two General Consultors also point out that a presence Ad Gentes begins to consolidate on the island of Guadeloupe, near Haiti, and there is collaboration underway with the Redemptorist Province of San Juan (including Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic) for a pastoral care project for Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic, in the town of Paraíso.
"The region is quite young: the average age is 35 years old!" they stress, noting that it is "a sign of great hope" that at the same time implies the need to strengthen the path of formation and the training of formators. Following the earthquake, the Congregation has been involved in many ways for Haiti, and 9 out of 19 young people are still continuiing their studies outside Haiti: 5 in Colombia, two in Baltimore (USA) and 2 in Sant'Anne de Beaupré (Canada). (CE) (Agenzia Fides 16/01/2013)

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