



## **ASIA/CHINA - "Let us run for the poor" at the Beijing Marathon 2013**

Beijing (Agenzia Fides) - "Run for the charitable works of the Church; we have to run for our poor, elderly, orphans, the sick ....; we have to run to witness our faith": this is how a few participants in the Beijing International Marathon 2013 expressed themselves. As reported to Fides Agency by Faith of He Bei, the Marathon took place on Sunday 20 October in Beijing, with the participation of 5 priests, 85 nuns and many lay Catholics volunteers from 11 provinces, belonging to 20 religious congregations, who raced for 27 charitable projects of the Catholic Church (15 for the elderly, 9 for orphans, 2 for the prevention of AIDS and one for leprosy patients).

There were two priests and 22 nuns who completed the 42,195 km, the others did their best, because "behind us there are nursing homes, orphanages, clinics and many charitable works of the Church", said a 42-year old nun who has been taking part in the initiative for 5 years. Like every year, before the marathon the "athletes" attended the Mass celebrated for them on 19 October in the parish of the Immaculate Conception in Beijing.

Don Luo Na Qing of Jinde Charity (the Chinese Catholic charitable organization, organizer of the initiative), during a press conference spoke about the history and reasons for the participation of the religious women, "so that they learn to organize the event, to raise money .... to reach their autonomy, especially for the Catholic charitable works". In 2009, when the marathon began, it was attended by only 10 nuns. (NZ ) (Agenzia Fides 24/10/2013)