

News In Brief

POPE JOHN PAUL II CALLS FOR RECONCILIATION

On the occasion of the beatification of Bishop Aloysius Versiglia and Father Callistus Caravario, two members of the Salesians of Don Bosco who were killed in China in 1930 while defending a group of young women from attack by river bandits, Pope John Paul II renewed his appeal to China for reconciliation. On May 15th at the Mass of Beatification, the Pope addressed the 100,000 people gathered for worship in St. Peter's Square: "This beatification reinforces in us the hope for progress in the dialogue with the Christian people of China." He said that he hoped Chinese Catholics would find a balance between what he called their 'social and national commitments' and their 'communion with the universal Church.'

TOP CHINA LEADER DIES

China's chief spokesman on Hongkong and Macau affairs, 75-year-old Mr. Liao Chengzhi, died of a heart attack in Beijing on the 10th of June. In his capacity as director of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office in the State Council, Liao received numerous delegations from Hongkong, to exchange views about the present situation and future possibilities. He was considered to be an outstanding statesman as well as a kind and generous host. His death was described as a great loss to both China and Hongkong.

MATTEO RICCI COMMEMORATED

An exhibition commemorating the 400th anniversary of Matteo Ricci's arrival in China opened in Nanjing on April 22. The exhibition, which was organized by the Nanjing Museum, displayed many personal articles of Ricci who spent the last 28 years of his life in China during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

Also in celebration of the 400th anniversary of Matteo Ricci's arrival in China, the government of Taiwan issued two commemorative stamps on April 3rd. Both stamps carry the portrait of Matteo Ricci in the foreground, the background of the NT\$2 stamps is a 16th century globe while the NT\$18 stamp has the Great Wall of China.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS YEAR

This year is International Communications Year. Its theme, as set by the United Nations, is 'the Development of Communication Infrastructures'.

China is setting up a Commission for World Communication Year at the beginning of January, announced that a communications satellite will be launched for the purpose of developing China's Communication infrastructure, as well as showing a positive response to the International Communications year.

On April 28th, the Chinese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications also issued a new stamp to commemorate International Communications Year. It features two traditional 'Flying Goddesses', one holding a letter, the other a satellite.

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST IN BEIJING AND GUANGZHOU

On May 22nd, the Feast of Pentecost, Bishop Fu Tieshan in Nantang and Bishop Tu Shihua in Dongtang, celebrated Masses with over 5,000 people in attendance.

On the same day in Guangzhou, Bishop Ye administered the Sacrament of Confirmation at a Solemn High Mass in Sacred Heart Cathedral. Father Lin Pingliang also said Mass for an overflow crowd in Shamian's Church of Our Lady of Lourdes. Among the many foreigners present at the Guangzhou Masses was a delegation from the Philippines which also included the former Philippine Foreign Minister and the former Director of the Philippine Information Bureau.

BISHOP PETER KWONG VISITS NANJING UNION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

On May 6th, the Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong-Macao, Bishop Peter Kwong, paid a visit to Union Theological College, Nanjing. His host, the President of the College Bishop K.H. Ting, accompanied him to an evening concert in the college auditorium. The concert featured hymns composed by musicians of the Chinese Christian Church. The indigenous character of both words and music was enriched further by the use of traditional Chinese instruments.

RELIGION INSTITUTES ESTABLISHED IN SICHUAN

Four academic institutes of religion have been set up in Sichuan Province recently. They are the Tibetan Language Buddhist Academy, the Buddhist Academy for Nuns, the Catholic Seminary and the Protestant Theologate. Apart from the Tibetan Language Buddhist Academy which is located in Kangding, all the others are situated in Chengdu.

These four academies admit middle school graduates between the ages of eighteen and twenty five who aspire to the religious life as a profession. The schools offer a two year course. Certificates of graduation will be granted to those who complete the course and pass the

examination.

XI ZHONGXUN ADDRESSES CCPA

On April 23rd, about two hundred of the clergy and laity who participated in the Joint Conference of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the Chinese Catholic Administrative Council, assembled in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, commemorating as well the election and consecration of local bishops without approval from Rome.

Acting Prime Minister Wan Li, Secretary General of the State Council and the Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Secretariat Xi Zhongxun, Director of the Central United Front Work Department of CCP Yang Jingren, Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council Qiao Lianshen, also attended the assembly, gave special praise to the administration of the Church for its independent stand. He also declared that the right of the Chinese Catholics to have their own independent Church will always be protected by China's Constitution, and will continue to have the support of the Party, the government, and the people of the nation. Also addressing the meeting were Bishop Zong Huaide, the Chairman of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, Zhang Jiashu, the Chairman of the Chinese Catholic Administrative Council and President of the Chinese Bishops Conference, Bishop Wang Liangzuo, one of the founders of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, and Bishop Dong Guangqing, a member of the first group of bishops to be consecrated locally.

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