



## **AMERICA/CHILE - Card. Ezzati's appeal: Solidarity with the people of Valparaiso after the tragic fire**

Santiago (Agenzia Fides) - An appeal for solidarity with the victims of the earthquake in the north of the country and for the recent fire that broke out in Valparaiso which has killed 12 people so far and forced 10,000 people to flee was launched by Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati, Archbishop of Santiago, "at the beginning of Holy Week, on Palm Sunday" as reported in the note sent to Fides Agency by the Episcopal Conference of Chile.

"This Easter we are faced with so much pain - the Cardinal said - . Few weeks ago we saw the people in the north suffer the effects of the earthquake and yesterday we were all deeply touched by the deadly fire that hit many families and has killed many people in Valparaiso".

"It is a terrible tragedy, without doubt the worst fire in the history of Valparaiso" said the President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet, commenting on the fire which broke out in the late afternoon of Saturday, April 12 and in a few hours destroyed about 800 hectares of the peripheral area of Valparaiso. Despite the work of 3,500 men between the forest service, firemen, police and army, the fire lasted more than 24 hours.

"These two events invite us to live Easter more intensely" - said the Cardinal in his appeal - The note also refers to the appeal of Caritas in Santiago which collects material aid to bring to Valparaiso, where people have found refuge and support in the churches of this city. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 14/04/2014)