

## March 12, 2010 - Democratic Republic of the Congo – Solidarity without limits



**(ANS – Goma-Ngangi)** – The Don Bosco Youth Center in Goma-Ngangi has responded to the appeal for solidarity with Haiti. During January there were many Salesian events.

Although the Goma-Ngangi house is in the north Kivu region, one of the poorest areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and with many problems of its own, there was no shortage of generosity from those working in the center and from the youngsters cared for by the Salesian missionaries. The community did not forget the solidarity from which it had benefited when it was in difficulty on account of civil war and then the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano, and enthusiastically responded to the appeal of Fr. Joachim Tshibangu, provincial of Central Africa, to make a small donation.

Following the teaching in the Gospel, "freely you have received, freely give" (Matt 10:8), the director, Fr. Pietro Gavioli, put an envelope into every classroom for the offerings. Slowly these began to be filled with offerings and then returned to him. The director then announced in public at the "Good morning" the amount collected and the class or the group which had made it. This created a healthy sense of competition that produced fine fruits: in less than a week \$1,102 were collected, which soon became \$1,258. The money collected was then sent to province headquarters in Lubumbashi, whence with the other collections it was sent for the Salesian houses in Haiti.

Contributing to the collection were men and women religious, teachers and other staff, the personnel and other collaborators of the work, the past pupils, the street children of the Gahinja House, the girl mothers in Mama Margaret House, and the young boys and girls who attend the various classes. Among these, Fr. Gavioli tells us, were also "a small boy with only one slipper and another with two leaky shoes."

The Salesian community in Goma-Ngangi was kept especially busy during January: on January 16 about 200 people including Cooperators, past pupils, and staff from the two Goma out-stations, came together in Ngangi to reflect on the 2010 Strenna. On January 22, following a program prepared by the Lubumbashi Youth Ministry section, the novena in preparation for the feast of Don Bosco began, culminating on Saturday, January 30, with a Mass attended by the students and staff of the Center. Presiding at Mass in the multi-purpose hall was Bishop Faustin Ngabu of Goma.