U.s. Bishops' Subcommittee Awards Grants for 187 Projects in Latin America, Including Help for Migrants and Victims of Natural Disasters

Description

WASHINGTON (Dec. 4, 2017) —With the goal of strengthening and supporting the pastoral work of the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Subcommittee on the Church in Latin America awarded nearly $3.2 million in grants for 183 pastoral projects in the region for 2018. These most recent grants were made at the Subcommittee's meeting in November and bring the total awarded for pastoral grants 2018 to almost $7.2 million. Four other projects were awarded in response to natural disasters. "Each year the generosity of Catholics in the United States is transformed into programs that nourish the faith of our brothers and sisters in Latin America and the Caribbean," said Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, auxiliary bishop of Seattle and chairman of the Subcommittee on the Church in Latin America. "This generosity sustains the faith for many marginalized and vulnerable people, like migrants and victims of natural disasters." Instability in some areas of Latin America has resulted in an increased number of migrants within the region from countries like Venezuela, Colombia, and Haiti. Projects in support of the pastoral care of migrants that received funding from the Subcommittee include support to the Hermanas Misioneras de San Carlos Borromeo in Ecuador and the Archdiocese of Santiago in Chile. The religious congregation received a grant to support and integrate migrant families into Ecuadorian society. Migrant families will receive spiritual support through conferences, retreats, and catechetical formation. This project is anticipated to reach over 1,500 beneficiaries. The Archdiocese of Santiago's Department of Migration received funds to provide formation to 250 pastoral ministers, many expected to be migrants themselves, to learn about their rights and how to defend them and work on evangelization of other immigrants. The project will also create booklets as supporting material for the ministers as they work in parishes. Additionally, three grants were awarded to projects in Haiti to support rebuilding efforts of the Church in the wake of Hurricane Matthew. Hurricane Matthew swept through Haiti in 2016, and the country continues to recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake. A grant to the Diocese of Jérémie will be used for repairs and reconstruction of three church buildings and a grant to the Diocese of Anse-à-Veau et Miragoâne will be used for the reconstruction of two church buildings. These funds were awarded from the Hurricane Matthew emergency collection that was taken in most dioceses last year. In addition to grants to help with the reconstruction efforts after Hurricane Matthew, the Subcommittee also funded a project to rebuild a church destroyed during the 2010 earthquake. The funds for this rebuilding came from the Special Collection for Haiti which took place in the aftermath of the earthquake. Other areas of funding for the Subcommittee's pastoral grants include seminarian and consecrated religious formation, prison ministry, youth ministry, and lay leadership training. The issues covered by these ministries are pro-life, environmental justice, ministry to indigenous and African-Americans as well as urban ministries, among others. "As it proclaims the Gospel of joy, the Church is called to develop ministries to all those in need, whether materially or spiritually, and thus the Subcommittee supports all the ministries available to the faithful," said Bishop Elizondo. Grants are funded by the annual Collection for the Church in Latin America, taken in many dioceses across the U.S. on the fourth Sunday in January. The Subcommittee on the Church in Latin America oversees the collection and an annual grant program as part of the USCCB Committee on National Collections. It allocates revenue received from the Collection for the Church in Latin America as grants across Latin America and the Caribbean. More information about the Collection for the Church in Latin America, the many projects it funds, and resources to promote it, can be found at www.usccb.org/latin-america.

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