



United States Catholic China Bureau

China Church Quarterly

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Editor's Note:

Light and Hope – the central themes of Advent, uniquely echo in the hearts of Christians in China – unswervingly grounded in faith and trust in the promised Messiah. They wait upon the Lord, albeit at times under a canopy of darkness which sometimes shrouds the dawn.



Autumn in China - as this issue of CCQ attests, witnessed just such a juxtaposition of events: pride and joy in many exciting developments portending the steady growth and development of the Church in China. Even as it assumes an ever expanding role in leadership, witness and service to society, it can be suddenly overshadowed by clouds of sadness and painful consternation, caused by a new unwarranted and unexpected contravention of Catholic religious beliefs by external political authorities. The PRC regime's oft repeated demand to be "free of interference in its internal affairs" rings hollow, if it will not in turn extend this same prerogative to the Chinese Catholic Church, an officially recognized religion in China.

The hasty, illicit consecration on November 30, of a new auxiliary bishop for the small diocese of Xu Zhou in Jiangsu Province, was widely lamented. In an official response, the Holy Father, Benedict XVI, with utter sensitivity to the plight of Chinese Catholics and their religious leaders, acknowledged the spiritual drama, suffering and inner unease of those forced to take active part [in events] contravening Catholic tradition. Liturgy by definition is not magical. It is meaningful only insofar as the participants willingly give their assent. No early power can intrude nor compel acquiescence. Therefore, let us be steadfast in prayer, joyfully awaiting **the Coming of the Lord!**

22nd National Catholic China Conference

The USCCB held its 22nd National Catholic China Conference November 3-5 at the Simpsonwood Retreat and Conference Center in Metro Atlanta. With the theme: ***Experiencing Jesus Christ Through Chinese Eyes***, 76 people from North America and China shared a cross-cultural dialogue around cultural, social, intellectual, theological and artistic perspectives, forming a prism, through which new insights and understandings of their faith in Jesus Christ were shared. This Conference marked a **significant transition in intercultural dialogue**: from talking *about* the Church in China, to listening to and learning from uniquely Chinese perspectives on Faith, characteristics of diverse spiritualities and ways of relating to Jesus Christ; as well as experiences of Church rooted in contemporary China's cultural and social contexts.

All the sessions were marked by **dynamic interaction among speakers and participants**, as well as in small group discussions. A highlight of the weekend was a celebration of Chinese culture with a special dinner and a spectacular **performance of music, dance and other forms of Chinese artistry** generously presented by the *Atlanta Chinese Community*. Bishop *John S. Cummins* of the Oakland, CA diocese, long-time liaison between the US and Asian Conferences of Bishops and USCCB Board Member, presided at the Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy, at which the ACC choir also provided all the music, with the lively recessional led by the children of the Community.

The 23rd National Conference is scheduled for October 17-19, 2008 most likely in the Mid-West. Following upon the Olympic Games to be held that Summer in China, the theme will seek to continue the "**Cross Cultural Dialogue**" focusing on Chinese and American youth, laity, business people and those who have lived and served in China for some time.

Proceedings of the 22nd Conference are available at cost [printing and postage @\$10.00]. At request of the speakers, these are not transmitted electronically.

- *Christianity in Chinese Cultural Context*, Rev. Prof. Enoch Wan
- *Christianity in the Chinese Cultural Context*, Rev. Joseph Wenxi Zhang
- *Reflections on the Biblical Jesus: in the Eyes of Traditional Chinese Faithful*, Rev. Paul SHI Hui Min
- *My Spiritual Pilgrimage to Fullness of Faith*, Dr. Rachel ZHU Xiao Hong
- *Reflections of Women Religious in China Today*, Sr. Avila FU Hong Liang
- *Such Small Suffering and Such Abundant Grace*, Cecilia TAO Beiling
- *Chinese Youth in Quest of Meaning*, Dr. Jean Paul Wiest

Ed. Note: *Quarterly reflections are usually shared by one of the young clergy or religious leaders doing graduate studies in the USA. This time we present a contribution excerpted from a paper of a Catholic laywoman at the China Conference.*

