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First Asian Bishop for U.S. Church

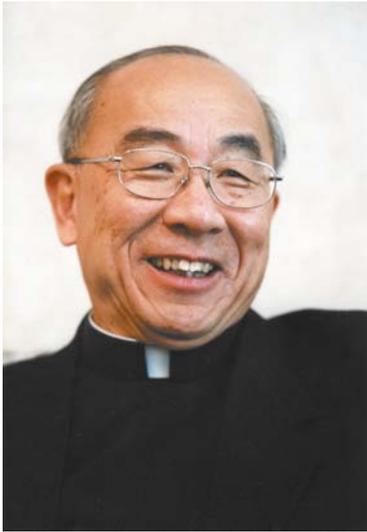


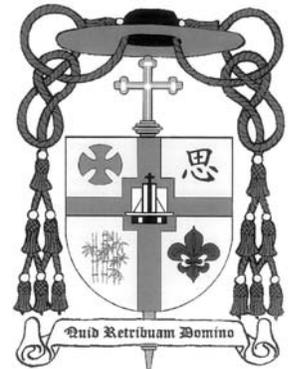
Photo by Cathy Joyce, Catholic San Francisco

The Chinese American Catholic Community, as well as Catholics in Hebei Province – north China's "Cradle of Catholicism" – had cause for great rejoicing in mid-December, when **Pope John Paul II announced the appointment of Monsignor Ignatius C. WANG Chung Chang as Auxiliary Bishop of the San Francisco Archdiocese**, with his Titular See at Sitipa. Bishop WANG is believed to be the first Latin Rite Asian, and the first China born priest, to be named to the US hierarchy.

Ignatius WANG was born in Beijing in 1934, the fifth of eight children in a Catholic family of fourteen generations! His parents trace their ancestry to the last Emperor of the Manchurian Dynasty. His studies for the priesthood were done at Holy Spirit Seminary in Hong Kong, where he was ordained in 1959. After obtaining a doctorate in Canon Law in Rome, and unable to return to China at that time, due to the political turmoil, he was assigned to the Diocese of St. George in the Antilles, where he was a pastor and vicar general for 12 years. In 1974, he came to the

San Francisco Archdiocese, where he served as parochial vicar in several parishes and Pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish for 10 years, while concurrently serving as Chancellor of the Archdiocese and member of the Tribunal. Since 1981, he has been coordinator of the Chinese apostolate in the diocese, where one fourth of nearly a quarter million Catholics are Asian.

Bishop WANG's Episcopal Coat of Arms bears the motto "What return can I make to the Lord?" Other significant elements include the Chinese expression "to ponder, to reflect;" a bamboo shoot; and the *Fleur de Lis* – honoring Our Blessed Mother – Patroness of China. Among those at his Episcopal ordination on January 30th, 2003 at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco were Bishop John TONG Hon of Hong Kong, and Bishop Joseph TI Kang from Taiwan.



Bishop WANG's appointment carries great significance for both the US Church and the Church in China, which is very dear to his heart. Many of his relatives still live in China, including several religious and priests. He has visited China on numerous occasions since the 1980s and in the Jubilee Year 2000 joined USCCB's 7th Religious Study Tour to China. His good counsel and wonderful skills in relating to friends and colleagues at the churches of the seven dioceses we visited were a special blessing to us all.

Clearly, China is also very dear to the heart of our Holy Father. His care and concern for many millions of Chinese Catholics – both in China and within the worldwide diaspora – is very movingly witnessed with this appointment, which recognizes the growing importance and influence of Chinese Catholics in the U.S. Church. In the words of Bishop WANG, *the Chinese Catholics in America, no matter how small a group, are a piece of the mosaic, without whom the picture would not be complete.*

**Ad Multos Annos – 10,000 years to our dear brother and friend, and new shepherd of the US Church,
Bishop Ignatius WANG!**



Editor's Column:

The **Spring Festival**, or Lunar New Year embodies rich meaning and symbolism... something like our

western New Year's, Thanksgiving and Easter – all rolled together. People celebrate with family and friends the passage of the year, elaborately feasting and sporting their newest finery. It is once again an extended holiday of 7 to 10 days – after several decades of being compressed into “a day off from the factory or commune.” Old customs and deep traditions are again colorfully and elaborately observed, even if the forms they now take are somewhat thinly symbolic – even perfunctory. Young people, transplanted urbanites and married women in particular, return to their villages and ancestral homes, bearing expensive and lavish gifts for the folks – as much to honor the elders as to demonstrate that they have ‘made it’ out in the big new world.

