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VATICAN - Cardinal Filoni in Vailankanni: following Mary's footsteps, we must "bear witness to our faith through our actions."

Vailankanni (Agenzia Fides) - "The Church in India is a very vibrant church with a long and deep tradition, and in the context of today's milieu, you face many challenges in presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a coherent and authentic way" are the words expressed by Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, on Sunday, February 10, during the meeting with the Bishops of India (CCBI) in Vailankanni, for the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Episcopal Conference (see Fides 08/02/2013). The Prefect of the Congregation, Special Envoy of His Holiness Benedict XVI also pointed out that the different Ritual Churches provide "a richness and diversity that has to be appreciated," and urged to "make good use of this treasure."
Speaking of the role of the Bishop, the Cardinal pointed out that the people of God expect from them a clear leadership and be a shepherd according to God's heart; they must also remember that "the Diocese belongs to Christ"; then their example of life is very important. Among the virtues that must be taken into special consideration by the Bishops are prudence, fortitude and justice. Cardinal Filoni also underlined the importance of ensuring a correct teaching of the Catholic faith, especially in seminaries where they form future priests.
Finally, the Cardinal said that the Bishop is called to "promote missionary work in all its aspects": "Therefore, we must be the first to preach the Gospel, encourage others to preach the Gospel and to bring the Good News to those who do not yet believe in Christ. Yes, a Bishop must himself have missionary zeal." Cardinal Filoni urged the Bishops to promote the various Pontifical Mission Societies and to provide "pastoral care to all categories of people in the diocese, regardless of caste or ethnicity" as "no ethnic group, group of low caste or minority group, must feel marginalized or left out of activities or pastoral work in your Diocese. "
On the afternoon of Sunday, February 10, Cardinal Filoni presided over the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the erection of a Minor Basilica of the Shrine dedicated to "Our Lady of Good Health", in Vailankanni. "Here, in Vailankanni, Mary found a home – he said in his homily -, and She was offered a 'home' to stay permanently with you, with the people of this country, in order to live and share with you all your joys and sorrows ... Today, through our presence here, we would like to show our devotion and our relationship with her, reassuring her that she is always welcome and this is her home, where she feels part of the Indian population and all Indians, with joy and fidelity, they come to visit, meet and pray her. " Finally, the Cardinal pointed out that according to the Gospels, "Mary did not say much, but she did a lot - she lived her mission. This is what is expected of us in this Year of Faith, we must bear witness to our faith through our actions." (SL) (Agenzia Fides 12/02/2013)

> LINKS

The full text of the speech at the Episcopal Conference (in English):
http://www.fides.org/eng/documents/Disc_CCBI_10022013.doc:

The full text of the homily (in English): http://www.fides.org/eng/documents/Om_Vailankanni_10022013.doc:

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