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ASIA/MIDDLE EAST - Meeting of the Latin Bishops of the Arab world

Rome (Agenzia Fides) - On September 17 the ordinary meeting of the representatives of the Conference of Latin Bishops in the Arab Regions (Conférence des Evêques latins dans les régions arabes, CELRA) begins in Rome, the body that brings together the Catholic bishops of the Latin Church in the Arab States of the Middle East, Egypt and Somalia. The sessions in which the meeting is organized will last until Friday, September 20 in a priestly residence adjacent to the Vatican City. During the days spent in Rome, each bishop who will participate in the meeting will have the opportunity in concelebrating the Mass presided over by Pope Francis every day in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.
The meetings – which will also see the participation of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Fouad Twal - will talk about the latest initiatives planned for the Year of Faith and the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. The liaison body of the bishops of the Latin Church in the Arab countries was established in 1967 just as a tool to favor collegiality and communion among local Churches.
The convulsions that shake the Middle East and are affecting Arab Christian communities will inevitably be at the center of exchanges of information among the bishops of CELRA gathered in Rome. According to information verified by Fides Agency, Georges Abou Khazen OFM, Apostolic Administrator of the Vicariate Apostolic of Aleppo should have participated. But the Franciscan father could not leave the city in northern Syria, isolated for months under siege by anti-Assad militia. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 16/09/2013).

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