



ASIA/INDIA - A 3-year-old girl raped and murdered: the Archbishop of Calcutta calls for mobilization

Calcutta (Agenzia Fides) - A three year old girl was raped and murdered in the area of Hastings, in Calcutta. As learned by Fides, the body of the child, belonging to one of the many "homeless" families who live on the streets, was found in a landfill yesterday morning, July 21, with many signs of injuries. According to the reconstruction sent to Fides, on Saturday evening, July 20, the child's grandmother and family went to the police when they realized she was missing. The police and many volunteers started looking for her, but unfortunately they found the lifeless little body. The doctors confirmed that the little girl was raped and injured in several parts of the body. After the initial investigation, the police arrested several men suspected of the crime.

The incident aroused horror and indignation among public opinion. A strong appeal came from the Catholic Church. In an interview with Fides Agency, the Archbishop of Calcutta, His Exc. Thomas D'Souza, said he was "sad and shocked by such a horrible and inhuman act", he assures solidarity with the family and states: "The Church will make every effort to re-launch a public reflection in order to stop these acts against human dignity". "Rape or assault against minors - he explains - are always terrible acts. Such incidents are reported in the news all over the country, but this case, which concerns a 3-year-old child, is a sign of barbarism that must be fought". This is why the Archbishop calls together the entire city for a "social, civil and religious mobilization".

We will talk with institutions, with the government and civil administration, and also with religious leaders, with whom we have excellent relations. Not only to protest, but to elicit a joint reflection and to adopt a common strategy", he remarked. In particular, "as Catholic Church we have organized meetings with other religious communities in the last year to generate a real leap of consciousness. Religions can help in the work of formation of consciences".

Even the Archbishop Emeritus of Calcutta, Mgr. Lukas Sirkar, speaking on the issue, assured Fides "the sympathy and prayers of the Catholic community for the child and her family." "Whether they are Christian or non-Christians is not important", he explains.

"As Christians we defend the supreme value and dignity of every person, especially towards young children and the weak". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 22/07/2013)