



AMERICA/MEXICO - Pastor forced to lock down a parish for the violence, and the faithful return to Mass

Monterrey (Agenzia Fides) - All around there is a five-meter high wall of reinforced concrete, the walls are evidence of bombings and car bombings. Metal blocks were also placed on the windows to prevent stray bullets from penetrating into the church and attack the faithful. In addition, nine guards walk the perimeter 24 hours a day. This is not a barrack or an embassy, but the parish of St. Teresa of Avila, in Cologne Mirasol, Second Sector, in the west of Monterrey, Mexico. The parish priest, Father Scott Michael McDermott Eichhorst, was forced to take these extraordinary security measures in the wake of the violent events that have occurred in the last two years. There have been many innocent deaths in clashes between gangs or between the army and criminal groups. "One of these clashes lasted about 40 minutes ... there was chaos - says the priest -. People did not know what was happening. Precisely for this reason, to immediately warn the faithful of what happens outside, we placed two traffic lights in the church. "red indicates clashes, deaths or mobilization of armed police; yellow, suspicious vehicles or armed people outside the church; green means go ahead and that the road is safe.

According to the note sent to Fides Agency, in this parish 15 Masses are celebrated every Sunday with the participation of a total of about 8000 people. Meanwhile, violence in the country does not stop. According to the statistics of the Attorney General of the Justice of the State, in September 2012 only 87 people were killed, for a total of 1,107 deaths recorded in Mexico in 2012. To this the official number of unreported cases must be added (see Fides 25/09/2012). (CE) (Agenzia Fides 14/01/2013)