

Fr. Mark Hyde was in Port-au-Prince on Jan. 29-30. On the 30th the new superior of the Haitian Vice Province, Fr. Ducange Sylvain, was installed by Fr. Esteban Ortiz, regional councilor.

Fr. Mark forwarded reports through Mr. Correa from either Santo Domingo or Port-au-Prince (which, not known here in the N.R. provincial house):

Fr. Vaclav Klement, SDB, general councilor for the missions, has confirmed via e-mail that, per instructions of the Rector Major, funds raised for the Haitian Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Program by Salesian mission procurees and NGOs worldwide should be wired to New Rochelle.

A convoy of trucks with additional food assistance will leave next Monday from La Vega, D.R., bound for Pétion-Ville and Carrefour-Thorland in Haiti. A second convoy with food assistance and water is scheduled to leave next week also. The cost of each truckload of food assistance is quoted at \$11,664 and with water alone at \$6,189 (including fuel and truck rental).

The water purification equipment donation arranged through Jugend Dritte Welt (Bonn) will be picked up from the World Food Program warehouse in Port-au-Prince tomorrow morning.

The Italian Salesian NGO International Volunteers for Development (VIS) has offered to airlift an initial 100 tents good for 10 persons each around next Monday, Feb. 1. VIS may be able to secure an additional 400 tents later in the week. Likewise, Salesian Missions is making arrangements to airlift over 1,500 tents for 6 persons each from China next week for delivery to the SDBs of Haiti via the SDBs of the Antilles.

VIS's desk officer for Emergencies, Ricardo Giannotta, and VIS's deputy director, Nico Lotta, are scheduled to arrive in S.D. this weekend to carry out an on-the-ground assessment of the extent of the damage, to develop a list of priorities based on needs, and to get enough information to develop a project proposal for donor funding addressing (a) emergency relief, (b) rehabilitation of educational infrastructure including temporary shelters and classrooms, and (c) reconstruction of the Salesian educational infrastructure. This is an extraordinary opportunity for a Salesian Missions team to work and join forces with VIS's colleagues in assessing the noted needs and establish priorities for project funding and an even greater on-the-ground opportunity to coordinate who is going to do what and be agreed upon and embraced by the Salesian leadership in Haiti at the same time.

On Jan. 30 the joint VIS-Salesian Missions Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Team (RRT) was on its way to Haiti through Santo Domingo. The RRT's mission is to (a) assess earthquake-inflicted damages and (b) develop a list of needs and priorities that can be used to seek funding from external donors through development of discrete project proposals. The 2-person VIS team arrived on the night of the 30th, while one of the two team members from Salesian Missions was due on the afternoon of the 31st.

Thus does Fr. Mark celebrate the solemnity of St. John Bosco.

Meanwhile, on the 29th a Catholic News Service team of reporter Dennis Sadowski and photographer Bob Roller arrived in Port-au-Prince and set immediately to work with short blogs. See <http://www.catholicnews.com/>