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A Blessed Christmas And A New Year of Peace and Joy!



The BOARD OF DIRECTORS and STAFF OF THE BUREAU extend sincere greetings for a very Blessed Christmas and a New Year of Joy and Peace to all our friends and benefactors – colleagues and collaborators around the world.

“And she wrapped the child in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the Inn”

[Luke

2:171

A Story Ever Old, Ever New:

As Christmas nears, a Catholic Sister in southern China wonders if curious onlookers and local Catholics should be allowed to enter an old church in their historic town for Christmas Eve Mass.

The small town of Qingyan, close to Guiyang, the capital of Guizhou province was developed seven centuries ago as a stone-built fortress. It now attracts tourists because of its cultural, historical and religious monuments. Besides the Catholic Church, it also features a Protestant church and a dozen Buddhist, Taoist and folk religion temples that were erected over the centuries. The church in Qingyan was built in 1863 near to a site where four Chinese Catholics were beheaded in 1861. The four – Saints Martha Wang, John Liu, Chen Changpin, Zhang Wenlan – were among the 120 China Martyrs canonized on October 1, 2000.

Sr. Zhang Kaixiu is perplexed, not for fear of having crowds of visitors throng Sacred Heart of Jesus Church for Mass, but because the dilapidated building itself poses a danger for anyone under its roof. The church was restored when it was returned to the diocese in 1987, after it was confiscated decades before by the government. The 15 years that have passed since the hurried restoration have been unkind to the church.

The building stands “dangerously” in a position where winds continuously bring in layers of dust. Tiles are missing from its roof, which rests precariously on watermark-stained walls. Inside the 100-capacity church, the ceiling’s wooden planks are chipped and worn. The paint on the supporting pillars is peeling and at least one broken window is boarded over. Nearby, the simply renovated quarters where Sister Zhang and another Sister live are no comfort either. Nonetheless, she quietly told a recent visitor, “I’m ashamed it seems better than Jesus’ place.”

From the Editor

8th Religious Study Tour: Some Musings



Surprising.. inspiring.. confounding.. overwhelming .. moving .. One runs out of adjectives to encapsulate the experience of the start of the 21st century, as it spins ever onward, upward and outward in contemporary China!

The eighteen people, who journeyed with me to China in the first few weeks of November, continually expressed **amazement at each successive encounter** in the eight cities.. the churches, seminaries, convents and medical and social service projects visited. One is hard pressed to summarize the experience... but surely increasingly sophisticated urbanites, building projects, roads, new housing, gleaming commercial sectors, and an overall improved infrastructure in some of the rural areas visited are common denominators. The **vibrancy of youth**, enthusiasm and diligence for every task, **focus on the immediate and the pragmatic are endemic**. One elder gentlemen traveling with us - a former high school teacher from California, kept reminding us "*China is the future; the coming power; Europe is becoming a museum; the West is history.*"

After a mere two-year hiatus since the last USCCB Tour, **CHANGE continues to be the key word**. **Beijing** was decked out in its finest on the **Eve of the 16th Party Congress**: lights silhouetted buildings, gleaming streets, enormous flower sculptures and miraculously clean air! In the midst of the coldest early winter in NE China in six decades, the atmosphere was crisp and clear as far as the eye could see - especially from the top of the Great Wall! If they can do it here - they can do it everywhere, hopefully in **Xian**, still a very polluted city. **Shanghai**, on the other hand, was gleaming - although with its penchant for festivals, exhibitions and expos [the World Tourism Expo was in progress during our visit], its phenomenally developed commercial and tourist facilities were strained to the hilt. Our National Guide had to negotiate at length to recover hotel rooms long since reserved, but summarily commandeered by the local authorities for "preferential" customers due in town. On another evening, our most skillful and courteous driver was summoned away, coach and all, to serve some higher priority passengers: Tourism with Chinese Characteristics!

Some, and at times *all*, of the above, was reflected in microcosm during our visits to Catholic communities and other religious venues. **The big foot of officialdom still randomly treads into the sanctuary**. At this time, the **atmosphere in religious circles seemed a bit more restrictive**. This is common to all social groupings [religious entities fall into this category in China], which, from the government's perspective, might

potentially orchestrate opposition to the prevailing political powers. This mostly amounts to low-level harassment, unreasonable proscriptions, and annoying intrusions into the affairs of the respective organizations. But the **Chinese people are long schooled in patience and forbearance; when a door is closed, they open a window**.

