



## **EUROPE/FRANCE - "Missionaries of 8" prepare for Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception in Lyon: churches open until midnight, prayer meetings, welcoming visitors**

Lyon (Agenzia Fides) - From December 5 to 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the city of Lyon will welcome, as it does every year, thousands of visitors and pilgrims who will visit the Marian shrine of Fourviere. 4 million people are expected to come. For the occasion, the Archdiocese has promoted the "open doors" initiative to welcome all those who wish to live a moment of dialogue, friendly or spiritual encounter, or learn more about artistic and cultural life. Thanks to the hundreds of volunteers called "Missionaries of 8", mostly young people, almost all the churches of the city's downtown area will stay open until midnight during the four days of celebrations, while the people of Lyon have been asked to illuminate their windows with lamps and candles.

According to a statement sent to Fides, the "Missionaries of 8" on the streets of Lyon will distribute at least 80,000 city maps with a list of the main events and meetings organized by parishes, shrines and places of worship. Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, Archbishop of Lyon, has invited all Catholics to become "Missionaries of 8." The initiative will be officially launched on November 27, with a Holy Mass presided by Cardinal Barbarin, followed by a training session. December 5 to 8, the diocese has also promoted, at the Shrine of Fourviere, the "Mission School" which will include lessons, moments of prayer, and sharing. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 25/11/2009)

> *LINKS*

Archdiocese of Lyon website: <http://lyon.catholique.fr>: