



## **ASIA/MYANMAR - A new bishop of ethnic chin: a sign of unity for the Church and the nation**

Yangon (Agenzia Fides) - The new bishop Lucius Hrekung who, in the Diocese of Hakha, will have the pastoral care of the population of the Chin ethnic minority, to which he himself belongs, is "a sign of unity for the Church and for the entire nation": This is what Msg. Charles Bo, Archbishop of Yangon said during the celebration of the solemn Eucharistic on Sunday, February 2. As reported to Fides, the Mass of ordination was attended by 15 bishops, hundreds of priests and religious, 4,000 lay faithful Catholics, many Christians of other denominations, who had come to rejoice and pray for the new Pastor.

In his homily, Msg. Bo pointed out the journey of Christians in areas where chin tribes live: "The history of the Diocese of Hakha is the story of a 50-year journey of faith of the people. It was launched by bishops, priests, religious and indigenous laity. Mgr. Lucius is the result of this story, of people who have passed on and witnessed faith from generation to generation", he said.

The Archbishop remarked that "the journey of faith is never without obstacles", noting that "in 2014, the Church in Myanmar celebrates 500 years of its journey of faith". "Our ancestors - he said - gave their lives for their faith. During the dark period of nationalization, the doors were closed to missionaries. We became weak and lived in fear. Yet we have always trusted in God".

Mgr. Bo praised the bishop for having chosen as his motto, "Thy kingdom come": "This is your compass, based on faith, and this is his prayer, that will always be good news for everyone". The bad news, however, regards "divisions that weaken the credibility of evangelization". In this sense - he concluded - the Catholic Church embraces all tribes and ethnic groups in Myanmar: Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Shan, Bamar and others, promoting harmony in the Christian community and across the nation. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 05/02/2014)