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ASIA/CHINA - Retreat for priests in the Diocese of Feng Xiang: striving for personal holiness in order to help others strive for holiness

Feng Xiang (Agenzia Fides) – “The goal of the retreat for 2010 was for us priests to strive for personal holiness in order to help others strive for holiness. The priesthood has supernatural characteristics. When the retreat does not bring about a spiritual renewal, it means that we have not reached this spiritual, supernatural level." With these words, Bishop Luke Li Jing Feng, 88-year-old Bishop of the Diocese of Feng Xiang in the Province of Shaan Xi, in mainland China (the Bishop who was invited by the Pope to attend the Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist and had written a letter thanking the Pope, which was read during the Synod), opened the annual retreat lasting eight days. The retreat was attended by 32 diocesan priests and was held August 23 to 31. According to reports received by Fides, Bishop Li stressed “we must strengthen the faith of our priests through the Church's teachings on spirituality, on life, and on the priesthood itself.”
The Diocese of Feng Xiang is divided into four deaneries and 30 parishes, and has over 20,000 faithful, 38 priests (18 of whom belong to religious orders), and 60 religious sisters that belong to three Congregations (Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Sisters of the Sacred Heart and Little Sisters of Saint Teresa). The diocese was founded as a Franciscan mission and to this day devotees of the Saint from Assisi continue to give life to the diocese. In the diocese there are two Marian shrines and a cemetery for Catholic priests. The diocese also runs various social service agencies, such as clinics and orphanages. (NZ) (Agenzia Fides 03/09/2010)

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