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ASIA/CHINA - Prayer and concrete help of the Catholic community to the earthquake victims of Yun Nan

Shi Jia Zhuang (Agenzia Fides) – The continental Catholic community rallied after the earthquake that occurred on September 7 in the province of Yun Nan, area where there are different ethnic groups. As always in these situations, Jinde Charities, the largest Catholic charitable organization in mainland China, is at the forefront since the beginning to coordinate the emergency relief and reconstruction. As reported to Fides Agency by Faith of He Bei, His Exc. Mgr. Fang Jian Ping, Bishop of the Diocese of Tang Shan, immediately after hearing the news of the earthquake, celebrated a Mass for the repose of the dead, inviting the faithful to prayer for the earthquake victims and rescuers. He said in his homily: "let us invoke our merciful Father to dry the tears of the earthquake victims and heal their wounds and their pain, encouraging them to rise up from the rubble."
Two operators of Jinde Charities arrived in the earthquake area on September 12, with tents and blankets. Their journey was long because of the difficulties created by the earthquake to the transport system. From the Jinde Charities headquarters constant contact with the priest of the most affected area was established, to assess the situation and the relief needed. According to Fr. Huang, the pastor of Yi Liang, the epicenter of the earthquake, is even the poorest on the continent, "Our church has suffered minor damage, but the houses of the faithful are completely destroyed." The local Catholic community is made up of over 6000 faithful with a population of 550 000 inhabitants. Jinde Charities also asked Fr. Huang to collect the needs of the earthquake victims in the areas not yet reached by government aid or humanitarian organization. According to official data, up to now, the earthquake has caused 81 deaths, more than 800 injured, 740 000 earthquake victims with damage estimated at approximately $553 million. The earth tremor still continue. (NZ) (Agenzia Fides 13/09/2012)

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