Notwithstanding, one senses that **the Catholic Church in China is poised on the threshold of the second phase of its re-founding**. Most impressive and moving, was meeting up with young priests and sisters, several of whom have returned in recent years, after graduate studies and formational programs here in the USA, or in Europe or Asia, and are gradually assuming positions of leadership and responsibility in their seminaries, religious congregations and dioceses. The kindly guidance and reassuring patronage of elderly bishops and religious remains quietly present; but, not unlike the (relatively) youthful profile of the new CCP leadership [see page 7] the baton has clearly been passed.

The **building bonanza also affects the Church** - as extensive land holdings from the missionary era are gradually restored to diocesan jurisdiction. The proviso being that a building commensurate with the acreage be built on it, comes with the threat of re-confiscation if one fails to do so within a reasonable time frame. On the negative side, local churches are accumulating heavy debt burdens; on the positive side, **one cannot but be in awe of the confidence and trust in Divine providence and the courageous hope with which the new leadership moves forward**. **They are convinced that in due time, such resources will prove useful in ever widening opportunities for service to God's people**.

In summary, one goes to China and comes away "blown away- every day in a new way" to recall an oft-repeated quote of one of the most astute and well educated persons in our group - a man who lived through the Hungarian Uprising and knows more than a little about communism and its aftermath. China and the Church in **China needs our prayer**, it goes without saying. **They too, pray for us** and express great concern about America and where it is going? As Americans, **China also needs our understanding** and patience with a wonderful work in progress; and, above all, **it ought to merit the courtesy of not constantly being misjudged**, based on what we *think* or *imagine* it is like, or should be like; **all the while failing to see what it is, and is becoming, in God's provident time**.
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China Church News

Faith and Endurance

The following is an excerpt from a recent letter received from a young pastor in Southeast China.

Dear Sr. Janet,

Greetings from China! I am glad to receive news from you. It has been some time since our last contact. I am happy to know that you are doing well. I am doing fine. However, I am busy preparing a Parish Council meeting later this month. This meeting is once in five years, which is significant to our parish's future. A couple of council members always give me a difficult time. They want power and control of the parish, compete to be the council president; and seek to gain benefit of it for themselves. There is always someone who has something against us or against our Church. The top thing is that they have government on their side to lay some pressure on us. This is perhaps the special matter of the church in China. I am working with other members, trying to encourage more parishioners to vote for the Pastor to be the president.

I ask your prayers. God is on our side. We place everything in God's hand. God bless you and your loved ones. In the month of November, I will keep your loved ones in my prayer! Thank you again for your prayer and support!

*Sincerely yours in Christ,
Joseph*



New Marian Shrine

On November 3rd, some 2000 Catholics gathered in **NW Shanxi Province** for the official inauguration of a new church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Mass of dedication was celebrated by *Bishop SUN Yuan Mo*, together with about thirty priests. The church, built in traditional style, stands on Mount Mary. There is a **growing tendency to build new churches in traditional Chinese style** instead of the models of European architecture adopted earlier. [Fides 11/26/02]

Religion vs. Ideology

Recently, *Minister of Education Chen Zhili* warned party cadres against the spread of religion, in particular Christianity; and Western liberal thinking in university circles. They were called upon to promote Communist ideology and discourage *all* students, (not only Communist party members), from taking part in religious activities; and to guard against banned groups, such as *Falun Gong*. Party members are banned from joining religious organizations; but Chinese citizens are, according to the Constitution, free to belong to any of the five legalized religions. **China watchers suggest that the warning reflects the Party's fear that it is losing influence among young intellectuals.**

Departments of religious studies or research centers have been set up on several university campuses since the 1990s. They study religion from an academic perspective to better understand culture, philosophy and historical issues. The vast majority of students tend not to be religious believers, but in some cases, have become known as "*culture Christians*" for their sympathy with Christian philosophy and culture.

Accommodating Religious Diversity

Scenic **Emeishan in SW Sichuan** province is one of China's four most **famous Buddhist holy mountains**, with over 20 temples whose heritage goes back centuries. Catholics have recently built a church and a guesthouse for visitors, seminars and meetings and for guests, Pingan Shanzhuang (Peace Mountain Villa). It is the only religious establishment on the mountain that is not Buddhist and dialogue and government mediation was needed to calm opposition by Buddhists.

Approximately 500 Catholics live scattered about Emeishan, and most families engage in tourist-related business. It is inconvenient for them to leave on Sunday, when many thousands of tourists and pilgrims visit. The shortage of priests in the diocese means Mass can only be offered there on major feast days. However, they can now gather in the new church for Sunday prayers, and await an elderly priest who will soon be sent to reside at the church. Considerable financial help was provided by the Bishops' Conference of the Catholic Church in China.

