



ASIA/INDIA - The Church establishes a fund-deposit destined to Catholic families to encourage births

Thiruvananthapuram (Agenzia Fides) - The Kerala Catholic parishes have organized themselves to provide incentives for families who commit themselves to having more children. What is feared is that the Catholic population starts to diminish. According to local sources, a parish in the district of Wayand has established a "share-deposit" of \$ 225 to be allocated to a Catholic family who in 2011 will have its fifth child. Father Jose Kocharackal, vicar of the Church of St. Vincent De Paul Forane in Kalpetta, said that two families have already benefited from the parish. Part of the Sunday collections is reserved for this fund-deposit. The program was established with the help of Sion Pro-life Movement of the Diocese of Mananthavady. The regional coordinator of the organization said that the popularity of the campaign continues to increase. A second parish is planning to launch the same initiative and the local church is committed to spreading it in all parishes of the diocese. One priest out of five said they were pleased that the Church is promoting a culture of life. The program is not in tune with the guidelines of the federal government which instead encourages parents to have only two children. The census carried out in 2001 showed that in Kerala, Christians were 19% out of a population of over 31 million people, a decrease compared to the previous census in 1991, where 19.5% of Christians were registered. The region of Kerala is predominantly Hindu, but about 25% of the population is Muslim. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 02/09/2011)