



## **ASIA/VIETNAM - Three new Jesuit priests for the mission in Vietnam**

Kontum (Agenzia Fides) - The Society of Jesus in Vietnam has three new priests who have already started their pastoral service in the country. To the delight of the congregation and the entire Christian community, Tommaso d'Aquino Ta Trung Hai SJ, Joseph Chu Thai Hiep SJ, and Anthony Nguyen Thanh Nguyen SJ completed the years of their human, spiritual and theological formation and were ordained priests on August 22, 2013.

As reported to Fides by the Vietnamese Province of the Jesuits, the three started their pastoral work in the footsteps of St. Ignatius of Loyola a month ago "expressing a desire to devote their whole lives to the service of God and others", "with generous devotion", says a prayer of the saint.

During the celebrations, presided over by Mgr. Michael Hoang Duc Oanh, Bishop of the diocese of Kontum, and concelebrated by the Jesuit Provincial, Fr. Joseph Pham Thanh Liem SJ, other five deacons were ordained, always Jesuits, in the presence of more than 60 priests and 2,500 faithful.

Vietnam is considered a "fertile ground" for the Society of Jesus: as Fides learns, in recent years the vocations of the congregation have multiplied. The centerpiece of the Jesuit formation is the "San Giuseppe Scholasticate", in Ho Chi Minh City, an institute that welcomes more than 50 students, and each year has more than 100 new candidates, all young Vietnamese.

The Jesuits arrived in Vietnam in 1615 and for 150 years have contributed significantly to root the Catholic Church in the country. In 1975, with the advent of the Communist regime, many religious were forced to leave the country. In 2007, the Province of the Jesuits in Vietnam was officially rebuilt and since then the flowering of vocations has been constant. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 30/09/2013)