A good friend and colleague, Timothy **YAO Li** who always serves as our National Guide during our religious study tours, shared this not untypical vignette with me. His ten-year-old niece – in observance of the custom for children to appear before their elders on Chinese New Year Day – to wish them “*health, wealth, and happiness*”, while politely expressing some form of the old ‘kowtow’: kneeling, a curtsy, or low bow – after which they are rewarded with a little ‘red packet’ containing a few shiny coins – appeared before him this year, gave him a “*high five*,” then greeted him with a “*Happy New Year, Uncle*”, flipped her extended palm over and said, “That will be 500 yuan, Uncle” [\$60.00!].

In this issue, we offer a variety of profiles, snapshots and vignettes on China today which may surprise some of our readers. They testify to the dynamic tension in which the Churches are caught as they strive to maintain fidelity in Faith, while establishing a *modus vivendi* for an effective Gospel witness and service to the people and modern Chinese Society.

On another New Year's note – In this Year of the Sheep, we in the Christian West have to hope and pray it will be a Year of the Lamb...symbol of gentleness and harmony in our scriptures...the “*Lamb which lies down with the lion*” in harmony and **PEACE**.

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Church News

The Catholic Church Statistical Profile 2002

Further in this issue, are a few ‘*snapshots*’ of China today – cultural, social and economic perspectives (cfp.6-7). As a complement to our regular reporting of developments in the China Church we present here a “*statistical snapshot*” of the Chinese Catholic Church 2002, compiled by the Holy Spirit Study Center in Hong Kong – and recently published in the China Bulletin of our colleagues in Paris. As with all statistics, these are based on subjective criteria. In China, people are also still wary of keeping records

Catholics:	Estimated 12 million
Churches:	5000
Dioceses:	138
With bishops:	116
Vacant sees:	22
Bishops:	117
Recognized	72
Not recognized	45
Priests:	2650
Official/older	250
Unofficial/older	200
Official/younger	1400
Unofficial/younger	800
Seminaries:	34
National	1
Regional	6
Provincial	7
Diocesan	10
Unofficial	10
Seminarians	1670
Major/official	870
Minor/official	800
Unofficial Seminarians est.	800
Religious women	4900
Official	3300
Unofficial	1600
Novices:	1800
Official	900
Unofficial	900
Novitiates (official):	40

Zhonglian, No. 104 (02/03)

Ordinations

The distribution of Church personnel in China tends to be uneven. The majority of Catholics live in rural areas – the source of many priestly and religious vocations. However, after studies in open seminaries, which have stronger academic programs, younger priests often remain in urban areas. **Of 107 men ordained in 2002 the breakdown by Province follows:**

Hebei – 10 Dioceses	29
Shanxi – 8 Dioceses	20
Shandong	11
Liaoning	9
Tianjin	9
Hubei	7
Inner Mongolia	7
Shaanxi	4
Heilong Jiang	3
Anhui, Jiangxi, & Guangxi	2 each
Fujian, Yunnan	1 each

Sister Church in Taiwan

By comparison, the Catholic Church situation in Taiwan is **challenged by a paucity of priestly vocations** – a harbinger perhaps of what awaits China – as it “catches up” in terms of modernization and secularization. According to *Archbishop Joseph II Kang of Taipei*, the breakdown of family life: single parent families, childless couples, divorce and domestic violence are of growing concern; a situation hardly likely to nurture vocations. Happily, **in Taiwan, lay participation is playing a significant role in the growth of the Church**. Each of the seven dioceses has laity formation training centers, implementing the direction of Vatican Council II.

[Asia Focus 1/10/03]

Spirit of Vatican II in China

[Ed. Note: CCQ #52 presented the pastoral view of a young priest on the struggle to implement Vatican Council II in the Church in China in the past two decades. Two more views follow: a political perspective; and views representative of China's Episcopal leaders.]

On the 40th anniversary of the convening of Vatican Council II, last Fall **Anthony LIU Bainian**, vice-chairman of the *Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association* noted that when Vatican Council II was convened in October 1962, mainland Chinese bishops could not take part as China had been a closed society since the early 1950s. But he feels that the spirit of the Second Vatican Council is alive in China, though manifested in a way that accommodates political realities.

