



ASIA/BANGLADESH - A new church in Dinajpur, a sign of rebirth at the conclusion of the Year of Faith

Kodbir (Agenzia Fides) - The Year of Faith ended with an event in Bangladesh defined by all as "highly symbolic": the consecration of a new church and the simultaneous creation of a new parish in Kodbir (the 15th in the diocese of Dinajpur).

The new parish is named after the "Conversion of St. Paul" and the figure of the Apostle of the Gentiles was and will remain a powerful call to evangelization. Archbishop George Kocherry, who recently started his work as Apostolic Nuncio in Bangladesh, presided over the solemn Eucharistic Celebration of consecration, which took place on 16 November. As reported to Fides, the celebration was attended by the local Bishop, Msgr. Sebastian Tudu, and the superior of PIME in Bangladesh, Fr. Franco Cagnasso. About 40 priests concelebrated, including local priests, PIME missionaries, Saveriani, Brothers of the Holy Cross, as well as a large number of sisters. The population of the new parish, which is detached from that of Dhanjuri, is composed of tribal Santal faithful: a sign of the new evangelization, which flows from a community that celebrates and bears witness to faith. This process, said the Apostolic Nuncio, has the support of Holy Father Francis, who, through his representative in Bangladesh, has given the community a new chalice and paten.

As reported to Fides, in his homily, the Nuncio recalled the journey of St. Paul's conversion, his faith and his work of evangelization. He then spoke of the importance of the family and its crucial role within society, ending with a call to pray for vocations in the diocese. After the celebration the statue of St. Paul was blessed at the entrance of the church itself, and the day ended with a performance of dance songs, prepared by young people from different tribal villages. "The memory of this day will accompany our missionary journey. At the conclusion of the Year of Faith, we are all aware of the task that awaits us in building together a community founded on unity, peace and the love of God", said Fr. Michele Brambilla, PIME missionary in Bangladesh. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 26/11/2013)