agenzia fides
Fondata nel 1927
Organo di informazione delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie
http://www.fides.org

ASIA/SYRIA - Reconciliation ceremony for the release of Christian hostages

Rableh (Agenzia Fides) - Bells ring in celebration, hugs among family members reunited, a Mass of Thanksgiving and a solemn interfaith ceremony of reconciliation: this is what happened yesterday in the village of Rableh, in the region of Homs, on the border with Lebanon after the release of about 240 Christians (this is the number of hostages, compared to the 280 previously reported), mostly Greek-Catholic faithful. The faithful had been taken hostage by armed groups while working in the fields (see Fides 25/9). The release, explain local sources of Fides, occurred thanks to intense negotiations conducted by the heads of the local families, committed within the popular movement "Mussalaha" ("Reconciliation"), who were able to establish contact with the Syrians present among the kidnappers. The leit-motif of the negotiations, a Catholic source tells Fides, was the principle to "avoid fratricidal conflict and sectarian war: we are Syrians, we are a nation of people, we are on the same side." The success of the operation was sanctioned by the unconditional release of civilians, all unharmed, and the decision of some of the kidnappers- members of opposition groups from the same village of Rableh - to join the movement "Mussalaha", interfaith and multiethnic, which intends to revive the spirit of unity of the Syrian people, in its peculiar ethno-religious mosaic.
The release was celebrated in the village with a solemn ceremony of reconciliation, which was attended by all the heads of families and clans, hundreds of people involved and their families, religious leaders, Christians and Muslims. During the celebration Pope Benedict XVI was mentioned as a "spiritual leader who has indicated the path of reconciliation for Syria."
The Greek-Catholic priest Fr. Bakhos celebrated in his church in Rableh a Mass of thanksgiving, noting that "from something evil something good can come out." Reached by Fides, he said that "the outcome of this story gives great relief to the region: we hope that the same dynamic of reconciliation can occur even in the village of Qusayr." Rableh has been for months "under siege" by armed gangs from different backgrounds. The positive result of this "hostage crisis", explain sources of Fides, could serve as "an encouraging precedent for reconciliation among the civilian population in the war-torn region of Homs." (PA) (Agenzia Fides 26/09/2012)

I contenuti del sito sono pubblicati sotto Licenza Creative Common - http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/deed.it