My Spiritual Pilgrimage to Fullness of Faith

Dr. Rachel ZHU Hong Liang, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Fu Dan University, as well as visiting Professor at East-China Christian Seminary, in Shanghai, is currently a visiting scholar in the Theology Dept. of Notre Dame University. An intellectual disciple of Schillebeeckx, she has authored numerous articles in scholarly journals; been recipient of several prestigious research grants, and participated in many international conferences. Her paper at the recent China Conference, recounts the fascinating and labyrinthine pathway by which she came to faith as a Roman Catholic. Beginning from the challenges and tensions inherent in being the daughter of a staunchly convicted Marxist father, drawn in as a "cultural Christian" in the 1980s in China, and swept up in the so called *Christianity Fever* era, her journey continued as a visiting scholar at Yale University. There, she and her husband Daniel were "*surprised by the spirit.*" Led on by the ever deepening implications of her theological insights and encounter with *Catholic Social Thought*, they at last found their home in the Catholic Church, which also enabled Rachel to reconcile the multi-faceted intellectual and spiritual dualisms of her life. *An excerpt of her paper follows:*

The Reconciliation of Dualisms

"Owing to various historical and political reasons, Chinese Christian churches have been burdened by many kinds of dualism. In China even today, Christianity is still regarded as a foreign religion; and Chinese culture and its symbols and ceremonies are regarded as the alien to Christian faith. Moreover, the conflict between the registered and the registered churches distracts the focus on the Mission of the Church and betrays God's commandment of love. Concerning the division among these different groups, Robert Schreier reminds us all that "*the Church is a community of memory and hope*". The incarnated and suffering God has provided us with the memory of His Passion, encouraging us to speak out of the provocations and sufferings of the past, to help build a safe and peaceful present, and to construct a pathway of hope to the future.

Concerning the relationship of local culture and the Christian Faith tradition, *Gaudium et Spes* teaches us

that God revealed himself according to different cultures in different epochs; Christian tradition and local cultures communicate with and enrich each other. [GS No. 58] Out of these perspectives, **it is important for Chinese Catholic scholars** to proclaim such a message of reconciliation to the Churches, and **to further explore the possibilities of a fully and authentically contextualized Christian faith.**"

Witness of an 'Orthodox' Catholic Scholar

"Upon my return from Notre Dame to China next year – in addition to my own research and writing projects, **my personal vision is to implement my dream to initiate a *Catholic Studies Center*, dedicated to research and teaching of Catholic thought and history.** I want to take this scriptural verse as the burden I will bear for my future: "*The one to whom much is given, will have to give much; if much is given into her care, of her more will be requested.*" (Lk12:48). As I have already mentioned at the beginning of this paper, there are many Christian Studies Centers in the Chinese academic network so far, but few of them provide sustained consideration to Catholic Christianity. The mission of the Center I envision would be to do academic work, and to pursue cultural exchange towards horizontal integration, including these activities:

- 1. Publication** of several series of readings for both academic and Christian believers. **Translation** of Western classical works in Catholic spirituality and in fundamental theology. Support for **contextualized or original works of Chinese writers**, to introduce both systematic and pastoral theology.
- 2. Seminars for the students** in religious studies programs as well as for religious and lay people in dioceses. In past few years, the program in which I have been teaching has successfully arranged a two-year graduate level pastoral training course for local Protestant pastors. It would be also feasible and practical to provide such a program for Catholic priests and Sisters, only a few of whom are likely to receive financial support and official permission necessary to go aboard for advanced studies.
- 3.** This Center could also **facilitate cultural exchange programs** such as inviting international scholars in Catholic studies to lecture as visiting scholars.
- 4.** The Center would also **encourage students and scholars** in religious studies to **participate more actively in Church** liturgy and pastoral activities. "

USCCB's First Matteo Ricci Award

The Board of Directors of the U.S. Catholic China Bureau has presented its first **Matteo Ricci Award** to **Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington DC**. Named for the famed 16-17th century Jesuit missionary to China, this award has been created "to honor individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the Catholic Church in China consistent with the purposes and goals of the Bureau."

