



## **ASIA/CHINA - Sacrifice and dedication up to martyrdom: six priests ordained on the feast of St. Matthew**

Han Dan (Agenzia Fides) – To be willing to sacrifice and dedication up to martyrdom to defend the Church: with these wishes the community of the Diocese of Han Dan (Yong Nian) has welcomed 6 new priests who were ordained on September 21, on the feast of St. Matthew the Apostle. As reported to Fides Agency by Faith of He Bei, the province where the Diocese of Han Dan is situated, His Exc. Mgr. Yang Xiang Tai, the elderly diocesan Bishop presided the ceremony of the priestly ordination, while His Exc. Mgr. Sun Ji Gen, coadjutor Bishop celebrated the Eucharist concelebrated by 85 priests. During the homily, Fr. Zheng Rui Ping pointed out that the priestly ordination has a special meaning, since the Church is living the Year of Faith. Three of the new priests come from the same Catholic village, and it is the first time that this occurs in the history of the diocese. In addition, one of them is an only child. Fr. Zheng Rui Ping also explained the meaning of the particular embroidery that was made on the surplice of the newly ordained priests: to remember that priests must always be ready even to shed their blood for the Church of Christ.

According to the data of 2012, the Diocese of Han Dan (Yong Nian) has 150 thousand faithful, 79 priests (now 85 with the 6 new presbyters), more than 200 religious women of the Congregation of the Consolation of the Holy Spirit, hundreds of churches, a seminary and several clinics run by nuns. (NZ) (Agenzia Fides 24/09/2013)