



## **ASIA/BANGLADESH - Jubilee of the mission in Pathorghata, "the port of stones"**

Pathorghata - (Agenzia Fides) - More than 2,500 people participated in past days to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the mission in Pathorghata, in the diocese of Dinajpur. This is how Fr. Livio Prete, PIME, the local parish priest, recalls the early days of the mission: "In the early '40s, a pastor of the Diocese of Dinajpur, Msg. Giovanni Battista Anselmo - originally from the diocese of Genoa - passing by saw a stony ground on the bend of the river Tulsigonga and on that site prophesied the birth of a mission. What he saw on the river was a stony ground, in a country that does not know stones. Yet the name of the mission comes from those stones: Pathorghata, namely 'port of stones'. The place has an ancient history: in the past there had been a Buddhist and then a Hindu settlement and now for 50 years a Christian mission". "The missionary Fr. Giovanni Vanzetti was sent to break up this stony ground - says the message sent to Fides. He arrived on February 20, 1962. He lived in a small village for two years and from there, he slowly built the church and the parish house. Here he remained until 1979".

On the day of the Jubilee, the first missionary, Fr. Giovanni and his tireless service was repeatedly mentioned, including his commitment to social development and agriculture in the area, with new programs of cultivation and irrigation. Fr. Vanzetti also launched a school and, after its destruction during the war years, he rebuilt it all with patience. Fr. Livio recalls the merits of the first missionary: "Of having established the mission and the Church in the hearts of its people". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 17/02/2014)