The award was **presented at a gala dinner held at the Apostolic Nunciature of the Holy See in Washington DC, on October 11, 2006 and attended by 80 invited friends, benefactors and guests of the Bureau**. It was accompanied by a symbolic gift in the form of a miniature replica of one of the newly installed stained glass windows at the *Cathedral of St. Ignatius in Shanghai* portraying Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. [The panel is one of over 900 new windows being designed and created by Theresa WO Ye, a woman artist working in the style of traditional Chinese paper cut art; and under the direction of Tom Lucas, SJ, of the Fine Arts Dept at University of San Francisco. These windows are replacing the French gothic style stained glass which was totally destroyed during the Cultural Revolution in China.]

The citation noted in part, that Cardinal McCarrick has "for two decades... followed in the footsteps of Matteo Ricci, who was widely revered as the foremost cultural mediator between China and the West." For his tireless efforts to build bridges of friendship with the Chinese people, McCarrick is widely respected in both religious and secular circles in China and abroad; as well as for opening effective channels of communication for the Church. Known also for his lifelong dedication to promoting the human, social and spiritual well-being of peoples in many lands, the **Cardinal has also advocated with a judicious and prudent manner, for a fuller enjoyment of human rights and freedoms for the peoples of China.**

As a **founder and charter member of the Catholic China Bureau** in 1989, **Cardinal McCarrick remains active as one of our Episcopal Patrons**, providing pastoral leadership and wise counsel in the implementation of our mandate to *initiate a new missionary partnership with the Catholic Church in China.*

Congratulations! 10,000 years!



Mr. John Murray, St. Paul, MN,
with Cardinal McCarrick

China Honors Ricci

A square in commemoration of *Matteo Ricci*, the Italian Jesuit missionary who introduced the world map, Western mathematics and astronomy to China in the 16th Century is to be constructed at Nanchang, capital of east China's Jiangxi Province. Covering 2,900 square meters, **Matteo Ricci Square**, will be located at the southern end of the City Center. A ten-foot tall statue of Matteo Ricci will be erected in the center of the square, with a brief biography in Chinese and English inscribed on the base. Designed as a leisure attraction with open-air cafes and a Roman-style theater, construction was to be completed by the end of September 2006.

Born in 1552, Matteo Ricci arrived in Macao in 1582. From there, **he promoted Catholicism and science in many Chinese cities**, including Beijing, Guangzhou, Nanjing and Nanchang; and **introduced China's cultural and scientific attainments to Europe**. Ricci spent three years in Nanchang from 1595 to 1598 and told his friends about the city in his letters, one of them noting that Nanchang had clean, wide streets and was at least twice as big as the City of Florence, Italy.

Ricci died in Beijing in 1610, and then *Emperor Wanli* of the imperial Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) had Ricci's grave set in the western part of the city proper. **Visitors to Beijing today often go on pilgrimage to the site of Ricci's Tomb** and that of other early missionaries to China.

China Infodoc 06/06

80th Anniversary of the First Six Chinese Bishops

On 28 October 1926, six Chinese priests were ordained to the episcopacy in Rome by *Pope Pius XI*. No Chinese bishop had been ordained in the 241 years since *Bishop Gregorius Luo Wenzao* of Nanjing became the first Chinese Bishop in 1685.

Celebrations to mark the 80th anniversary of the first Chinese bishops, took place in the dioceses of Anguo, Fenyang, Haimen, Puqi, Taizhou and Xuanhua which they served. **Special emphasis was placed on reflecting on the development that has taken place since then in the local Church.**

Three new priests were ordained during the October 28 commemoration. One, *Father Wang Jianjun*, expressed his gratitude to *Archbishop Celso Constantini*, the Holy See's first ambassador to China, saying that in the seminary the archbishop is well remembered for bearing hardships and endeavoring to develop the Chinese Church. The 1926 ordinations took place during the tenure of Constantini, who later became a Cardinal.

