



ASIA/MYANMAR - Aung San Suu Kyi at the Mass for the 100 years of the Cathedral in Yangon

Yangon (Agenzia Fides) - The celebration of 100 years of the foundation of the Cathedral of Yangon, to be held on December 8, "will be a significant moment for the Christian community: for its history and faith, but also for its future, for the role that Christians want to have in a free and democratic country", said Archbishop Charles Maung Bo, SDB, Archbishop of Yangon, who explains to Fides the meaning of the celebrations that involve thousands of Burmese believers. In Yangon, Catholics, Christians of other denominations and believers of other religions are gathered in view of the Holy Mass of the Centenary of the Cathedral of Santa Maria in Yangon, "a symbol of Christianity in this land," stressed the Archbishop.

The Mass on 8 December, presided by Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, Special Envoy of the Holy Father Benedict XVI, will be attended as Mgr. Bo confirms to Fides by, "the democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who will surely take part in the celebration from the beginning to the end of the Mass". Mgr. Bo, who personally knows the leader and has met her several times, explains that Aung San Suu Kyi "joins us to show solidarity to the people: wants to encourage all religions and all ethnic groups".

The message that Archbishop launches to the faithful on the occasion of the Centenary is the invitation to "pray for the country, so that we can live in the New Jerusalem. Pray so that authentic freedom and human dignity may be restored". With regards to the future prospects, the Archbishop told Fides: "The Burmese faithful are very generous and docile, but most of them are not ready to live authentic freedom: therefore a path of preparation is needed", in which the Church can be guide and beacon.

The spiritual attitude which for three years has been the compass for the faithful Burmese is to "renew all things in Christ", explains the Archbishop. Throughout the Jubilee Year, in preparation for the Centenary, the emphasis has been placed on the theme of reconciliation: "Reconciliation with God, with others, with one's own conscience: let us try to rebuild our lives and our nation, on this basis". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 07/12/2011)