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EUROPE/ITALY-Prayer vigil for victims of the trips to Europe: in 2011 more than 1820

Rome (Fides Service) - Since 1990 at least 17,597 people have died on the journey along the borders of Europe. The change that is affecting the geopolitical organization which is affecting Countries of North Africa and in particular the conflict in Libya, have led many people to embark on dangerous sea crossings. In this context, in the first 5 months of 2011, 1820 people were killed in the Mediterranean, of which 1633 traveling to Italy. The toll is probably more tragic when you consider how many were on board the boats of which there was no longer news, and never managed to reach the Italian coast.
Two main routes which originate from the flows of migrants by sea since the beginning of 2011 are: Tunisia and Libya. 187 people have drowned on the Tunisian route, while the Libyan route has recorded the death at sea of 1633 sub-Saharan migrants (data Fortress Europe). The condition of those coming from Libya in war is extremely vulnerable: threatened by all the parts in conflict are forced to undertake the crossing of dilapidated and overloaded boats in order to reach a safe haven in Europe.
Faced with this data we cannot remain silent: we are dealing with men, women and children fleeing from situations of conflict, serious human rights violations and persecution. Looking for a safe place to stay, instead has led them to death. On the occasion of World Refugee Day 2011, which is celebrated on June 20, the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Astalli Center Association, the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, the Migrantes Foundation, Italian Caritas and ACLI, even this year, will organize a prayer vigil in memory of the victims of the trips to Europe with the participation of communities and associations of immigrants, refugees and voluntary organizations, ecumenical representatives and relatives of the victims. The vigil, which has the theme "To die of Hope" will be presided by His Exc. Mgr. Antonio Maria Vegliò, President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, and will be held in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome, on June 16 at 6pm. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 15/06/2011)

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