



ASIA/MONGOLIA - Catholic community grows in hope

Arvaiheer (Agenzia Fides) – Hope, joy and optimism is growing in Mongolia's small Catholic community, in particular because of a brand new community formed by six newly baptised women in Arvaiheer, main town of the southern Mongolian Uvurhangai region, thanks to the missionary endeavours of community of Consolata Missionaries IMC.

The feast of Pentecost, 23 May 2010, "was a special feast for the mission", says Fr. Daniele Giolitti IMC. Six local women were received into the Church with the administration of the Sacraments. "Since we arrived in Mongolia in 2003, these are practically the first visible fruits of our presence as evangelisers in this part of the world".

"We wish to offer thanks to the Lord – the missionary continues – for these six new sisters in Christ who have made such a radical decision, if we think of the context in which they are prepared to live the Christian message which is so new for the people here". Battogoo (Lucia) is the youngest (23); Perlimaa (Rita) and Diimaa (Elisabetta) two sisters belonging to a large family; Narantuya (Caterina) and Otgonbayr (Maddalena) married with children; Deejit (Anna) "we accompanied them along a two year path as they discovered the faith and then prepared to receive the Sacraments. In these two years they shared with us some aspects of daily family life poverty and hardship".

"It was for us a special grace to see these lives mysteriously marked by the presence of God leading them to this personal encounter with Jesus", says Fr. Giolitti, adding that the joyful event is an ulterior encouragement for the mission.

On 19 September 2006 a small group of missionary priests and missionary Sisters of the Consolata Order took up residence in Arvaiheer after a long and arduous iter which began officially in the Summer of 2005, to obtain the necessary recognition in a region where the Catholic Church had never been present. At long last, at the beginning of 2007 the local government granted the missionaries a permit for religious activity in the region of Uvurkhangai. This was the start of the new mission which has just borne its first fruits.

The Catholic community in Mongolia has a Bishop and three parishes with almost 200 Mongolian born Catholics, a good number of catechumens preparing to be received into the Church, many groups for apostolate, well frequented pastoral structures including a number of kindergartens, a polytechnic school, homes for street children, for the disabled, for unmarried mothers. Missionary activity, first started ten years ago, is entrusted to some 50 missionaries and religious.. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 22/7/2010)