China Still Struggles to Implement Vatican II

The Church in China is still catching up with the Second Vatican Council four decades after the council began. In an interview with UCAN, **Rev. John Baptist Zhang Shijiang** said the teachings that emerged from Vatican II (1962-1965) reached the Church in China only after church buildings that were closed during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) were reopened and Chinese from overseas could again visit China. Father Zhang, 38, directs the **Beifang Jinde Catholic Social Service Center** at Shijiazhuang in Hebei province. Founded in 1998, it is the first Catholic social service organization in China to run on a non-profit basis, with no government affiliation. Fr. Zhang also directs *Faith Press*, which produces a widely circulated fortnightly Catholic newspaper, publishes books and operates its own website [www.chinacatholic.org].

Q: How was the Church in China soon after Vatican Council II?

A: We did not know anything about Vatican II. The churches were closed then because of the Cultural Revolution. They were opened only in the late 1970s. We learned about Vatican II from visiting overseas Chinese. This was in the early 1980s.

Q: How did church people react to what they were learning?

A: Devotions then were very strong. There were many kinds of devotions – the rosary, Stations of the Cross – and our Masses were crowded. But Catholics did not know much about Vatican II. For example, liturgical reforms in the early 1980s (in line with Council teachings) met with a very strong reaction from the Chinese. When the Chinese language was used in the Mass, many could not accept it. But since they had for so many years been separated from the universal Church, they felt they should be loyal to the Holy Father and follow the universal Church. Many then accepted the change. Still it was very hard for them to adjust from pre-Vatican II to Vatican II practices.

Q: How quickly were changes introduced?

A: I celebrated the Latin Mass for three years from when I was ordained in 1989 until 1992. Then more and more overseas Church professors from Hong Kong and Taiwan came to China. They shared the documents of Vatican II with seminarians and the local Church. At that time, we had a limited sense of social work. I myself was mainly involved in Church publications then. That was in the early 1990s, when the Church was

involved only in evangelization, catechism, vocation formation and the building of churches. A few years ago, the Catholic press in Shanghai published the (Vatican Council II) documents for all Catholics.

Q: What obstacles impede the understanding or implementation of the council?

A: We still lack the teaching of Vatican II. We only have an impression, not theological reflections or systematic teachings on Vatican II. The local Church, seminaries and many diocesan training centers should do something for laypeople, for clergy, for the whole Church. Something should also be done about teaching catechism according to Vatican II.

Q: How up to date is the Church in China as regards the Council's teachings?

A: I think the church in China jumped into Vatican II. I say, "jump" because we had a very short time to change over to Vatican II. For example, before Vatican II, (we said that) without Baptism, without the church you could not enter heaven. Now, no one from the Church would say that. During one recent interreligious conference on the environment, I remember one Buddhist delegate said, "When I was a boy, I heard that without Baptism, without the Church, we will go to hell." Several university professors there

immediately told him that was pre-Vatican II teaching and that the Church in China now does not teach that.

Q: Which aspects of Vatican II do you hope to see better implemented in China?

A: First, **liturgical reform**. Chinese are very slow (to accept) the big change in language. Ninety-five percent attend Mass in Mandarin, but there are still Masses in Latin in big cities in the early morning, attended by older people. **Social work is second**. Many dioceses now run clinics, homes for the aged and for orphans. They are involved in social work. That is a big change. I myself have been much influenced by the social teachings of Vatican II. **Interreligious dialogue** is coming up. The Chinese government does a good job for interreligious dialogue. They always bring (the various religions) together for meetings, and urge us to build harmony and social stability. *Beifang Jinde* will build some schools together with other religions. We have already worked on several other social work projects with them. **The Church in China is willing to contribute to Chinese society and to walk in step with it.**

[Asia Focus 11/1/02]

"The Church in China is willing to contribute to Chinese society and to walk in step with it."

Post Vatican II priorities include:

- Liturgical reform
- Social service
- Interreligious dialogue

Social Issues

Growing Plight of Street Children

The **Baoji Refuge**, a shelter for street children, was established in 1998, in the empty premises of an orphanage. It is part of a new project initiated by five retirees, called ***Fu Lao Xie You*** "Serve the old to help the young". The idea was to build a retirement home next to the shelter and then use the monthly fees from the pensioners to help run the shelter. It is a dynamic social development solution, using local resources. Unfortunately, due to a lack of sponsors and financial support, the shelter has had to stop taking in new children in recent months. It currently has around 50 children, while the number of pensioners next door is currently stuck at 53 due to a lack of medical facilities at the site. The retirees had hoped that the Baoji idea would tempt investors, including foreigners, and be copied across the country.

