



AMERICA/CHILE - One hundred thousand young people at the pilgrimage of Santa Teresa de Los Andes: "You must be proud of being Christians," exhorts the Archbishop of Santiago

Santiago (Agenzia Fides) - More than 100,000 people, mostly young people took part on Saturday, October 20 at pilgrimage to the Shrine of Santa Teresa de Los Andes, covering some 27 km from the town of Chacabuco to the "Sanctuary of Carmelita."

This 22nd edition of the pilgrimage ended with a Eucharistic celebration presided by His Exc. Mgr. Ricardo Ezzati, Archbishop of Santiago, who told the young people that the Church has confidence in them to build a more fraternal Chile.

"You must be proud of being a Christian, this is the Church that Christ wants. Only Christ gives a deeper and true meaning to man who walks. Let us become people with an open heart, which grows only if this is done together with others; only in this way development will have a human face," said the Archbishop in his homily. The note sent to Fides Agency stresses that the Archbishop invited all to live this Year of Faith engaged in the "Youth Mission" (see Fides 02/10/2012).

From 4 am until the hour of Mass, 5 pm, more than a thousand volunteers indicated the path to the pilgrims, while a hundred police closed the highway 57 to allow the passage of one hundred thousand young people.

The annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Santa Teresa de Los Andes is one of the most felt and national events with wide participation of young people. Along the way 12 stops to reflect, pray and sing were made. What struck most were the moments of silence, during which the pilgrims walked in silence, each holding a colored cross with a written prayer intention. "I am here for my studies", "I pray for my father's health," "For the cause of the Mapuches," "I would like to study at the University," "I pray that in Chile there is justice," "Because I want to express my Catholic faith in public" are some of the answers given by the young people who participated in the pilgrimage, when asked about the reason for their presence. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 22/10/2012)