



ASIA/PAKISTAN-After the death of Bin Laden the Bishops remember the "love for enemies" and "the example of John Paul II"

Islamabad (Agenzia Fides) - "In the soul of a Christian there is never joy for the death of a man, even if he is an enemy. On the occasion of the death of Bin Laden I would like to remind the supreme commandment of the Christian message: love your enemies": With these words the Archbishop of Islamabad, Bishop Anthony Rufin, comments to Fides the killing of the leader of Al Qaeda, observing that currently there were no incidents of violence against Christians. "I would also like to express our absolute respect for Islam and all Muslims of Pakistan", with which "we believe it is possible to share dialogue and collaboration to build a peaceful nation". As far as the situation of Pakistani Christians, the Archbishop said: "We are called by God's will to live in this country and do good in this country. We live our vocation and mission with faith and hope, even in difficult situations", he concludes.

Bishop Andrew Francis, Bishop of Multan and President of the "Commission for Interreligious Dialogue" in the Episcopal Conference, told Fides: "I had two meetings with the civil and military authorities to discuss security measures to Christian sites in South Punjab, after the death of Bin Laden. What I brought to them was the example of Blessed John Paul II, a man of dialogue, peace, role model for Muslim-Christian relations in Pakistan".

The bishop recalled "the closeness of the Church towards the Muslims, with whom we shared yesterday a celebration in honor of Blessed interfaith John Paul II". "Today it is important for us to point out his shining example of openness to others, dialogue with Islam, recognized and appreciated by Pakistani Muslims to stop any fundamentalist drift and any attempt to incite hatred among religious communities".

Even Archbishop Lawrence Saldanha, Archbishop Emeritus of Lahore, stressed in a statement that "the death of Bin Laden, considered by many a hero of the Islamic revolution, and the center of Islamic extremism in the world, can help to demystify extremism", thus reducing the tension and intolerance in Pakistan. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 05/02/2011)