

United States Catholic China Bureau

China Church Quarterly

Issue No.58 Spring 2004

Fruits of the Spirit for the Church in China

It is the Season of Pentecost and this Spring we celebrate five young leaders from China who marked special milestones on their journey to service in the Chinese Catholic Church:

Sr. Mary JIAO Yan Mei

Sisters of St Joseph - Beijing Diocese

MA - Pastoral Theology at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Sr. Mary is continuing in the Doctorate in Ministry.

Sr. Matthias GUO Xiao Ping

Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary – Liaoning Diocese

MA – Systematic Theology at Boston College

Returning to China to teach in the formation programs.

Sr. Pauline YU Chung Jing

Sisters – Helpers of the Holy Souls – Xingtai Diocese in Hebei, and

Sr. Teresa MA Lei

Sisters of the SACRED HEART - Xi'An Diocese Shaanxi

MA - Pastoral Theology at St John's University/Collegeville

Both Sisters are in China this Summer to give Workshops and Retreats. This Fall they will pursue further studies in Spirituality at Fordham University.

Rev. Raphael GAO Chao Peng

ZhouZhi Diocese Shaanxi

STL [Licentiate in Sacred Theology] Catholic University of America

Raphael will pursue his PhD in Moral Theology at CUA, with a concentration on Family Ministry.

[cf. Letters on p.2]

The formation and education of a new generation of priests and religious women for leadership in the Church was one of the earliest priorities identified by the *Catholic China Bishops Conference [CCBC]* - soon after its inception in the early nineteen-nineties. During more than three decades of suppression of all religious activities during the height of the Cultural Revolution, seminaries and convents were closed and young people were unable to pursue religious vocations.

Seminary teachers and those prepared to provide spiritual formation and counseling to young women religious, seminarians and lay leaders were urgently needed. Starting in the mid eighties, elderly clergy and sisters in China, who had endured years of suffering and silencing, were heroically struggling to take up this immense task of preparing a new generation of young Catholics for leadership and service in the Church. In the early nineties various dioceses in China began to send students abroad for more advanced studies in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Rome, Belgium, Germany, France and other countries. The first four seminarians came to the USA in 1991 and the first two sisters in 1993. There have only been a few lay Catholics, as basic programs for training and formation of laity have just recently been initiated in China, where this remains a major need – even as it was in the West in times past.

In another very encouraging development for the Church in China – three of those who have been in the Education and Formation Project here in the USA – have received scholarships to participate as resource persons at the *International Association of Mission Studies 11th Quadrennial Conference* to be held in Malaysia in mid summer. This is another *first* for the China Church – and a major step towards enabling a more effective engagement between religious scholars in China and the growing number of secular scholars of religion in Departments and Institutes of Religion in numerous universities in China.

[USCCB was instrumental in arranging these scholarships - generously provided by colleagues at the IAMS Secretariat and the Foundation for Theological Education in Asia]

Fr. John Baptist YANG Xiaoting (ZhouZhi diocese), Fr. Paul PEI Junmin (Liaoning diocese), and Fr. Joseph ZHANG Wenxi (XingTai Diocese), - and currently a PhD candidate in Scripture at CUA, will be submitting papers on the Conference web site. They will also serve as a Panel at a Workshop on contemporary developments in theology and seminary education in China during the Conference. [cf. the IAMS web site at www.missionstudies.org for Conference details.]

Also text of the paper: *Integrity of Mission in the Light of the Gospel: Bearing Witness of the Spirit – An Asian Perspective* – to be discussed at a plenary session.

From the Editor:

The Church celebrates new life at Easter and Pentecost and reminds us to be attuned to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We see the fruits of the Spirit in the lives of individuals featured in this issue religious women, priests and laity now actively contributing to the Church in China. We congratulate the religious women completing their academic studies, encourage the priests participating international mission conferences, celebrate the work of the artist and thank the writer for sharing his experiences. In what we hope will become a regular feature, Rev. Raphael Gao has written about his personal faith journey. With permission of the Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER) we are pleased to add a special insert about the work of Ms. Wo Ye, who has been associated with the USCCB for several years through study and work in the U.S. and Europe. She heads the team designing replacements for the stained alass windows Shanghai's Xujiawei Cathedral. Using her work as a fruitful example of inculturation of the Church in China, the article provides an update and objective description of the current state of the China Church. Many readers know FEER as one of the most informative objective of and weekly journals published in Asia. CCO readers should be aware, however, that this article does contain several mistakes and unfortunate references, such as the ones to "CPA bishops and priests," that would offend friends in China. We should also note that there are no doctrinal differences between the registered unregistered Church communities, as cited in the article.

