



AFRICA/TANZANIA - Catholic priest killed; "this is the second of my priests to die" says Catholic Bishop of Zanzibar

Zanzibar (Agenzia Fides)- "We have no idea why Fr. Evarist was killed, we are waiting to hear the results of the police enquiry", Fides learned from Bishop Augustine Shao, Catholic Bishop of Zanzibar, where, yesterday Sunday 17 February, 55 year old Catholic priest Fr. Evarist Mushi, was murdered.

"Fr. Evarist was killed at 7am yesterday morning. He had just arrived at Zanzibar's Catholic Cathedral, St Joseph's, to celebrate Sunday Mass. Before he could even alight from the car two men on a motorbike approached him and the one seated at the back opened fire shooting three times. " said Bishop Shao.

The Bishop, who is waiting for the police enquiry to find a motive, suspects that the priest's murder "may be connected with other local events. Recently explicit assassination threats against bishops and priests were seen in local newspapers. At Christmas, another local priest, Fr. Ambrose Mkenda was seriously injured in an ambush (see Fides 3/1/2013). Fr. Ambrose is still recovering from his wounds in hospital. Furthermore, last year, 2012, three Catholic churches and several churches of other Christian denominations in Zanzibar, were set on fire. We have no idea of the size of the group targeting the island's Christians, but it would appear to be large" the Bishop concluded.

The local police says it has arrested three persons suspected of involvement in the killing of the priest. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 18/2/2013).