



AFRICA/SENEGAL - More than 160 graves desecrated in two Catholic cemeteries, bronze crosses stolen

Dakar (Agenzia Fides) - More than 160 graves were desecrated in two Catholic cemeteries in Dakar. "Crucifixes and other stone objects were taken away from their graves in the Christian cemeteries of Saint Lazarus of Bethany and Bel Air, by individuals who have not yet been identified," said a statement sent to Fides Agency by Fr Roger Gomis, director of social communications of the diocese of Dakar. "There are about sixty tombs that were desecrated at the cemetery of Saint Lazarus of Bethany, and more than a hundred in Bel Air."

Cardinal Theodore Adrien Sarr, Archbishop of Dakar, and those responsible of Christian cemeteries, on behalf of the whole Christian community, have expressed their outrage and dismay concerning these acts of vandalism. Don Gomis interviewed the guardians of the two cemeteries, who stated that the thieves steal bronze crucifixes in the most ancient tombs, ignoring the more recent ones. In both cemeteries, the guardians had reported to local authorities the need to increase the height of the walls to ensure safety. In Bel Air three volunteers provide security service from 6.30 pm to 9 pm because, according to the guardian, after the 21 thieves they prefer not to venture into the cemetery. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 12/10/2012)