

3 Holy Spirit Study Centre : *

THIRD ANNIVERSARY REPORT



It is not true that Anniversaries are merely ritual celebrations of survival. There is also in them a definite note of hope. One trusts that there will be continuity and progress even as one expresses some degree of satisfaction for the past year's accomplishments. As is our annual custom, then, we offer our Readers more than just a brief summary of the highlights of the past year. We shall attempt a few projections into the future as well.

All in all, it has been a good year for the Centre, minor mishaps and set-backs were more than compensated for by signs of a growing maturity. Most encouraging has been the Reader response to TRIPOD. Most comments are favorable. Friendly critics note a definite improvement in our content, and many wrote to tell us how helpful they found our two special issues -- one on Matteo Ricci and the other on China's new constitution -- to be in their work. All of which leads us to the conclusion that more 'specials' and a wider range of content should be given proper emphasis in the coming year. We are also gratified by the number of new subscriptions coming from university and China research centers throughout the world.

Recently, we have noticed an increased interest in two major subject areas, that of Hong Kong's future and articles dealing with

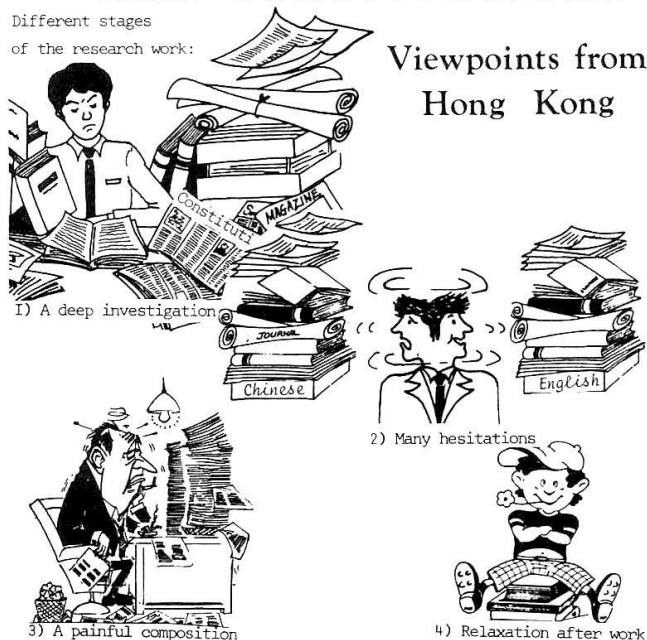


SPECIAL ISSUE
ON MATTEO RICCI

CHINA'S NEW CONSTITUTION:

Different stages
of the research work:

Viewpoints from
Hong Kong



religion in China. To make it easier for those who come to the Centre in search of further information, our 'clippers' and 'classifiers' have prepared a separate section with a comprehensive index for both of these subjects. The amount of material culled from both English and Chinese newspapers, periodicals, magazines and journals continues to mount up not only in the above mentioned areas but in other related subjects as well.

A Centre project that received an immediate and enthusiastic response, no doubt due to the timely nature of its subject, was our sound-slide production "Christians and 1997". This effort, to offer a multi-media tool for stimulating discussion of Hong Kong's future among local Church and school groups, was made possible through the cooperation of the Hong Kong Council of the Laity and the Centre for the Progress of Peoples. "Christians and 1997" was given two major showings in September and October, with a panel of priests, sisters and lay leaders on hand to facilitate discussion, before making the rounds of Diocesan Church groups and schools. Audience response was not only positive but creative as well.

As Readers of TRIPOD may recall, one of the year's major undertakings has been the compilation of the historical data of the Diocese of Hong Kong. We are now happy to report that Father Sergio Ticozzi and Miss Christine Yau have completed the collection and translation of original source materials. The historical data are already being serialized in the Diocesan Weekly Kung Kao Po, and publication date for the book itself, is set for this December.

One of the less dramatic but, we feel, vital works of the Centre is initiating and maintaining relationships with Christians on mainland China. Our staff and research associates spend part of their year traveling through China making new contacts, meeting with old friends, studying first-hand the rapidly changing situation there, and then reporting their experiences in TRIPOD. This year's journeys found us in Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Suzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Quanzhou, Xian and Wuhan.

While journeys to the East predominate, our journeys to the West were also on the increase last year. This is due, in part, to the interest in the West in things Chinese engendered by China's 'open door' policy. Last December, Sister Mary Louise Martin represented us at the Chicago Symposium ("East Meets West: the Jesuits in China"). February found Sister Goretti Lau in Taiwan for Fujen University's theological seminar marking Ricci's 400th Anniversary of entrance into China. Father Angelo Lazzarotto and I were fortunate in being able to attend the 6th Meeting of the Ecumenical China Study Liaison Group which met in May in Glion, Switzerland. Father Angelo in September participated in the "International Symposium of Chinese-Western Cultural Interchange" sponsored jointly by Fujen University and two other cultural organizations in Taipei. As we write these words, Sister Goretti is putting the final touches on an address to be given in December in Chicago at a conference sponsored by Catholics of America Concerned with China (CACC). The title of Sister's talk is: "Reflections on the Chinese Church Experience." If all this flying around gives the impression that much of our time has been spent in the air and abroad, we'd like to balance it off with a comment on our work on the ground and at home. Last year, we had an even greater number of calls on our services by local groups to lecture and lead discussions on what is happening in the Churches of China.

And now a peek into the future. Already five Catholic seminaries have opened their doors to new students on the mainland -- Sheshan in Shanghai, Hua Yuan Shan in Wuchang, Shenyang, and two Seminaries in Beijing. In an effort to promote dialogue and mutual exchange with these

seminaries, the Centre is preparing an up-to-date bibliography of major philosophical and theological titles currently available in Chinese. The Centre would then facilitate the ordering and shipping of desired books under terms to be worked out by the seminaries themselves. Sometimes this might involve merely an exchange of written materials.

Sister Goretti informs us that her lectures in Christology given in her extramural course are being revised and re-edited. They will be printed in book form for use by local Christian groups concerned with theological formation in contemporary society. Look for their publication in June of next year.

Now that work on the historical data of the Diocese of Hong Kong has been completed, we shall expand our horizons to include our neighboring Diocese, Guangzhou. Father Ticozzi will coordinate the project along with Father Pierre Jeanne. Father Pierre's assistance will be most useful when researching the French documentary sources. Work has already begun in collecting materials, and, as in the case of Hong Kong's historical data, the Guangzhou historical material will appear first as a series of articles in the Kung Kao Po.

Last year, as part of the celebration of Matteo Ricci's arrival into China, the Diocese of Hong Kong held an appropriate exhibition consisting of slides, photographs and memorabilia of Ricci and his times. The Centre would like not only to expand this exhibition in a continuing display of materials dealing with the history of the Church in China, but also find a permanent site for display. Permission is being sought from the diocesan and Holy Spirit Seminary officials to establish an historical museum at the Seminary that would allow visitors to Hong Kong and to the Seminary to learn more about the history of the Church in China.

In closing, we wish to express, once again, our sincere thanks and appreciation to all those groups and individuals which make the work of our Centre possible. We ask for your continual guidance and support, and also your prayers, that we may better serve the Church of Hong Kong, of China and of the world in the spirit of Christ.

BY JOHN TONG