



## **ASIA/PAKISTAN - Christmas in the Year of Faith: the "Infant Jesus of Prague" in Pakistan to bring hope**

Faisalabad (Agenzia Fides) - "Infant Jesus of Prague" arrives in Pakistan to mark Christmas in the Year of Faith: So says Fr. Anastasio Roggero, Carmelite, Rector of the Shrine of the Infant Jesus of Prague, who sent a statue of the Child in Pakistan "to bring a message of peace, hope, love for Christians who suffer and for all the people of Pakistan." As learned by Fides Agency, the initiative came from Fr. Emmanuel Parvez, a Catholic priest and pastor of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in Pansara, in the diocese of Faisalbad in Punjab. The statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague will be placed in a new chapel dedicated to the Child, in a village where there are some Christian families, ordinary people, mostly farmers and clay workers. The parish of St. Paul and the local Christian community "look forward, with joy and with deep faith the arrival of the statue, in view of the Christmas celebrations," say local sources of Fides.

The arrival of the "Infant Jesus of Prague" in Pakistan will be great encouragement to the faith of adults and especially the little ones: His Exc. Mgr. Joseph Coutts, Archbishop of Karachi and President of the Episcopal Conference, has expressed an interest and desire to spread the devotion to the Child in the country, especially in schools. That is why he invited the Carmelite Fathers to come to Pakistan to help implement this plan, perhaps through Sunday school.

Already in other Asian countries like India, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Mongolia, there are churches and chapels named after the Infant Jesus of Prague. Fr. Roggero, who travels around the world to spread the devotion to the Child, in past weeks was in India, where he celebrated a Mass at the Shrine of the Holy Infant Jesus of Bangalore, where the 5,000 worshipers present prayed for Christians in Pakistan.

The devotion to the Infant Jesus in the convent of Prague was born from the faith of father Giovanni Ludovico Assumption, Carmelite Prior in 1628. The small effigy dressed in a red royal cloak wears a golden crown on his head, gives the blessing with his right hand while the left carries the world. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 20/12/2012)