



ASIA/PHILIPPINES - Father Bossi, exemplary missionary, builder of bridges and... churches ...

Zamboanga City (Agenzia Fides) - "Father Bossi was a great example of missionary life lived to the end. He was motivated by an authentic missionary spirit, of simplicity and sharing with the poor. Everyone remembers him as being a generous and kind person, who gave himself unstintingly": with these words, released by Fides Agency, Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambra, PIME, a missionary in the southern Philippines for almost 40 years, remembers his confrere of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions, Fr. Giancarlo Bossi, 62, who died two days ago in Italy as a result of a tumor. Fr. Bossi had also spent over 30 years as a missionary in the southern Philippines, at the service of Christians, tribal people, engaged in a dialogue of life with Muslim communities who live on the island of Mindanao.

Father D'Ambra remarks to Fides: "The locals remember him as a builder of bridges of friendship and harmony, but also as a builder of churches: Fr. Bossi loved to get involved with manual labor, he was a carpenter and in Payao (in the region of Zamboanga), where he spent many years as a missionary, he himself built the church and the parish house, giving start to the missionary presence in an area where relations between Christians and Muslims were strained and lived in fear. The bay of Payao in fact, due to its shape, was often a refuge for armed rebel groups and this generated a lot of fear among the Christian communities and tribes who live in the inner area."

"I was very impressed- continues Fr. D'Ambra - by the spirit of acceptance of the event that marked his life: the kidnapping in 2007, where he remained in the hands of a criminal group for 40 days. He considered that experience as a spiritual pilgrimage and an opportunity for proclamation. To young people he said, referring to his story: 'Let yourselves be taken prisoner by Christ!'. And he did not transform the fame after the kidnapping in personal glory, but always and only opportunity to evangelize, in simplicity, from all the pulpits where he was called to testify." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 25/09/2012)