A priest, also from Xuanhua Diocese, shared that young Catholics are unaware of the significance of the 1926 ordinations and that the importance of the anniversary had to be stressed during prayers and homilies. Some lay leaders recounted the history of the diocese, sharing pastoral experiences and giving faith testimonies.

This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the naming of the first Chinese cardinal and the establishment of the Catholic hierarchy in China.

Divine word Bishop Thomas Tien Keng-hsin, was named the first cardinal in China and in Asia on 18 February 1946. Two months later, on April 11, Pope Pius XII announced the establishment of the Chinese Church hierarchy and erected 20 ecclesiastical provinces with 79 dioceses and 38 existing vicariates. HKSE 12/06

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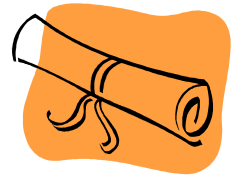
U.S. Catholic China Bureau
Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079

Tel: 973-763-1131 - E-mail: chinabur@shu.edu

The Bible on a Piece of Silk

An authentic work of art, a Bible written on a piece of silk 5,007 meters long, a combination of Chinese culture and Christianity, has been given a place in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

This "longest" Bible in the world, on display at the Exhibition Hall in Beijing, is perfect in every detail. Its fifty volumes are written in 900,000 *Cao Shu* Chinese characters (one of the most important types) and it is the work of one artist. **The white silk, which signifies sacredness and purity, is decorated with pale blue silk as a sign of Heaven, the House of the Father.** The outer cover is green and the work is tied with ribbon of red, the color of life and energy and the national color of China. **The 5,000 meters of silk recall five thousand years of Chinese history and civilization.** The volumes are contained in boxes of scented wood with bronze decorations and the lock is a Chinese symbol of happiness reflecting that the contents of the box contain the "happiness of mankind."



Fides

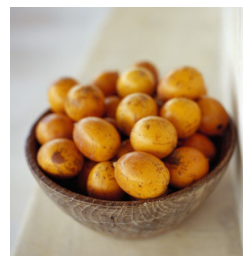
Eggs Multiply Like "Mustard Seeds"



The start was quite modest, collecting money to buy two eggs a week for each seminarian and sister in a northern Chinese diocese to supplement their meager meals. In 1996, Rev. John Baptist ZHANG Shijiang entrusted some money his

family had given him to start a fund, to help improve the diet of seminarians and nuns in his home diocese of XingTai in Hebei Province.

Over the past 10 years, the charity fund spread throughout China and now supports the education of more than 5,000 school children, irrespective of their religion or even the lack of one. Today, the Vocation and Education Fund, which operates under Jinde Charities, has more than 600 donors in many dioceses in China. A few months ago, Jinde Charities became the first officially registered Catholic NGO in China.



Asia Focus 08/06

Strengthening Ecumenical Bonds

Chinese Catholic leaders praised **Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury** for his concern over the development of the local Catholic Church and his efforts to further Catholic-Protestant dialogue during an October visit to China. Traveling to Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xi'an and Beijing, Williams met with local Protestant communities and organizations, religious leaders, academics, government officials, NGOs and business leaders. The head of the worldwide Anglican Communion also visited various Catholic communities, spent a day at a Daoist temple in Hubei province and met with Muslim clerics in Xi'an.



While in Shanghai Archbishop Williams attended an official dinner hosted by Bishop Aloysius JIN Luxian and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph XING Wenzhi of the Shanghai diocese, following which they had an extended conversation. JIN later observed that the Archbishop was particularly interested in the general situation of religious freedom in China. The Jesuit prelate also said he told Archbishop Williams that with China continuing to open up, **Christians in the country are aware of their role in fostering the development of a harmonious society, in which elements such as an ecumenical spirit cannot be left out.**

