

KIDNAPPING OF CONSECRATED AND LAY PERSONS IN HAITI: CONCERN AND SUPPORT FROM THE CRC

Montreal, April 13, 2021 — As Catholics in Canada and around the world were celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday, we learned from the Agence France-Presse (AFP) report that seven consecrated persons—five priests and two nuns (including two French citizens)—were abducted in Croix-des-Bouquets, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Shortly afterwards, the Haitian Conference of Religious (CHR) also confirmed the kidnapping of three additional lay people from the family of Father Jean Anel Joseph, a [Saint-Jacques Society priest](#), who was to be installed that very day in the parish of Galette Chambon, east of Port-au-Prince.

The Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) is deeply concerned about this tragedy which, unfortunately, is merely a reflection of the inhumane and disastrous situation — on so many levels — that has been plaguing the country for more than a decade. In alignment with the [Bishops' Conference of France \(CEF\)](#) and the [Conference of Men and Women Religious of France \(CORREF\)](#), the CRC wishes to express its total support for and send its prayers to the families of the victims, to the religious families concerned and, more broadly, to the Haitian people.

Canada has a strong bond of solidarity with Haiti. Many Canadian religious communities have worked and are still working there. These ties are alive and well and affect us deeply, as demonstrated by [the letter from Bishop Claude Hamelin](#) of the Diocese of Saint-Jean-Longueuil, which includes three priests in service from the *Société des Prêtres de Saint-Jacques*, the congregation that has been struck so profoundly by this cruel kidnapping.

Ever since the 2010 earthquake, the Haitian people have seen their situation worsening on a daily basis: violence, insecurity, social disorder, political crisis, disease, lack of food — and kidnappings. What suffering have these people not endured over the past so many years!? Yesterday's tragic event only reinforces the position of the CRC which, just over a month ago, [called on the Prime Minister of Canada](#) to denounce the dictatorial regime established by President Jovenel Moïse, [which the CHR also denounced in early March](#).

The CRC is calling on everyone to pray for the kidnapped persons so that they may be released unharmed as soon as possible:

- Father Evens Joseph, PSJ, *Société des prêtres de Saint-Jacques*
- Father Michel Briand (French citizen), PSJ
- Father Jean Nicaïsse Milien, PSJ
- Father Joël Thomas, PSJ
- Father Hugues Baptiste, priest of the Archdiocese of Cap-Haïtien
- Sister Anne Marie Dorcéus, PSST – aunt of Father Arnel Joseph, PSJ
- Sister Agnès Bordeau (French citizen), sister of Providence of *la Pommeraye*
- Madame Oxane Dorcéus, mother of Father Arnel Joseph, PSJ
- Miss Lovely Joseph, sister of Father Arnel Joseph, PSJ
- Mr. Welder Joly, godfather of Father Arnel Joseph, PSJ

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