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AFRICA/EGYPT - 62nd Catholic Festival of Egyptian Cinema opening ceremony

Cairo (Agenzia Fides) – The 62nd Catholic Festival of Egyptian Cinema was officially opened in the evening of Friday 28 February at the Nile Hall - a 500 seat multi-media hall annexed to Saint Joseph's Latin Catholic church in Cairo. Distinguished guests included former Egyptian minister of culture Farouk Hosni and actress Samiha Ayoub. During the week more than thirty Egyptian and Arab films produced in 2013 will be projected and judged for artistic and cultural content, with strict criteria of valuation regarding above all human and moral values portrayed by the films. The jury of examiners chaired by Egyptian Franciscan Boutros Daniel OFM, comprises Christian and Muslim experts. At the end of the week on Friday 7 March, prizes will be assigned to the three winning films while awards will be presented to representatives of the world of culture and media.
The presentation of these "Oscars" assigned by the Catholic Centre of Egyptian Cinema, now celebrating its 62nd edition, was an idea of Toscana born Franciscan Erminio Roncalli OFM and represents the first experience of valorisation of the art of cinema of this type to flourish in Egypt. "Egyptian and Arab film makers" Fides was told by Bishop Adel Zaki OFM, Episcopal Vicar of Alexandria of Egypt for Catholics of Latin rite – are anxious to take part in the event and to win an award. The criteria of judgement are inspired by the vision of the human person, human expectations and aspirations for good, kindness and beauty found in Christianity and which has universal value . In the eyes of the participants the awards presented express in a way the appreciation of the whole universal Church".
Over the decades the Catholic Centre of Egyptian Cinema, with its staff of more than 10 people, has become an authoritative institution which, thanks to its prestigious archives-film-library – consulted and frequented for research by experts and scholars from all over the world – safeguards the historical memory of Egyptian cinema and the cinema of the Arab world. Every year, besides organising the Festival of the Egyptian Film, the Centre publishes in Arabic a book containing the reviews of all the films shown in cinemas in the previous 12 months. The reviews focus in particular on the educational contents and the anthropological and moral vision transmitted by each of the cinematographic works. (GV) (Agenzia Fides 1/3/2014).

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