For 20 years in the 1960s and 1970s, there was no contact between the Church in China and in other parts of the world. Persecution during the 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution further isolated Chinese Catholics from other Catholics. When religion was gradually allowed to revive in the late 1970s, the Church in China remained much as it had been before 1960. *It was only after more contact with the church in other parts of the world that the message of the Vatican Council II was spread from the clergy to the laity*, Liu said.

He believes many conclusions reached by the Council derived from and fit the mould of developed nations that had embraced capitalism. Thus, he said, **it is only fitting that the Chinese Church seek ways to implement the key thrusts of the Council: empowerment of the laity, liturgical renewal and interreligious dialogue – in the present-day context of China.** We have to learn about the Vatican II documents, which are being taught in the seminaries and to integrate them with the situation in China, he said. Liu noted that now, 40 years after the Council began, the Church in China emphasizes that *all believers share the responsibility of managing and caring for the Church, as well as serving the poor. This is different*, he said, *from the past, when Catholics were only concerned about saving their souls.*

Offering their assessments, two Open Church Bishops, **Pius JIN Peixian** of Liaoning Diocese, and **Anthony LI Jiantang** of Taiyuan Diocese, gave more nuanced views. **The concept of lay participation** underscored in Vatican Council II as practiced in China is not the same as in Hong Kong and elsewhere. *In certain*

matters, the Bishops' Conference has less power than the Catholic Patriotic Association, they said. Real participation from grassroots Catholics is minimal. Some bishops have lost their authority in the name of "running the church democratically."

In dioceses where bishops and clergy actually hold power, the problem is not great, they explained, as compared to other dioceses where the Church is more controlled by the Patriotic Association. Set up in 1957 when China severed ties with the Vatican, the Association is supposed to promote patriotism among Catholics and "manage the Church in China." Bishop LI pointed out that **most Catholics do not have enough theological and pastoral training to be leaders in the church.** Very few Catholics remembered the 40th anniversary of the start of Vatican Council II last October 11, he noted.

Both Bishops said that **interreligious dialogue in China is different** from dialogue promoted in other countries. They noted that the government often organizes meetings for the leaders of the five government-recognized religions:

Buddhism, Catholicism, Islam, Protestantism, and Taoism. While these occasions provide a platform where religious leaders can maintain friendships, **real dialogue and exchange among religions is rare, they said.**

Liturgical renewal in China began when the liturgy in Chinese was introduced in 1992. Elderly Catholics and clergy accustomed to the Latin Mass initially resisted the change. Today, however, the post-Vatican Council II liturgy **is generally accepted.**

Inculturation, which emerged as a topic of discussion after the Council, also **poses a unique problem for the Church in China**, as the Cultural Revolution virtually destroyed traditional cultures. *"In recent years, our society has been blinded by foreign cultures, making it difficult for Catholics to accept inculturation of faith,"* Bishop LI said.

The Church's **view of social justice is also limited** and mostly involves homes for the elderly, nurseries and other government-supported social service projects. Bishop Pius JIN noted that amid the current political situation in China, the Church mostly remains passive and only reacts to the government's call as far as social issues are concerned. ≈

"All believers share the responsibility of managing and caring for the church, as well as serving the poor"

The Church's Social Response: Beifang Jinde

At Shijiazhuang, in Hebei Province, on the compound of the Regional Seminary, in what was once the Trappist monastery of Notre Dame de Laisse, is a remarkable set of enterprises including a publishing house, producing numerous books on theology and spirituality, adult and youth catechesis, and the only nationally circulated catholic newspaper; a foundation offering scholarships to young Catholics; and **Beifang Jinde, the first Catholic NGO in China**. Founded in 1997, Beifang Jinde has since worked quietly to serve the poor in a wide range of programs, which are ever more necessary, as China's new market economy undermines the traditional state welfare system.

Beifang Jinde is named in honor of the late *Bishop HOU Jinde* of Xingtai diocese, whose personal charity was very influential on *Beifang Jinde's* founder and current director, **Fr. John Baptist Zhang**. Among the first young priests ordained in the late eighties, Fr. Zhang later studied in the Philippines, where he was deeply impressed by the value of social work as an expression of faith. These international contacts have shaped *Beifang Jinde's* development, and enabled cooperation with foreign charitable institutions on larger projects.

Beifang Jinde develops its activities in the spirit of *witnessing faith and practicing charity*. Through **Faith Fortnightly**, a newspaper which has served the Catholics of Hebei Province since 1991, stories of suffering are published, and the Catholics all over China are encouraged to donate money to help those in need. Gradually this work has taken on a regular form. *Faith Press* still remains the chief vehicle for communicating needs and activities. Two or more urgent cases are included in each issue; and readers are invited to choose which case to support by their donations. In order to ensure that the cases are genuine, most applications are co-signed by the local parish priest or bishop. The number of cases keeps growing because the reports on various projects generate further applications. *China's Catholics – most of whom themselves are poor in*

rural areas – have donated many thousands of dollars for these purposes.

