



ASIA/PHILIPPINES - "Silsilah" movement chosen for the Goi Peace Award

Tokyo (Agenzia Fides) - "We have chosen the "narrow road" of those who live and promote a Culture of Dialogue starting from a personal transformation in the midst of divisions and conflicts. This is for us the best way to work together for the social transformation toward a vision of peace". This is what Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambra, PIME missionary said when he received the prestigious "Goi Peace Award 2013" on behalf of "Silsilah" movement, which has been active in southern Philippines since 1984. The award was given on November 27 in Tokyo, a celebration organized by the "Goi Foundation", that chose the theme "Building a Culture of Dialogue for Peace".

Among the apostles and witnesses who have worked in the "Silsilah" movement (which means "chain"), Fr. D'Ambra cited in the speech sent to Fides Agency, his confrere Fr. Salvatore Carzedda, PIME, killed in Zamboanga on May 20, 1992, during a summer course for Muslim-Christian dialogue, organized by Silsilah. He then recalled all the other members and volunteers who renewed their commitment for life as part of the Movement, using the local word "Padayon!" that means "Move on!", to express the determination to live and promote the culture of dialogue in society.

The Goi Foundation selected "Silsilah" Movement in recognition of the many years of tireless work to promote dialogue for peace and solidarity among Muslims and Christians in the Philippines, efforts have not only advanced the "process towards lasting peace in your communities", but have inspired many people around the world "with the example of true dialogue based on spiritual values".

"Thank you very much for appreciating our effort and mission "based on spiritual values", said D'Ambra. "We continue to believe that sustainable dialogue and peace must be based on spiritual values. Dialogue often is considered a strategy, but for us dialogue is, first of all, spirituality because we consider dialogue an expression of love in action, silence and harmony". "Guided by the understanding that dialogue starts from God and brings people back to God, we promote a spirituality of 'life-in-dialogue' that challenge all of us, people of different cultures and religions, to move together for harmony, solidarity and peace", he explained.

The missionary recalled those who suffer violence in Syria, Egypt, Pakistan and many other parts of the world where "the greed for power, often exacerbated by cultural and religious differences, is transforming the common house of this world into a divided house where the cry of the poor and the many victims of violence remind us of our urgent need to work together for the common good".

Fr. D'Ambra launched an appeal: "It is time for us to start again to invite Muslims and Christians to rebuild the culture of dialogue based on the spiritual values of each one. The culture of dialogue is dynamic; it starts from where we are, from our culture and our religion, including the situation in which we live and goes beyond fear and conflict". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 02/12/2013)