



ASIA/INDIA - The auxiliary Bishop of Bombay, after the attacks: "violence will not triumph, we work for peace"

Bombay (Fides Service) - Prayer, solidarity and commitment to help victims: these are the first responses of the Church of Bombay to the three simultaneous bombings that devastated the city yesterday, causing at least 20 deaths and over 140 injuries. The bombs exploded in busy areas full of people, just while in the city the meeting on "Indian Council of Bishops of the Western Region" was being held, which includes the ecclesiastical provinces of Bombay, Nagpur and Goa, as well as the dioceses of the eastern rite found in the territories. The news of the attacks immediately reached the assembly of Bishops: the Bishops observed a minute of silence in mourning, then dedicated the celebration of the Holy Mass to the victims of the tragedy yesterday, praying "for all families who are in mourning and in pain", said Fides sources. All the Bishops of the Council expressed solidarity and closeness, offering their availability to the Catholic community of Bombay.

His Exc. Mgr. Agnelo Rufino Gracias, auxiliary Bishop of Bombay, reached by Fides, said: "The town is shaken. We are very saddened by the loss of many lives and the attack against innocent victims. We condemn all forms of violence, especially against the innocent. The terrorists have chosen places with large gatherings of people to make a high number of victims. It is a human tragedy for many people and for many families".

The Bishop recalls the attacks in 2008 and tells Fides: "Maybe Bombay is a target because it is difficult for the police to control a big city. It will also not be easy for the intelligence services to trace those responsible. But the investigations are in progress and we have faith".

The aim of the terrorists, he says, "is to create fear and instability. But we must not allow this. I remember that in 2008 the city returned quickly back to normality. We will not allow these dark forces to get a foothold, we will not be paralyzed and violence will not triumph". "The Church will give her contribution," continued the Bishop. "We will work together with all people of good will to eradicate evil and create an atmosphere of peace. The Catholic Church in Bombay is ready to mobilize to help victims and will continue to pray for the suffering and may the Lord grant the gift of harmony and peace in Bombay". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 07/14/2011)