

FROM THE EDITOR



Through His death and resurrection Jesus Christ has fully completed His task of glorifying God and redeeming man. And so the celebration of the Paschal Mystery is both the source and the summit of the Church's liturgical year. The core of every liturgical year is Easter, while the core of every week is Sunday.

Today the Church, following a long-standing tradition, solemnly celebrates Easter not only with the Holy Week Triduum, but also with Eastertide. The Church beckons the faithful to joyfully celebrate this great feast for fifty days, starting with the Easter Vigil and lasting until Pentecost Sunday. Thus each Sunday within Eastertide is no longer called "Sunday after Easter," but rather the "second, third, etc. Sunday of Easter."

When this issue goes to print Easter will already be over, but not Eastertide. The joy of Easter is still with us, and it is this joy which serves as a link to connect all the essays in this issue.

"Isn't it a joy to have friends coming from a far distance?" This famous saying from Lun Yu, one of the Four Books, provides the title and expresses the spirit of joy sounded in the first essay. By way of a summary report on the visits to Hong Kong of

Bishop Dominic Tang and the Chinese Christian Delegation, and a comparison of their differences and similarities, the essay shows forth the joy of friendship.

"Reflections on Meeting Christians from China" is a companion essay to and continuation of the theme of the first essay. It contains precious extracts from the talks by the Chinese Christian Delegation members and also provides reflections for the readers. It thus brings about a sense of harmony which results from an understanding of and respect for the Chinese Christians.

"Atheism and the Chinese Communist Party after Mao Zedong" surfaces critical questions about the present-day policy of religious freedom. The author encourages the Communist Government to improve this policy so that as a result, the people of China may taste the joy of complete liberation.

The two essays, "The Primacy of the Pope and the Collegiality of the Bishops" and "Christian Missioners to China: Imperialists or China-lovers?" provide an explanation to two key problems pointed out by the Catholic Church in China. The former analyzes from a theological viewpoint the harmonious relationship between the papal primacy and the episcopal college, while the latter, drawing on information gained from personal interviews, discloses the true motives and sincere feelings of missioners. These two articles provide a joy which consists in attempting to eliminate some of the barriers which are in the minds and hearts of many people within the Church.

"Brief News from the Catholic Church in China" is a reprint from the second issue of the periodical Catholic Church in China. In addition to deepening our understanding of recent developments, these news items serve to promote the joy which results from unity and harmony in the Church.

To sum up, all the essays in this issue help not only to further our goal of "Contact and Dialogue" (the sub-title of the last essay) but also to realize the joy of the Paschal Mystery.