In Wuhan, Williams met with *Bishop Bernardine DONG Guang Qing* and visited the *Major Regional Seminary for South and Central Catholic dioceses*. The Archbishop held a conversation with the seminarians about issues of celibacy, spiritual formation and challenges ministers face today; counseling the seminarians to *"make friends, relax and take rest after they work; but more importantly, spend time daily in prayer and receive God's grace through their spiritual formation."*

In Beijing, he visited the *Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady* and the *Beijing Diocese' Institute for the Study of Catholic Christianity and*

Culture. Rev. Peter Zhao Jianmin, director of the Institute, said the Archbishop was interested in progress on China-Vatican relations and showed interest in the theological research done by the Institute, which also runs classes jointly with local universities. The Institute focuses on theology, Catholicism and the Second Vatican Council. Williams.

Archbishop Williams' visit was at the invitation of the *State Administration of Religious Affairs*, the *Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee* and the *China Christian Council*. The latter two are official bodies of the Christian Church in China. [UCAN 11/06]

Taiwan Church Leader in China

V. Rev. David J. H. Lai, Episcopal Bishop of Taiwan, paid an historic official visit to China in early December, meeting with senior SARA officials in Beijing and church colleagues in Nanjing and Shanghai. Lai emphasized the need for harmonious relationships, a message that motivates the Chinese Christian Church in its post-denominational era. **Lai went to China with the primary objectives of educating himself, establishing relationships with the Church, and fostering a wider and deeper understanding of Christianity in China.**

The delegation also met with 93-year-old *Bishop K. H. Ting* at his Nanjing home; and with students and faculty at *Nanjing Union Theological Seminary*; and learned about the social outreach work of the *Amity Foundation* and *Amity Printing Company*. **Bishop Ting expressed his hope that the Diocese of Taiwan and the Church in China could build a stronger relationship in the future.** "We have good relationships with the mainline denominations," he said, "but we have very few visitors from Taiwan. I hope we can improve on that."

Canon Margaret Larom, Director for Anglican and Global Affairs of the U.S. Episcopal Church described the opportunity to accompany Bishop Lai as "a truly galvanizing experience. It was wonderful to see Bishop Ting and other Chinese Christian leaders again; and to explore ways in which our Churches can engage more fully in supporting their various ministries." [ENS 12/01/06]

Rev. Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, also recently completed a week-long tour of China. **Clearly the profile of international religious dialogue has taken on new emphasis and priority at this important juncture in the emerging international stature of the China Christian Church.**

Society & Church News

Civil Society in China and the U.S.A.

China's dramatic economic growth continues to dominate headlines and shape international perceptions of the country's changing place in the world. Less well-known is a **quieter transformation taking place in the fabric of Chinese society to expand the role of civic organizations in public life.** In response to this phenomenon, last March 2006, the *Yale-China Association* and the *Institute of Sociology at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences* co-sponsored a comparative workshop in Beijing focused on "*Civil Society in China and the United States.*" The *Luce Foundation* provided generous support.

Chinese participants represented individuals and organizations active in building China's fledgling civil society sector, from university-based sociologists and anthropologists, to environmentalists, to founders of charities to assist the handicapped, to labor organizers, to student volunteers. **American participants** included seasoned professionals knowledgeable about the history of American non-profit organizations, philanthropy, non-profit law, management of non-profit organizations, and relations between government and NGOs.

The American participants were struck by the extraordinary challenges Chinese counterparts face in carving out a legitimate, socially and politically sanctioned sphere of activity for their organizations and for the civil society sector more generally. They were also deeply impressed by the passion, commitment, and courage of these pioneers, and by the cheerful spirit of camaraderie and shared purpose evident in their interactions with one another.

Whereas Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) formed to assist the disadvantaged, support culture and the arts, enrich civic life, or advocate for a particular cause have a long history in the United States, such organizations are a much more recent phenomenon in China, and their right to exist and operate freely is neither enshrined in law nor recognized by the public at large.

