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AMERICA/CHILE - The decline in vocations to priesthood at the center of the Assembly of Bishops of Chile

Punta de Tralca (Agenzia Fides) - With a Mass presided by the Apostolic Nuncio in Chile, Archbishop Ivo Scapolo, the 107th Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference of Chile (CECh) began, which takes place from May 5 to 9 at the Casa de Retiros in Punta de Tralca. In his homily, Mgr. Scapolo brought the greetings and blessing on behalf of Pope Francis and asked them to reflect on the role of the Bishop, pointing out that his word is necessary to guide the confused and encourage and strengthen the weak.
As the note sent to Fides says, under the guide of the Archbishop of Santiago and President of CECh, Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati, the Bishops will discuss the main challenges of each of the five pastoral areas of CECh: Ecclesial, Pastoral Workers, Education, Pastoral Charity and social Communications. However, at the center of the reflection of this Assembly there is the theme of vocations to priesthood and seminaries, as the decline in the number of priests and seminarians in recent years is the main concern of the Bishops.
The new Statistical Yearbook of the Holy See, which has just been published, shows that in Chile there are 2,415 priests (1,182 of whom diocesan and 1,233 religious), 1,029 permanent deacons, 4,303 religious women, 1,552 lay missionaries and 46 282 catechists. There are 27 dioceses and 954 parishes. Chile has a population of about 17 million people, while the Catholics are 8 million, although the baptized are more than 12 million. (CE)
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