



## **ASIA/TAIWAN - Cardinal Paul Shan "belongs forever to Christ": the funeral on 1 September**

Taipei (Agenzia Fides) –There is deep emotion in the Chinese Catholic world, after the death of Cardinal Paul Shan Kuo-Hsi, SJ, Bishop Emeritus of Kaohsiung, who died yesterday afternoon in the Catholic hospital of GengXin in Taipei (Taiwan). Masses for his soul and remembrance are celebrated all over the Catholic Chinese world in mainland China, in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, especially in the diocese of Kaohsiung, where the body was taken this morning in the Holy Family Parish. As reported to Fides Agency by a statement from the diocese of Kaohsiung, the funeral will be held on September 1, "with a simple ritual, according to the will expressed by the Cardinal in his will." As desired by the Cardinal, all donations collected will be donated to the "Foundation of Shan Guo Xi for Social Assistance of ethnic and disadvantaged groups." Always according to his will, the gravestone epitaph on his tomb will report the phrase: "Born in Christ, lived in Christ, died in Christ: forever belongs to Christ," in tune with his episcopal motto which was "Establishing all things in Christ." Great appreciation for his figure was expressed by religious leaders and civil authorities. "Cardinal Shan was not only a religious personality of great mercy, but he is above all a person of immense generosity, peace and serenity that I always admired," said the well-known Buddhist leader Xing Yun. "In the face of life and death, Cardinal Shan showed great foresight, turning a difficult time in life as an opportunity at the service to all. His thoughts and his wisdom elicit a profound reflection on all of us," said the Great Buddhist Master Sheng Yan. Among civilian authorities, a message of condolence was sent by Ma Ying Jiu, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Cardinal Shan, after finding out he had cancer in 2006, intensified his efforts to promoting evangelization, with particular care regarding the Church in mainland China. Despite his age and illness, he never failed to lend support to the Bishops and faithful in China, as evidenced by his affectionate and authoritative "A Letter from Cardinal Paul Shan to All Brother Bishops", written in 2010, which called for unity and reconciliation in a spirit of great understanding and brotherhood. He spent his energies for evangelization: from November 2007 until April 2012, he held between 219 speeches, lessons and lectures in the university, the hospital and the prison in Taiwan.

Cardinal Shan was born on December 3, 1923 in Puyang (today in Henan), in China (diocese of Taming). He entered the Society of Jesus on 11 September 1946 in Beijing and took his first vows on September 12, 1948 in Beijing. He was ordained a priest on March 18, 1955 in Baguio, Philippines, from 1959 to 1961 he studied for his PhD in spiritual Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. After a period in Vietnam, in 1976 he was appointed Episcopal Vicar of Taipei. On 15 November 1979 he was appointed Bishop of Hualien. On 14 February 1980 he received the episcopal ordination and took possession of the diocese. In 1983 he was commissioned to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the arrival in China of Father Matteo Ricci. On 4 March 1991 he was appointed bishop of Kaohsiung, and took possession of the new diocese on June 17. He was general rapporteur of the Special Assembly for Asia of the Synod of Bishops, held in Rome from 19 April to 14 May 1998. It is due to his desire to invite two Bishops from China to the Synod, to whom the Chinese government did not give permission to participate: during the Synod there were two empty chairs to remember them. That same year, Pope John Paul II created him Cardinal. He was always a figure of authority of the Vatican Commission for the Church in China. (NZ) (Agenzia Fides 23/08/2012)