



AMERICA/BRAZIL - Mass and parish meetings in the evening have been cancelled because of violence ; prayer for peace

St. Paul (Agenzia Fides) - Given the increase in acts of violence and the increasing number of murders in the state of São Paulo, the Metropolitan Archbishop, Cardinal Odilo Pedro Scherer, recommended the faithful to pray for peace.

The Cardinal asked that the appeal to prayer is spread through the media and digital media, and urged all "individuals, families, groups, communities and parishes to pray for peace in our city." According to information sent to Fides Agency, the invitation is motivated by the violence, which has reached the point that schools have had to reduce their hours of lessons, many bus routes have changed course and shops close earlier. Although the curfew has not been declared by the authorities, the community lives in fear. Even in Catholic churches in the suburbs, priests have cancelled Masses and evening meetings in the parishes.

On the weekend of November 3 and 4 26 people died because of a violent death or gunshot. Another 20 in the past weekend. Most of the murders who target the police, could be behind the group known as "First Command of the Capital" (PCC), an association created in 1993 by prisoners in the maximum security prison of Taubaté, near Sao Paulo , which now operates in and out of state prisons: in addition to being the authors of the murders of police, they manage drug trafficking and commit various other crimes. Since the beginning of the year, at least 90 policemen have been killed in Sao Paulo by organized crime, probably as a form of retaliation compared to recent arrests of the different clan leaders. The Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff has called the governor of the state of São Paulo, Geraldo Alckmin, to develop a joint plan to fight crime. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 12/11/2012)