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Fondata nel 1927
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OCEANIA/PAPUA NEW GUINEA - The Bishops bear witness to the faith on social networks

Madang (Agenzia Fides) - The Bishops of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands proclaim and bear witness to the faith on social networks, in response to the message for the World Day of Social Communications 2013, which defines social networks "new areas of evangelization." As reported to Fides by the communications Office of the Episcopal Conference, this is what emerged during the Assembly of Bishops of Papua and Solomon, being held in Madang. Some Bishops are already present and active on Facebook and Twitter, and use social media as communication spaces and of missions. The Conference established that special catechetical, liturgical and pastoral programs online based on social networks will be studied and elaborated.
"While social communication is now definitely interactive - says the note sent to Fides - the main problem for Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands is in Internet services, still weak, unreliable and expensive." In addition there is a gap between young people in urban areas - living perpetually "connected" - and those in rural areas, for which digital services are scarce.
The Bishops explain: "The interactive communication via the Internet breaks down the barriers of time and space, gives greater access to information, culture and entertainment, promotes pluralism, exposes people to positive and negative content." In this context, "social media create a new culture and a new way of life that requires not only the presence of the Church in the use of mass media, but also the witness and proclamation of the Gospel in this new field." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 11/04/2013)

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