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Fondata nel 1927

ASIA/NORTH KOREA - More than 10,000 Bibles arrive in a hot-air balloon

Washington (Agenzia Fides) - The Bibles cross the bamboo curtain and reaches the North Korean faithful with a hot-air balloon. Over 10 thousand copies of the Holy Scriptures were delivered to the Christians living in North Korea - a country where religious freedom is totally denied - thanks to the unique initiative of the ecumenical organization "International Christian Concern" (ICC), based in the United, which performs a wide awareness-raising campaign, monitoring and support to persecuted Christian communities in the world. In a recent report on the activities carried out in 2011, which ICC sent to Agenzia Fides, initiatives to support the community of believers who are suffering in many countries are outlined, ICC reports to have masterminded the use of inflatable balloons to overcome one of the most militarized borders in the world and convey the Bibles to the underground communities in North Korea. "It is one of the most closed countries where persecution is terrifying. The Church struggles to share the Gospel; acts of worship or possession of a Bible may be punished with imprisonment in concentration camps", the report explains. The Bibles are packaged in packs of one thousand copies, and tied to inflatable balloons, blown up, at different time intervals. Other Bibles, confiscated by the army - informs ICC - end up on the black market within the country, run by the military themselves: because of the small number of copies in circulation, in fact, the Bibles have a significant economic value also. Even this channel, "is a form of spreading the Word of God" notes ICC. According to current estimates, there are about 400 thousand Christian faithful in North Korea. The ICC also issued over 100 thousand Bibles in China. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 02/12/2011)

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