The ***Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*** estimates there are between two and five hundred thousand street children across China today. A growing number are living in large cities, often around railway stations. With no mechanism to deal with them, most can expect no help from the **State, which has been forced to withdraw its social safety net because of a chronic lack of funds.** [AFP]

Camillian Society Outreach to Lepers

The Camillian Society has been well known for its medical services in Taiwan for many years. Its Far East Province has initiated a program of assistance to lepers in SW Yunan Province. Funds are being raised in Taiwan and elsewhere to subsidize restructuring several Leprosy Centers in this very poor region of China.

One Center, including a home with 26 rooms, a pigsty, a stable, and a warehouse is expected to be ready by February 2003. There are plans to restructure five other centers. One of these, consisting of 4 villages for 100 lepers and a school for 40 children, has no running water or electricity. In another there are 25 lepers cared for by three nurses paid by the Camillians. They also collaborate with the China Leprosy Service directed a Jesuit Fr. Louis Gutheinz, [Fides 10/31/02]

Survey on Suicide in China

China's first ever national survey on suicide revealed an **annual suicide rate of 287,000**, almost 10 times the USA rate. Suicide is the **fifth major cause of death** – after stroke, bronchitis, liver cancer and pneumonia. It was furthermore the biggest cause of death among youth between 15 and 34 years. The **suicide rate for females turned out 25 percent higher** than that of males and the **rural rate three times that of the urban one.**

Suicide has become an urgent problem to be solved in the field of public health. Compared with other countries, China's comparatively high suicide rate displays its own characteristics. **China is the only country that reports higher female suicide rates**, particularly among young women in rural areas. In other countries 90 percent of the suicides occur among those suffering from mental disorders, while in China that rate is much lower. [PD Online 11/02]

Next March, China's first *Suicide Research and Prevention Center* will open in Beijing. Statistics indicate only 7% of suicidal people had sought any mental health care; an indication of the paucity of psychiatric professional services in China; as well as the stigma still associated with such treatment. According to the President of the Chinese Society of Psychiatry "*changes...over the past two decades, have been dizzying enough to tax the stability of even the most well-adjusted individual.*" [USA Today 12/02]

Population Shifts

In the decade 1990 to 2000, China's Population shifted dramatically with a 52% growth in urban areas. In 1990 rural areas had 841 million; while urban areas had 302 million people. In 2000, the rural population was down to 808 million (a decrease of 33 million) while the urban sector was up to 459 million (an increase of 157 million).



[China Statistical Yearbook 2002]

China's 4th Generation of Leaders

New Leadership of the PRC

Hu Jintao (60) *Secretary General/President-designate. Youngest member of the Party Central Committee promoted by Deng Xiao Ping in 1982.*

Wu Bangguo (61) *Politburo member and Vice Premier; protégé of Jiang Zemin*

Jia Qinglin (62) *Jiang protégé, former mayor of Beijing, former governor of Fujian*

Wen Jiabao (60) *Deputy Premier; protégé of Zhu Rongqi (Economic Czar)*

Zeng Qinghong (63) *Jiang's closest aide*

Huang Ju (64) *Jiang protégé; Party secretary of Shanghai 1994-2002*

Wu Guanzheng (64) *Party secretary from Shandong*

Li Changchun (58) *Party secretary of Guangdong*

Luo Gan (67) *allied with Li Peng; leading cadre for 'law and order'*

An Analysis

If it wasn't clear enough already, the generational leadership change of the Communist Party revealed **what propels today's China: a frantic longing for better tomorrows**, the same fuel that fired the revolution of Mao – but with a profit motive. The departing **President, Jiang Zemin**, used the word "new" 90 times in his speech to open the 16th Communist Party Congress. **Hu Jintao**, Jiang's successor, invoked the same notion repeatedly, referring to a "new situation," a "new century." A "new phase," "new thought and new ideas dominate," the *Beijing Evening News* enthused.

