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ASIA/CHINA - A thousand faithful attended the blessing of the new statue of Our Lady of the parish of Dong He, in Mongolia, and the inauguration of the Pastoral Center

Bao Tou (Agenzia Fides) - The blessing of the new statue of the Madonna, 4 meters high, and the inauguration of the new pastoral Center, represent a dream come true, an imperative call to evangelization especially in the Year of Faith, for the parishioners of Dong He, in the diocese of Bao Tou in Inner Mongolia. This is how the priest who presided over the solemn rite began his homily, on Sunday, November 18, concelebrated by 48 priests from the surrounding area, with 23 religious women and more than a thousand faithful present. As reported to Fides by Faith of He Bei, local Catholics are very devoted to the Virgin Mary. Before the '50s they had built a grotto, similar to the one in Lourdes, and a statue of the Madonna was placed, which were later destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. With the new openings of the 80s, the first thing they did was to rebuild the grotto of Our Lady and the statue, so that "Our Lady can protect us and always accompany our journey of faith and evangelization," said the pastor.
Over the years, the statue has deteriorated because of the weather, also the space of the church has become insufficient to contain the increasing number of faithful. So in 2010 a 300 square meter room was built to accommodate the parish meetings and on Sunday, with the blessing of the new statue of the Madonna a new two-storey building of 570 square meters was also inaugurated, which will serve as a pastoral Center.
The cost of about 600 000 Yuan (equivalent to 100 000 euro) was entirely supported by donations from local members. (NZ) (Agenzia Fides 21/11/2012)

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