At the same time, rapid economic growth in China has resulted in a host of new problems and social tensions that CSOs can often address efficiently and effectively reaching out to certain populations and

disbursing social resources more adequately than government agencies. They can also help provide channels for citizens to express dissatisfaction and resolve conflicts rather than resorting to violence and to **nurture healthy civic values and civic-minded behavior.** CSOs can also help to protect citizens' rights and check absolute state power. However, as China's political traditions have historically favored an overwhelmingly prominent role for the state, several speakers noted CSOs would be well advised in the current environment, to concentrate on building a strong framework for civil society and providing social services rather than engaging in political activism.

Discussion among participants ranged from the theoretical to the practical. How should China build a culture of philanthropic giving among wealthy individuals and businesses? How can a CSO distinguish itself in the public mind from a commercial enterprise and win the trust of a citizenry unfamiliar with the nature of non-profit organizations? What is the best way to ensure integrity within an organization, and who should monitor and regulate non-profit organizations to prevent corruption and abuse? How can a young organization ensure financial security from year to year?

In both China and the U.S., participants agreed, the role of the founder and/or leader of a non-profit organization is critical, requiring energy, commitment, versatility, and the ability to learn and adapt quickly on the job while inspiring and motivating others. The challenge of transition once the leader is ready to move on was also recognized as universal.

Nancy Chapman, Executive Director,
Yale-China Review, Fall 2006

Ed. Note: **Three Catholic Social Service Centers**, sponsored by the dioceses of Xi'an, Shijiazhuang and Liaoning are **recognized as NGOs**: registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Along with other sectors, religiously motivated organizations have a very crucial contribution to make towards fostering Civil Society, confronted at once with both challenges and exciting opportunities. The following account of an interview on the topic sheds some interesting light on the development of NGO/CSOs in China today.

Citizenship Education in China Today

The same issue of *Yale-China Review* [Autumn 2006]- provided an account of a very interesting interview with a Fulbright scholar, currently at Yale University, and who is the Director of the *Institute of Political Science* at the *China University of Political Science and Law*.

Prog CONG Ri Yan addressed the **impact of China's legal, political and educational system on NGO activity and autonomy in China**. In general, the PRC authorities view "NGOs as an extension of the government, (which) are expected to follow the lead of the government and carry out its goals." So much so, CONG noted, "the authorities will promptly shut down any NGO activity that contravenes government agenda." [Ed. note: This stance towards NGOs is not unlike many other non-western countries – where in common parlance, such organizations are known as *GONGO's* ["government organized" NGOs.]

Prof. CONG cited three major obstacles to NGO autonomy in China:

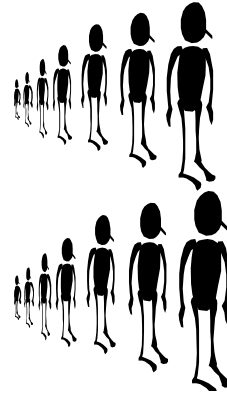
<1> "China's legal system does not grant legal status to truly autonomous NGOs; and requires that all NGOs register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs". . . . Nonetheless, "non-registered NGOs are much more prevalent than registered ones –although their size and influence is much smaller."

<2> "Chinese leaders want to control not only public opinion, but to be the source of public opinion. Even if the(y) agree with an NGOs stance, it prohibits activities and ideas that do not originate with the Party. Despite widespread economic privatization in China today, political and social spheres are still dominated by the State."

<3> An obstacle which has not received nearly as much attention is **the lack of citizenship education among China's populace**. "Even if China's legal and political systems were completely overhauled and NGOs were given greater autonomy in society, the average citizen would not be prepared to take advantage of these changes." This is in part due to the fact that **"traditional Chinese education and political thought focused more on becoming good subjects than on becoming good citizens."**

For this reason, **"educational exchanges play an important role in encouraging Chinese students**

to think critically about their relationship to the State and to humanity". ... These types of exchanges also **introduce Chinese students to principles of community service, pluralism ... and other aspects essential to building a vibrant civil society."** [Translated and reported by Travis Sevy]



China's Exploding Migrant Crisis

Around 300 million people, a quarter of China's population, will leave rural areas to work in cities over the coming 20 years, becoming the country's new migrants, according to a study conducted by the *Chinese Academy of Social Sciences* and funded by the *UN Development Program*. The report calls for new resource management policies.