The Party has been experimenting with ways to stamp their vision onto China's unique society for 53 years. Since shortly after Mao Zedong died in 1976, the future has been increasingly about cash. **China is obsessed with changing: to keep its 1.3 billion citizens fed, and too busy at work making money to turn against the Party.** The leadership also desperately wants to boast of its evolution – and persuade the world that the changes are no thereat. **Those twin motifs will define the next decade of Chinese communism** as the party wrestles to maintain its rule over a civilization many millennia old. As leader of the CCP, and as the likely president from March 2003, **Hu Jintao will probably have less control over China than any party leader before him, ruling by committee and internal consensus.**

Hu's predecessor has left him with the chaos of a free market waiting in the wings. Jiang Zemin's oddly named "**Three Represents**" doctrine, now Party policy, does what no one would have dared mention while Mao was alive: it **makes a communist out of a capitalist**, a deft deployment of pragmatism that, until recently, was adeptly hidden in Party literature.

The late **Deng Xiaoping**, first saw the arrival of an invader that even the Great Wall couldn't repel. When Deng began to open China in the late 1970s, he realized ideology couldn't prevent his people from wanting Nikes and Cokes. So he co-opted them instead. The result was the "**socialist market economy**," which seemed a linguistic paradox in a self-declared dictatorship of the masses. Today, foreign investment is raising the masses' living standards like never before; and social forces that have been unleashed are tearing across the land. Suburban developments, roads choked with Mercedes-Benzes and busy markets in fake GAP merchandise have cultivated something Mao most feared – *a middle class*.

The days of the Party redirecting the economy at whim are long gone. Even more momentous is the fallout from what leaders call "kaifang," or "opening-up." Economic reforms have yanked away the lifetime social safety net known as the "*iron rice bowl*"; 26 million have been laid off in the past four years. Many are angry, and some are protesting and becoming violent. Corruption thrives, and crime is rising on the streets. **While the economy may be opening, China retains tight political control.** Leaders of the New Openness generation are doing their utmost to prevent Chinese from learning of ideas that might get them thinking about who rules them. However, to the Chinese government at this moment in history "*it's the economy, stupid*." Mao's children may have defied the Great Helmsman, but they are honoring him, too. They're hard at work building his robust tomorrow – still pushed onward by that vision of Chinese utopia, retooled for a brand-new century in a way no five-year plan ever could have imagined.

[The Malaysian Star 11/16/02]

Changing Values of China's Youth

From numerous articles in popular magazines, it is obvious that a tremendous change has taken place in the values of youth over the past 20 years. The way they think and act, and their sense of values, reflect the changes in Chinese society at large. A young pastor in Hebei Province spoke about the changing values observed among Chinese Christians.

The late 1970s and early 1980s were **a period of faith reawakening in China**. Many priests, Sisters and lay people who had survived persecution returned to their parishes and religious activities revived. A whole generation of young people, who had grown up under atheism and lived through the catastrophe of the Cultural Revolution, came in contact with religious faith for the first time. They began **to think about the future and the meaning of life**; children of the older generation of believers, they began to participate enthusiastically in religious services and activities. During these years, in winter cold or summer heat, everybody, without complaint, participated in open-air religious services, which were extremely moving. Youth felt that religious faith was mysterious and holy and they blindly and emotionally believed. However, priests were so busy with reconstruction of the churches that they had little time to pay attention to the changes taking place in the values of young people.

During this period of *'openness and reform'* **sudden changes in all aspects of life: economic, political, cultural, moral and religious, had a great impact and influence on youth**. Young people began to think seriously about religion. A number of Christian youth answered the invitation of their faith communities and entered seminaries or convents to be trained as priests or religious sisters. However, this period of great and rapid social change in China also brought a weakening of the faith and confusion among many young people. **Confronted with so many new trends many youth lost their values and their faith**.

The **values of many young people became more pragmatic**. Though still basically idealistic, it was not easy to hold on to ideals in the atmosphere of consumerism that swept the country. This *"making money is glorious"* phase produced a new climate in which many forgot the meaning of life, and life's ultimate purpose. Many lost their sense of direction. Suicide rates among the young rose sharply [see p.5 article]. The **negative effects of some of the changes in the nation's moral standards** were not lost on government officials. In the latter half of the 1990s and into the new millennium, people from all walks of life, from the president to the person in the street, began to discuss religion and religion's function in society. *President Jiang Zemin* himself said that he was not only interested in religion, but that he had even read the Bible, the Koran and other famous religious books. People finally became aware that without *Confucius, Lei Feng*, religious faith and its ethical values, **society had lost its stability, equilibrium and direction**.

