



## **ASIA/BANGLADESH - "We feel close to the Pope, humble person, who knows the life of the poor"**

Dhaka (Agenzia Fides) - "We are very close to the figure of Pope Francis: he is a humble person who knows the life and problems of the poor": is what the Catholic Rosaline Costa, an activist of the NGO "Human Rights Hotline Bangladesh", collaborator of the Commission "Justice and Peace" of the Bengalis Bishops says to Fides Agency. Interviewed by Fides, Rosaline Costa says: "The first impression we have of the new Pope is very good: we are happy he comes from a non-European country, an underdeveloped country and is a person who pays a lot of attention and commitment towards the poor. He is very humble, this affects us a lot, I feel close to the cry of the poor. We hope he carefully looks at the very poor countries of Asia such as ours."

"Pope Francis - he adds - will face big challenges: among these, there is, in the Church, that of equal opportunities for women and the fair value of the action of the Holy Spirit present in women." This question is very much felt in countries like Bangladesh where the woman lives, because of historical, social and cultural conditions of subordination to man.

"We were really impressed by the fact that he wanted, in his first speech, the blessing of the people, we all pray for him and wish him well," she concludes.

A Bangladeshi delegation led by Foreign Minister Dipu Moni was present at the inauguration Mass of the pontificate in St. Peter's Square. The Minister gave the Pope a message of congratulations from the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina. Out of a population of 161 million people, Catholics in Bangladesh are about 0.1%, Muslims 89.5%, Hindus 9.6%. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 21/03/2013)