



## **AMERICA/MEXICO - Priest found murdered, violence does not spare the Church**

Los Mochis (Agenzia Fides) - With the participation of a large number of worshipers, on Sunday, September 23, the Catholic community of the deanery of Sinaloa gave a final farewell to the priest Teodoro Mariscal Rivas, found murdered in his own home in the area of Santa Fe. The priest, 45, was born in Tala, Jalisco, and had the pastoral care of the church of Santa Cecilia, which is within the territory of the parish of Santo Niño de la Salud, in the district of Mochicahui, towards the central part of the Gulf of California, Mexico. After the funeral, the priest was buried in Jalisco, his native land.

From an initial police report we learn that Father Rivas was found on the morning of September 20 in his home, bound hand and foot, with a bag on his head that caused the suffocation. The murder allegedly took place between 18 and 19 September. His car is among the valuable things which has not been found.

According to the note sent to Fides Agency, the Eucharist of the funeral was presided by the Vicar General of the diocese, Mgr. Juan Ruiz, who has asked the authorities to do their part and to investigate the murder. "We all need to pray for the priests, and to pray so that God leads to repentance those who take the lives of innocent people, they will not escape divine justice," he said during the Mass. The faithful witnessed the enthusiasm and joy that distinguished Father Rivas.

The spokesman for the Diocese of Culiacán, Father Esteban Robles, stressed that what happened is a clear reflection of the violence that is lived in the state. "This event is reprehensible, not only because it happened to a priest, but also because we are speaking of a person who was inside his home. Now even in his own home a person cannot be safe," said Father Robles, stating that "the Church lives within society, and this is why it suffers criminal attacks, when its only mission is to seek welfare, peace and help people to get to know God." Even the Cathedral of Culiacán has suffered attacks by vandals (see Fides 05/05/2012) (CE) (Agenzia Fides 25/09/2012)