

**July 28, 2010 – Salesian GHQ – Haiti: from weeping to hope**



**(ANS – Rome)** – In these days a DVD is arriving at Salesian houses which tells the dramatic story of the earthquake in Haiti on January 12 and the journey of the Rector Major a month after the event.

The 7.0 earthquake with its epicenter about 18 miles from Port-au-Prince added greatly to the problems of a country already stretched in its fight against poverty. Destruction, death, despair once again marked the lives of thousands of people.

The Salesian world in Haiti was also seriously affected. Over and above the material destruction was the death of three Salesians and several hundred youngsters.

The DVD, the result of collaboration between the Missioni Don Bosco Media Center and the Communications Department, is a concept-video organized in four separate sections which can be followed continuously.

The first, "The Face of Haiti," offers a short historical-social background to the country and presents the particular work of the Salesians in their 75 years there. "The Wound of Haiti," uses the eyewitness accounts of some of the Salesian survivors to describe the dramatic moments of the earthquake.

"The Weeping of Haiti" and "Hope for Haiti," the third and fourth parts, document the journey that Fr. Chavez made between February 12 and 15. It was a visit which bore witness to the solidarity of the Congregation and of the Salesian Family and planted a seed of hope in the hearts of those working in Don Bosco's name. If the third shows the perplexed and sorrowful expressions of the Rector Major, the fourth shows the joy and hope that he brought to the Salesians and the young.

Besides being a record of an aspect of recent Salesian history, the DVD can also be used in part or in its entirety for prayer or reflection groups. In fact the images and the words of Fr. Chavez have a unique symbolic and evocative force. The video can also be used in the ongoing fund-raising and solidarity campaigns needed to support the Salesians and lay people who are working on the front line in Haiti.

Produced in seven languages the DVD is also meant as a contribution to the commitment the Salesian Congregation has made not to allow "the spotlights on Haiti to be switched off" so that, as more than once Fr. Chavez has said, "Haiti may be reborn!"