Thoughts of Home . . .

This issue marks the first of a new column in CCQ – a letter from one of the Chinese priests and sisters currently studying in the US. Our first columnist, Rev. Raphael Gao Chao Peng has just completed his STL studies and will continue his PhD studies in moral theology.



Family Evangelization, the Cradle of Vocation

Since I came to the US, so many people have asked me a question, "Are there many vocations in China because you don't have CCD, Catholic Schools, or some special programs that can promote vocations?" I can proudly say that we do have a lot of vocations in China now. In some dioceses, there are more than enough. How can this happen? In my understanding, family evangelization plays a significant role.

According to contemporary Chinese religious rules, those under age eighteen cannot be evangelized. The only outlook on life that the young Chinese can learn in schools is Marxism. Therefore, the task that evangelizes the young Chinese is being mainly carried out within family. Pope John Paul II emphasizes many times the importance of family evangelization. Both family prayer and family catechesis are important parts of family evangelization. Through family prayer, parents can penetrate the innermost depths of their children's hearts and leave an enduring impression. He further points out that family evangelization is absolutely necessary in certain situations within which "anti-religious legislation endeavors even to prevent education in the faith" and "widespread unbelief of invasive secularism makes real religious growth practically impossible" (See Familiaris Consortio, no.52). Through this teaching, the Pope tells us the sign of our age. This teaching is very significant in the contemporary China.

I would like to share a story how my mother taught me to make a confession. When I was a kid, around nineteen seventies, there were no Churches, priests, and any prayer groups. Nobody dared to publicly set up holy pictures or statues in his or her family. People even had to lower their voice when they did morning prayer and evening prayer in their house. I had never seen a priest till I was ten years old. I could recite morning and evening prayer, Rosary, and Station of Cross when I was very young. When I was around seven years old, my mother taught how to go to confession. She piled up two quilts and put her Rosary on the top as symbol of priest. Then she held my hand to the front of "the priest." After paying respect to the crucifix, I was asked to bow to "the priest." Then she helped me to confess my sins. She asked me to repeat the whole process until I could easily make a very good confession. While I practiced, she carefully watched my every tiny act. The priest was astonished by my proficiency when I made my first real confession. I was so very proud of myself.

My parents' religious training on me makes an enduring impression. I am still getting benefits from it. Moreover, most vocations in China come from such families and such training procedure. I pretty much appreciate this kind of formation. \approx

Rev. Raphael GAO Catholic University of America, Washington, DC

Church News

80th Anniversary of First Synod

In early May Catholics throughout China celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Feast of Our Lady of China and the first national meeting of Catholic bishops, "*Primum Concilium Sinense*," also know as the Shanghai Synod of Bishops. The Synod held from May 14 to June 12, 1924, when all of its members were foreigners, concluded with the decision to dedicate China to Our Lady and to actively promote ordination of Chinese bishops Pope Pius XI ordained the first six bishops in 1926, and in 1932 designated Donglu in Hebei, where the picture of Mary that became the official image of Our Lady of China was taken from a church, as a pilgrimage site. At this year's Mass of Celebration, *Bishop Aloysius JIN Luxin* left his hospital bed to give the homily in which he recounted the efforts of the first modern Apostolic Delegate to China, *Archbishop, and later Cardinal, Celso Constanti (Gang Hengji)* to develop local clergy and hierarchy by his efforts to appoint Chinese bishops.

"Golden Week" for the Church

In 2000 the Chinese government officially designated the first week in May as a weeklong national holiday, "Golden Week," around Labor Day, May 1. Catholics this year took advantage of this new holiday to go on pilgrimages and promote evangelization. In Shanghai, over 50,000 people, Catholic and non-Catholic, visited the **Sheshan Marian Shrine** where the Shanghai diocese was able to share the faith publicly with the many pilgrims. Church notices along the pilgrimage routes described the basilica and explained the importance of the Feast of Our Lady of China. Seminarians and other church workers distributed leaflets that explained the Church and the Bible.

UCAN 05/04

More than 1,000 young people, most of them university students, participated in the **first ever youth assembly of Cangzhou diocese in Hebei Province**, and pledged to spread the Good News. *Bishop Li Liangui* and about 150 priests, seminarians and sisters took part in the three day assembly held outside the cathedral May 1-4. The assembly was marked by talks, forums, group sharing and group prayer, including Taize style prayer meetings and vigils. Bishop Li celebrated Mass in the Cathedral everyday.

Organizers said they chose the theme, "Youth, stand up and go your way," taken from the passage in Luke's Gospel where Jesus tells the man cured of leprosy to rise and go on his way, because young people today are confused by temptations, but can actively take part in evangelization after receiving adequate formation and encouragement. The diocese had dedicated 2004 as "Year of the Youth" to show special concern for the young. At the end of the assembly, the youth declared their willingness to strengthen their faith and their desire to spread the Good News.

Church – State Contacts in May

Hong Kong Bishop Joseph Zen Ze-kiun visited Shanghai, his birthplace, from April 28-30 at the invitation of Bishop Aloysius JIN to make a pilgrimage to the Sheshan Basilica. Bishop Zen told reporters that the visit, his first in six years, had been approved by city officials, but did not say by which authorities. He said that he saw his visit as an opportunity to pave the way for future dialogue. He and Bishop JIN met several times in the hospital where Bishop JIN was staying and recalled how the Bishop was so welcoming that he came to meet him outside the hospital. Bishop Zen said mass at the Marian Shrine at Sheshan, had lunch with priests and seminarians, and later accompanied his 80 year old sister in a visit to his brother-in-law's grave.

At the end of May, the two top Chinese government officials responsible for religious affairs, Liu Yandong, head of the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China and Vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and Ye Xiaowen, Director General of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, visited Hong Kong for the opening ceremony of the exhibition of Buddha's finger relic. There they met Bishop Zen and Auxiliary Bishop John Tong at a banquet for local religious leaders at which Liu told them that religion has had a significant impact in the territory's multicultural society and has played a positive role in furthering social development. Observers noted that during the last few years, Chinese religious officials visiting Hong Kong always avoided meeting Catholics. UCAN 05/04

New Bishop in Shandong

Rev. Zhang Xianwang, a 39 year old priest ordained in 1990 and who studied at Louvain from 1996-98, was ordained Coadjutor Bishop in Hongjialou Cathedral in Shandong in April. Four other bishops



from Shandong concelebrated the Mass of Ordination attended by more than 1000. Bishop Zhang said that his principal tasks will be to encourage evangelization and to renew the Church in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. Acknowledging the difference in age and experience between himself and *Bishop Zhao Ziping,* who is 92, he said they will work well together. Renewal efforts will include restoring village churches and beginning social services such as homes for the elderly.

Non-Christians seek Catholic Wedding Blessing

Church weddings have come into great demand in China as many non-Christian couples come to Catholic churches for a blessing. The pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Xuzhou, *Rev. Dai Zhenbao*, said he accepts requests from non-Christians to give them a special wedding blessing in his church. Although they cannot receive the blessings of the sacrament, Fr. Dai says that he *can give them a solemn blessing and this is also a path for evangelization, a way to announce the mission of Christ and his love for all."*

Matteo Ricci Film

A well known Italian film company Fondazione in April announced at a reception in Rome that they will make a major television documentary on Falco Quilici, who made his Matteo Ricci. reputation filmina science and documentaries, will direct the film. Father Giovanni Marchesi SJ, who developed the story, will serve as consultant to the project. Cardinal Paul Poupard. President of the Pontifical Council on Culture, attended the reception. Production should begin by end of this year and as soon as the final permissions were worked out with the Chinese government

Jesuit Communications 03/04

Christian Journey Begins in College

A survey conducted by the **People's University of China in Beijing**, and reported in the *Christian Times* published by the **Institute of Sino Christian Studies of the Tao Fung Shen Christian Center of Hong Kong**, indicates that most of the knowledge of Christianity among college students starts not with church but with readings, classes and course training. Most Christian students do not begin their religious journeys until they enter universities and most students do not identify with an institutional church.

Of the 300 students surveyed at random:

- 31% said they neither believed nor were interested in Christianity
- 61% said they did NOT believe, but DID show interest
- 3.6% were already Christian
- 4% had no comment
- 70% acknowledged that Christianity was able to help Chinese society by contributing to the culture, understanding of the west and enabling international communication
- 90% said that religion is a private matter
- 99% said that the government should not interfere with religion
- 50% became interested through study of western culture, art or philosophy
- 30% said they became interested when contemplating philosophical questions about life and the world.
- 8% cited loneliness and the search for psychological comfort
- 10% cited curiosity or accident

Those interviewed showed interest in religion and religious matters in the following order of priority: Bible, church activities, festival events, doctrines and rituals.

Catechism in Mongolian

The first modern editions of the Catholic Catechism and a prayer book in Mongolian were published in Ulan Bator by the Antoine Mastaert Center of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM). The prayer book is based on a Cyrillic text translated in 1920 by Father Mastaert who was one of the best know CICM missionaries in the region.

Asia News 04/05

Church and Social Services

Emerging Importance

Social service is the most likely meeting point for the Rev. John Church and the Chinese government. Baptist Zhang, Director of the Beifang Jinde Social Services Center in Hebei Province, speaking to a day long colloquium at the Australian Catholic University in April, said that the government wants to help people and there are signs of respect and acceptance of the Church's charitable work. He cited several examples of Church and government cooperation - the Xian Diocesean Social Services Office, the Caritas Services Center in Taiyuan and the Aixin in Beijing and Hangzhou, which all have government approval. The colloquium, attended by over 150 people, was organized by the Columban Mission Institute, two local Chinese Catholic communities and AITECE. Cardinal George Pell and one of his auxiliaries, Bishop Julien Proteous, former apostolic pro-nuncio to the Republic of China also attended. (Ed. Note: Father Zhang and his work with Beifang Jinde were featured in the Fall 2002 and Winter 2003 issues of CCQ.) HKSF 05/04

Catholic Social Service Activity

The Saint John of Montecorvino Society was recently formed in the U.S. to assist and promote involvement by Catholic laypeople in China in faith based social services in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. (Saint John of Montecorvino was an early Franciscan missionary in China in the 14th Century.) New Chinese government regulations concerning charities and non-profit organizations appear to be supportive of such efforts. The Society works with legally registered Chinese Catholic social service agencies and diocesan sponsored aid programs and has a special interest in selfless work being done by Chinese women religious in their care for the poor. The 'Our Lady of China Center for Abandoned Handicapped Children' in Handan Diocese, Hebei Province provides a concrete example of its efforts. Opened recently by sisters of the diocese, the center expects that there will be a rapid increase in children to care for. Training for the care-givers is necessary, especially for local lay people who already are beginning to step forward to help. More information can be found at the Society's Website: http://www.saintiohnofmontecorvino.org/

AIDS Team Trains in Thailand

To help serve those afflicted by AIDS in northeast China (UN estimates there will be over 10 million AIDS sufferers in China by 2010), a team of five religious women (two doctors and three nurses), a layman and a priest of **Liaoning Diocese** recently completed a month long training program organized by the Catholic Church in Thailand. All confessed that before their training they had not known much about HIV/AIDS nor had they ever met anyone with AIDS. Now, however, they share a sense of urgency for the Church to reach out to those in need. AIDS prevention will be a priority for the new diocese social services office being created by **Bishop Pius JIN Peixian** as it will organize training programs and form teams for outreach through the internet, newsletters and personal contact. The office also is considering hospice care and home care clinics. UCAN 03/04

Jesuit AIDS Care Center

At the invitation of provincial officials, *Rev. Luis Ruiz SJ*, established an **AIDS Caring Center**, **in the port city of Hongjian**, **on the Yuan River in Hunan Province**. Father Ruiz was helped by local sisters and a Maryknoll priest in setting up the center, which is located in the compound of a drug detoxification and rehabilitation facility. At the opening's celebratory mass, Fr. Ruiz spoke of the importance of selfless love. Two physician specialists in HIV/AIDS regularly visit the Center and are on call for emergencies. Fr. Ruiz later visited Yunan where he has been asked to help a village with many HIV infected children.

JSA News 05/04

First Catholic Dispensary

The first known Catholic dispensary in China was opened recently in the small town of Guan Pu Tou near Tianjing. Run by the local diocesan congregation of the Sisters of Charity, the dispensary was inaugurated in a public ceremony attended by civil and religious authorities, members of the Catholic community and local townspeople. Assistant Mother Superior, Sister WANG Meili, said that the dispensary was only a beginning and that with the help of the local Catholic community the sisters hoped to open a hospital and a home for the elderly as a way to demonstrate God's love by providing free care to the poor.

China News

Signs of the Times: China Outreach

China's Ministry of Education in March announced the establishment of the first Sino-foreign joint venture in higher education. England's University Nottingham and Zhejiang University in Ningbo will invest US\$74 million in a complex that will house three schools - Business, International Languages and International Exchange and Communication. As a branch of Nottingham University, the university will use Nottingham's materials and teaching system and issue its degrees. The first President will be Professor YANG Fujia, a Nottingham Dean and member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Xin Hua 03/04

The Ministry of Education also reports that an estimated 25 million people in over 100 countries are seeking to learn Chinese. Japan, Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, France and other countries have all requested Chinese teachers to meet the growing demand. The Ministry is actively recruiting teachers who are under 65, have two years of college education and speak good Mandarin. Salaries are US\$400 a month.

Epoch Times 04/04

Shift in Population Concerns

Chinese officials are beginning to express concern over China's graying population and the



foreseeable lack of young workers to support them. Unlike Japan and Europe, countries where the age gap has slowly developed, China will have to deal with the problem very quickly. Already city officials in Shanghai are reported to be considering revision of the one child policy.

NYTimes 05/04

China Reducing Poverty Levels

World Bank leaders in Shanghai for last month's Millennia 2005 conference on the Reduction of World Poverty praised China for its unprecedented success in reducing poverty levels.



According to the Bank, the number of Chinese people subsisting on less than \$1 a day has fallen from 490 million in 1981 to 88 million. During this period the country's output has increased more than eightfold and the average income has risen by 7% a year, passing US\$1,000. Bank leaders noted continued problems but acknowledged that the world can learn from China's constancy and good management. Good ideas are still needed to relieve anticipated problems by the steady increase in the floating population of workers now estimated at more than 100 million and expected to grow to more than 300 million people by 2020. International donors report a growing willingness by Chinese officials to learn from overseas experiences. Many pilot schemes, such as British-funded HIV-Aids awareness programs in Yunnan and education projects in Gansu have been adapted and applied by the government at the national level.

The Guardian 05/04

"Passion" Playing in China

The Passion of Christ by Mel Gibson has been well received by Chinese audiences. In Hong Kong and Taiwan it played in commercial theaters and before private church audiences and university student groups who rented theaters for special viewings. Reported reactions for the most part matched those in the U.S. many were inspired, especially young people, others were critical of the violence and apparent non-Scripture based scenes. While the film has not been shown publicly in China, and probably will not be because of its specifically religious content, pirated copies have circulated freely. Poor quality copies with Chinese subtitles are readily available on the street in many Chinese cities and groups from both registered and unregistered churches have shown the film. Christian university students have been reported to share the film with their non-Christian friends. AsiaNews 04/04

Social Issues

Church Sets Business Example

In an article addressing the May 6 visit by *Prime Minister* Wen Jiabao to Italy, commentator on Chinese Church affairs Father Bernardo Crevellera criticized European business leaders for neglecting the moral dimension in their business dealings with China. He noted that Missionaries had applauded China's economic reforms, entrance in the World Trade Organization, and selection as the site for the 2008 Olympics because they believed that these steps would help to alleviate suffering and develop much needed professional skills. He saw Wen's visit to the industrial north rather than to Rome as a reflection of Europeans' rush to make easy money in a loosely regulated Chinese economy, and he favorably compared American companies to the Europeans citing the fact that many American companies have ethical clauses in their contracts and provide living wages and clean working conditions. Many even contribute to the release of dissidents or help to build churches. The article concluded by noting the growing number of Chinese intellectuals and sociologists who, in contrast to European counterparts who seem to have forgotten their Christian roots, say that Christianity is what China needs because of the absolute value it places on the individual and commitment to love of others.