The authors of the report are all university professors who have monitored five Chinese cities for more than five years, measuring the level of natural resources, public safety and public finances.

A Report on China's development situation, commissioned by the *United Nations*, has suggested that the government develop new policies, crucial to sustain the rapid urbanization growth. According to the report, in fact, **many cities may soon have to face crises arising from limited natural resources like available land and water**. According to its findings, Chinese cities contribute less to the national economy than their equivalent in other developed countries. It also found low productivity rates and high densities made them unable to support future growth.

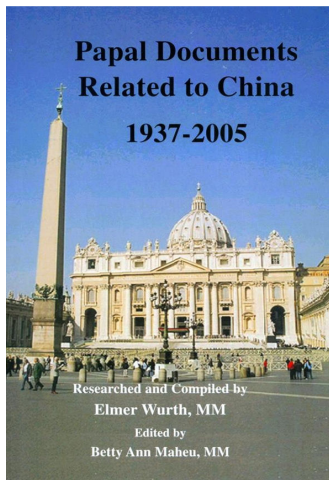
A respected geographic economist of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Lu Dadao, has called on the PRC government to slow the frenzied pace of urbanization. Lu said that existing policy focused on massive construction projects, which are often *under-utilized* and *deprive farmers of arable land*.

The UN report predicted that in four years about 125 Chinese cities would have a population of more than 1 million and, about 50 of these would have more than 2 million people. However, the authors added, "limited natural resources would create a bottleneck in this growth." The government *should strengthen city planning and find innovative ways to save resources, such as power and fuel by providing better public transport and encouraging the use of smaller vehicles*.

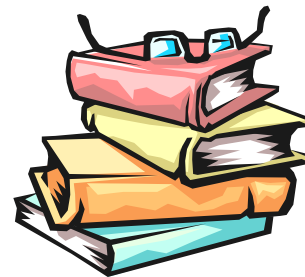
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Reading Notes

➤ Papal Documents Related to China 1937-2005



Researched and Compiled by Elmer Wurth, MM
 Edited by Betty Ann Maheu MM. 456 pp.
 Holy Spirit Study Centre, Hong Kong US\$25.00
 Email: <hsstudyc@hsstudyc.org.hk>



Papal Documents Related to China 1937-2005- the fruit of nearly 25 years of research, is a compilation of documents revealing the dramatic evolution over the years in the thinking of recent popes, and their references in speaking about the China Church. Gone are the harsh language and condemnations of Communism found in the encyclicals of Pius XI, and Pius XII. **Pope John XXIII gradually distinguished Communism as an ideology, from the Chinese people living under a Communist regime.** Paul VI, continuing this precedent, refrained from using harsh language and was sensitive to the suffering already endured by Chinese Catholics. **John Paul II**, always eager to effect a breakthrough in relations, went even further and **exerted great efforts to find channels for meaningful dialogue.** Whatever he wrote always manifested his great love for the Chinese people; concern for reconciliation in the Church in China; his great desire to visit China, and his hope that

the Church in China would be given the freedom to be fully united with the Universal Church.

A revised and expanded version of an earlier work published by ORBIS Books, Inc. in 1985, the book is divided into two parts: **Part I** contains statements of Pius XI and his successors up to John Paul I. **Part II is a collection of all statements made by John Paul II during his long pontificate [1979- 2005].** Although papal documents throughout these decades sometimes betray misunderstanding, frustration and disappointment, they repeatedly affirm the love of the Roman Pontiffs and their profound respect for the Chinese people, their millenary culture and revered traditions. They also reveal the Holy See's desire to deal with the Church in China and its hierarchy in the same way that it deals with the Church anywhere in the world. ***Intended primarily, but not exclusively, for scholars and researchers, the work will be very useful to anyone interested in the situation of the Church in China in both historical and contemporary perspective.***

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