Witnessing to the faith is central to Beifang Jinde's mission. Its social services embody the commitment of Catholics to the development of the whole society, without distinction of race or religion.

Priority areas of program are:

Disaster Relief: helping in healing the injured and rescuing the dying, including urgent rescue work and humanitarian relief in situations of natural disaster.

Social development: assisting local communities with infrastructure improvements and income generating programs and helping individuals with their medical and educational needs.

Pastoral care: church-building programs, evangelical training, continuing education of priests and religious; pastoral reflection, retreats, and seminars.

Beifang Jinde has a staff of five people. **More information is available on their website at www.chinacatholic.org/BFJINDE/index.htm.**

[China Sparks 01/03]

As CCQ went to press - an Urgent Appeal was received from Beifang Jinde - seeking to coordinate disaster relief, following a severe (6.8) earthquake in NW China [Bachu/Jiashi counties]. 300 killed, 2000+ injured, 8800 homes destroyed, over 27,000 left homeless - in freezing weather and continual aftershocks. Donations may be sent to USCCB for transfer to Beifang Jinde.



Scholarly Initiatives Promote Chinese-Western Exchanges

For the past twenty years, the *Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History of the Center for the Pacific Rim at the University of San Francisco* has been promoting cross-cultural exchanges between China and the West through the study of Christian faith in various disciplines. In the wake of the recent social, political, economic changes in China, the Ricci Institute has been taking additional initiatives to meet the needs of the scholars to further their research on Christianity in China.

In August 2002, a new *Catalog of Christian Publications and Documents: Sources from the Rare Book Collection of the Shanghai Municipal Archives*, was produced (Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, 2002. MA Changli and Xiaoxin WU, eds.). Shanghai has historically been the city where the majority of Christian groups were established, and in the seventy-year span from 1879 until the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, church organizations, both Catholic and Protestant, published a great variety of literature. The new catalogue offers **extensive information on church publications between 1836 and 1963**. Included is detailed bibliographical information on over thirty other denominations and church-related organizations.

Another unique book is scheduled to be published in October 2003. Entitled *Archives Relating to Catholic Missionary Activities from the Early to Mid Qing Dynasty China (1644–1840)*, this new three-volume publication provides over 1,000 imperial documents in regard to early Catholic missionaries and their mission activities both in the Qing imperial court and in other provinces. Over seventy percent of the contents are to be released for the first time to the public in the published format. The publication is the result of the joint effort by the Ricci Institute, the *First Historical Archives of China* and the *Beijing Center for Language and Culture*, a consortium of 26-US Jesuit Universities in China.

In December 2002, a symposium on "*Christianity and Chinese Culture and Society*" was held in Hong Kong. Co-sponsored with the *Center for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society at Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong*, the symposium was attended by thirty young Chinese scholars from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan, engaged in Ph.D. studies on Christianity

in China. **The symposium provided much needed encouragement and a platform for the growing number of young scholars to share their scholarly research on Christianity.** Serving as mentors were *Professor Nicolas Standaert, S.J.* of Leuven Catholic University, *Professor Daniel Bays* of Calvin College, USA, and *Professor ZHUO Xinping* of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

In October 2003, the Ricci Institute will co-sponsor a research workshop in collaboration with the *Institute for the Study of Christian Culture at the People's University in Beijing* to be moderated by *Dr. Jean-Paul Wiest* of the *Center for Mission Research and Study* at Maryknoll. It will address the increasing desire for empirical research methodology among Chinese scholars in the study of Christianity in China and approaching contemporary social, economic and spiritual issues facing Catholic, Protestant, and other local religious communities.

Dr. Xiaoxin WU
Director, Ricci Institute at USF

The *Macau Ricci Institute* and the Lisbon-based *Instituto do Oriente* also organized an international symposium last December, entitled *Religion and Culture: Past Approaches, Present Globalization, Future Challenges*. The Macau event drew participants from all over the world; ending with a visit to *Shangchuan Island*, where St. Francis Xavier died in 1552. **Scholars at the symposium credited Christianity as a force that helps build civic morality in modern China.** *Prof. WANG Xiaochao*, of Tsinghua University, observed that moral decay presents a good opportunity for Christians to take part in the country's *moral construction*; and recommended that Christian communities not only promote high morality among their own members, but also foster the morality of others in society. *Prof. KUNG Lap-yan* of the Theology Division of the Chinese University of Hong Kong similarly pointed out that **'religion and morality are almost synonymous in Chinese tradition.'** ≈



Snapshots of China Today

TV Series

Domestic Abuse



Director Zhang Jiandong knew he was challenging Chinese sensibilities with a television series focusing on domestic violence. What he didn't count on was it becoming a commercial and emotional triumph. Viewers, including some

victims of abuse, are praising the realism and gustiness of *"Don't Talk to Strangers,"* a 23-part series that ran on Chinese networks and is being marketed abroad.

Women's groups have hailed it as an eye-opener for a society just coming to grips with spousal abuse. *This is really a sign of progress for Chinese society,* Zhang says, as traditional culture teaches that family problems should stay within the family.

In modern China, women suffer from low political representation and strict family planning policies that reinforce the traditional preference for boys. When spousal abuse occurs, police often only recommend mediation. This has started to change during the last three years. **The Marriage Law of 2001 gives victims the right to official protection and orders abusers to be punished. Yet willingness to enforce the law varies widely across the country and the resources to help abused women are scarce.** The All China Federation of Women is pushing for more specific legal definitions of abuse to help prosecutions. It is also working to help women recognize that neither psychological, nor casual physical abuse are acceptable.

Miss Universe in Confucius' Home Town

In April, the final contest to choose who will represent China at the 2003 Miss Universe Beauty Pageant will be held in eastern Shandong province, close to Qufu, the hometown of Confucius! It is the first time for China to officially host such a nationwide contest. *The Miss Universe contest isn't about the prize but is very important for showing a female image of a country or a region,* said Paula Shugart, president of the Miss Universe Organization, who made a special trip to China in January. She believes that the contest will play an important role in enhancing cultural exchanges between China and the rest of the world [depending on how one defines 'culture' - Ed.]

Shows

Shanghai's DINK Households

According to a survey carried out by the Municipal Women's Federation, **nuclear family households, most common in other cities in the world, are**



becoming predominant in Shanghai. DINK (*double income, no kids*) families in the east China metropolis, now amount to 12.4 percent.

In recent years the family structure in Shanghai has also diversified. The number of households in which three family generations live under one roof is diminishing. More people are staying single or marrying later; and alternative family types, such as DINK, and single-parent families, where the parent is either unmarried or divorced, are emerging.

[China Today 02/03]

Image Consciousness on Rise

According to a recent investigation, the rate of increase in business income for Chinese beauty parlors over the past five years is higher than that of the Chinese GDP. Chinese people are expected to spend more and more on cosmetics over the next five years.



Government officials and entrepreneurs now hire their own image designers and consultants. People between 25 and 45 are seeking professional advice on how to dress appropriately according to the occasion. In their desire to look their best Chinese women now pay more attention to tasteful coordination of jewelry and clothes, skincare and cosmetics. Certain Chinese higher institutions now offer optional classes in cosmetic application skills and social etiquette in order to bolster their students' confidence when the time comes for them to find jobs.

[China Today 02/03]

Shanghai to host 2010 World Expo

The General Assembly of the Bureau of International Exhibitions (BIE) awarded the 2010 World Exposition to Shanghai, a cause for widespread celebration. China will be the first developing country ever to host the event.



The World Expo, first held 151 years ago, is a huge project presenting a comprehensive picture of the political, economic, cultural, scientific and social achievements of the host country. It is both a test of the national economic power, and a boost to the country's economy. **In 2001, China's gross domestic product (GDP) reached 1.16 trillion US dollars, ranking it seventh in the world, and its ranking in foreign trade jumped from nine in 1999 to seven.** By 2010, China's GDP is expected to exceed 2 trillion US dollars.

Hosting the World Expo, the "**Economic Olympics**," brings yet another huge boost to China after its winning bid to host the 2008 Olympics. It will give the high-speed Shanghai metropolis a challenging new project to rapidly complete its transformation into a world center of economy, trade, finance and transportation.

[PD Online]

Internet Business Opportunities

The government will push for the development of Chinese language software, information resources, and data bases so the nation better uses the Internet. **In September 2002, China had 54.35 million Internet users, with about 82,000 officially registered websites.** The Ministry of Information predicts an annual growth rate of over 30 percent, the sales of software and information services totaling US \$36.5 billion by 2005. According to the Minister of Information, **the development of the Internet in China has been beset with problems:** including its impact on traditional Chinese culture, due to a lack of online resources based on the Chinese language; the imperfect net and information security systems; and moral hazards. Representative Chinese classics and archives need to be digitalized; and the best of Chinese and foreign cultures and modern science and technology should be spread through the Internet to make it an important front for advanced culture.



[PD Online]

High-Speed Train



The world's first commercial "**Magnetic Levitation (Maglev) Train**"

performed flawlessly on its maiden journey, hitting 260 mph on its 14-minute, 19-mile journey between Shanghai's financial center and the new international airport in Pudong district. If the experimental operation proves to be successful over a period of time, the plan is to build a commercial service for the 120-mile journey between Shanghai and Hangzhou, a tourist attraction south of Shanghai; and/or an 800-mile route linking Shanghai, the economic center and Beijing, the political center of China.

As a joint venture between Germany and China, Germany is responsible for the "Train" whereas China is responsible for the "*Guidance Rail*" system. The train operates on a suspended air-gap maintained by two magnets, one attached to the train and the other to the guideway rail, a mono-rail type track raised several stories above the ground. The motion of the train is controlled by the traveling magnetic waves generated in the guideway rail. There is of course, the item of cost. **The current cost of a 19-mile system is 1.2 billion.** This translates into a \$6.00 one-way ticket for passengers. How much the ticket price for the proposed Shanghai-Hangzhou and Shanghai-Beijing run is still anybody's guess.

[Chinese American Forum Jan '03]

End of the Iron Rice Bowl?

The government is pushing ahead with plans to smash one of its last "iron rice bowls" by **ending cradle-to-grave jobs for its 30 million employees at hospitals, universities and other state-funded institutions.** But analysts think the planned reform is likely to run into stiff opposition from the cultural elite; and a group Beijing can ill afford to upset: intellectuals. The scheme calls for state-funded institutions, including think tanks and publishing houses, to sign contracts with their employees over the next three years, ending lifelong job tenures. As a result, many employees at the country's 1.3 million state-funded institutions would be laid off. Analysts were skeptical. An economist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the top government think tank said, **It's not conducive to social stability**, hinting at the possibility of discontent among intellectuals. **It'll be very difficult to implement.**



[Reuters 01/09/03]



Make a difference!

Go to China as an AITECE teacher!

The goal of AITECE is to contribute to the modernization of China through the exchange of personnel and to promote international understanding and friendship. AITECE is based in Hong Kong. Its USA liaison office is USCCB.

AITECE facilitates teachers and experts in sharing their knowledge and Christian values with the youth of China:

- Contractual arrangements with recommended tertiary educational institutions – covering teaching assignments, living allowance, stipend, lodgings, local medical care. Some options include air travel reimbursement.
- Orientation before taking up placement.
- Mediation with local authorities; advice on practical problems.
- Support of like-minded people working in the area.

Applications for Fall Semester 2003 now being processed. Contact USCCB.

The Association for International Teaching Educational and Curriculum Exchange (AITECE Ltd.) is an independent, non-profit organization registered in both Hong Kong and Beijing. Since it's founding in 1988, AITECE has sponsored 250 foreign teachers and experts in over thirty institutes in eleven provinces or major cities of China.

Announcement

The Second Worldwide

Overseas Chinese Pastoral & Evangelization Conference

July 1-4, 2003

Chinese Martyrs' Shrine, Toronto, Canada

Theme: ***The Teachings of Confucius: Prelude for the Gospel***

Info: cmcc@chinesemartyrs.org Tel: 905-294-1377

Registration Deadline: April 30th

4701 - The Year of the Sheep

The Lunar New Year began on February 1st, 2003, when sheep/rams/goats/lambs came into ascendancy in the East Asian countries of China/Taiwan and Korea. Sheep and its kin, are eighth in the cycle of 12 years named in the Chinese Zodiac.



The Year of the Sheep is considered to be "auspicious," and sheep are regarded as symbols of good luck. In Shanghai the occasion was marked by the introduction of 16 cloned goats at a local Safari Park!

Other Chinese vocabulary derived from the character for sheep include "mei" (beautiful or good) a combination of "sheep" and "big"; and "xian" (delicious or fresh) combining "sheep" with "fish". The oral sound for "sheep" is homophonic with "sunshine," "happiness," "oxygen," and "foreign," lending it to use for sage sayings and puns. ≈

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