The government soon took a more positive attitude towards religion and began to publicize the beneficial aspects of religious ethics, which could be put at the service of society. This led a large segment of the younger population to think seriously again about religion. While young people still emphasize the life of the spirit, they are more materialistic and pay much more attention to the quality of life. Today's youth question the traditional value system [be content with your lot; be hard-working and thrifty; study hard; bear your burdens] and they challenge it. Chinese people have traditionally emphasized duty, practicality, steadfastness, patience, simplicity and austerity. But today's youth like to wear fashionable, colorful, and personalized, name-brand clothing. They want new things, success, travel, gatherings of family and friends, and stimulus and enjoyment. **Another area of tremendous change in values involves love and marriage**. The values of young people, even Catholics, regarding love, marriage and the family are changing fast. Triangle love affairs, conception outside of marriage and extra-marital affairs have already become serious problems for many youth, for their families, and for society as a whole. **Pre-marital training and marriage counseling are becoming more important and necessary**.

To convince people to act morally, traditional Christian spirituality emphasized the saving of one's soul, austere penance and even the threat of excommunication and the last judgment. However, today's youth want to live a pleasant life and enjoy the Creator's beautiful world. They want to experience a modern civilized life. Traditional rules of conduct are not binding and do not satisfy the young, who are used to thinking for themselves; and dare to search for new meanings of life. **Society as a whole is at the moment generally receptive to Christian moral values**. The younger generation is becoming more and more open to such Christian values as universal love, compassion, a spirit of sacrifice, equality and forgiveness. Today's **young people are also interested in democratic ideas and the rule of law**. They are realistic and recognize many of them abuse freedom. "Freedom" does not mean license, the unchecked idea of 'me' at the center of the universe, a disdain for authority and the destruction of structures. **Personal relations have also undergone a big change**. For hundreds of years, trust among persons revolved around the family or personal friendships. Such **relationships were morally binding**. However, since the market economy functions by using universal norms of conduct, young people are accepting the fact that mutually beneficial relations are built on contracts and laws. Faced with rampant corruption, young people are convinced that only a legal system, transparency and democratic structures can put a stop to it. Western countries influenced by democratic ideas, equality and modern technology, are constantly challenging authority in the family, in school, in society itself and even in the church. Being in contact with Christian young people and observing the changes in their sense of values, it is not difficult to summarize some of the problems facing the church. However, **in confronting the changes taking place in the values of youth, the church needs to be alert and anticipate the future direction of these developments**. If the church tries to meet the needs of youth, young people will hopefully embrace Christian values, and become a strong positive force within the Church. [HKSE 10/13/02]



20th National Catholic China Conference

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Maryknoll Conference Center, New York

NOTE NEW DATES!

The Role of Religion in China's Emergent Civil Society

Keynote Speakers:

Dr. Richard Madsen, UC San Diego

Dr. Carol Lee Hamrin, George Mason University

Zhejiang University World Religions Institute: Social Survey Report

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CHINESE CULTURAL CELEBRATION AND EUCHARISTIC LITURGY

Celebrant: Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe [invited]

Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples

[Watch CCQ No. 53 for further details]

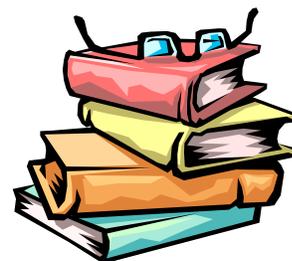
Recommended Reading:

- ***Pentecost in Asia: A new way of being church.*** Thomas C. Fox.

ORBIS Books, Maryknoll, New York 10545 (HB)

The dynamic vision emerging from the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences: What the Church in the West may learn from the emerging model of the Catholic Church in the East.

Chapter 6: New Openings: The Catholic Church in China – based on Fox's Journey to China as part of the 6th USCCB Religious Study Tour (1998).



- ***The Asian Synod: Texts and Commentaries.*** Peter Phan (Ed.)

ORBIS Books, Maryknoll, New York 10545 (352 pages)

Among the five Synods of Bishops that Pope John Paul II convoked to celebrate the coming of the 3rd millennium of Christianity, **the Asia Synod was, theologically speaking, the most exciting.** Asia, with its theologies of inculturation and interreligious dialogue, seems poised to capture the attention of the church in the first decades of the 21st century.

- ***Faithful Dissenters: stories of men and women who loved and changed the church.***

Robert McClory. ORBIS Books, Maryknoll, New York 10545 (PB)

Recounts how women and men from Galileo to Matteo Ricci to John Courtney Murray have challenged and helped the church – and the world – to see more clearly.

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Merry.
Christmas