AsiaNews 05/04

Human Rights Developments

In March, the National People's Congress approved two potentially important changes in the national constitution proposed by the Communist Party. The first was the right of individuals to own private property and the second was the addition of the phrase, the state respects and preserves human rights. While other government documents have addressed human rights, this is the first time they have been specifically addressed in the constitution itself. Critics claim that these changes will have little effect on the situation, which has not improved in the past decade. Earlier this year the United States and China continued to disagree over fundamental differences. Two weeks after the announcement of the new constitution, the Chinese government published its Seventh White Paper on Human Rights defending its record and strongly criticizing the US position reflected in the 2003 State Department Report on Human Rights in China. Timing

also coincided with the US proposal in the United Nations that the UN Commission on Human Rights condemn Chinese abuses. The Commission rejected the US proposal in April as 28 of the 53 nation members supported the Chinese measure to block the motion.

VOA 04/05

Earliest Site of Religious Worship

China's news agency Xinhua reported the finding of what is believed to be the oldest worship site in China. The site discovered in the well preserved Neolithic age Gaomioa ashes near the city of Hongjiang in Hunan Province is believed to be 7400 years old. Provincial archaeologist He Gang described an elegant phoenix on a small pot and said it was proof of the existence and importance of religious belief and the rich spiritual life of very early Chinese society.

FIRST NOTICE -MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!



June 24-26, 2005 Seattle University



Growth
of
Christianity
in
China

Watch this space for further details . . .

Reading Notes

God and Caesar in China: Policy Implications of Church-State Tensions. Jason Kindopp & Carol Lee Hamrin, (Eds.). Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC. 2004, pp. 200. Paperback \$19.95 (Amazon)



An important reference work for policy makers increasingly aware of the importance of religion in public affairs and international politics as well as the growing number of people involved with religious organizations and faith based not-for-profit social service efforts in China. The book is a compilation of papers presented at a Brookings Institute Conference on the subject in 2002 and these papers cover the important key issues anyone working with religious or faith based organizations in China needs to be familiar with: China's long history of orthodox authoritarianism; the current government's principles of control; the internal tensions between official and unofficial churches (both Protestant and Catholic); and the importance of cultural differences between the west, especially the U.S., and China with regard to religious freedom and practice. **Two chapters by USCCB associates specifically address Catholic issues: Professor Richard Madsen's "Catholic Conflict and Cooperation in the People's Republic of China," and Dr. Jean-Paul Wiest's "Setting the Roots: The Catholic Church in China to 1949."**

> God and Country: Western Religious Architecture in Old China. Tess Johnston and Deke Erh. Old China Hand Press, Hong Kong, 1996. pp. 205.

A great coffee table book, but more than this it is an excellent reference work with an extensive collection of high quality photos of Catholic and Protestant churches built in the 19th and early 20th Centuries. Pictures are complemented with instructive texts and commentary that remind readers of how early church architecture reflected the national and cultural differences of the home countries of the China missionaries. A companion work, *Hallowed Halls: Protestant Colleges in Old China*, is also available from the Press, which specializes in photo albums of old western architecture in China. www.han-yuan.com/shudian/

US Catholic China Bureau

9th Religious Study Tour to China 28 October - 15 November, 2004

Beijing - Shijiazhuang - Xi'an - Wuhan - Guilin - Shanghai

Tour will include meetings with Catholic Church leaders, visits to seminaries and houses of formation for religious women, clinics and local churches, as well visits to Protestant churches and major sites of traditional Chinese religions.

Highlights also include guided tours of major sites such as the Great Wall, Beijing's Tiananmen Square and Forbidden City, the Qin Dynasty Terra Cotta Warriors in Xian, and the fairytale-like landscapes of Guilin.

Estimated Cost: \$3,000 - Deposit of \$300 due by July 23, 2004

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