

# News in Brief



## POPE TO VISIT KOREA FOR BICENTENNIAL

Pope John Paul II will visit Korea from May 3rd to 7th to join in the Bicentennial Celebration of the Catholic Church in that country. On May 6th he will officiate at a special Mass of Thanksgiving during which 103 Korean martyrs will be elevated to sainthood. Among those to be canonized is Kim Tae-gon, Korea's first native priest. The Korean martyrs, all of whom were put to death during a series of 19th century persecutions of the church, include 44 women, 10 French priests, three of whom were bishops, and the youngest, Yu Tae-tchel, who was only thirteen years of age at the time of his death.

In 1784, Lee Sung-hoon was baptized in Beijing. He had been sent by a group of Korean scholars led by Lee Byok who had already been practising the Christian faith for some time. Chinese translations of Christian literature had been channeled through members of the Korean delegations to the Court of Beijing for many years, along with other books explaining the new western learning. Lee, the first Korean to be baptized returned to Korea with detailed materials and devotional artifacts, and within ten years the number of Korean Christians had reached over 10,000. It is unique to the church in Korea that it was pioneered by Korean lay people. In 1795, the Bishop of Beijing sent Father Chu Mun-mo, a Chinese priest, to minister to the growing communities. In 1831, Korea was declared a vicariate apostolic and entrusted to the Paris Foreign Mission Society. In 1962, John XXIII sanctioned the establishment of the hierarchy elevating all apostolic vicariates to dioceses and creating three archdioceses. In its two hundred year history, the church of Korea has had over 10,000 martyrs, and today numbers over 1,500,000 members.

## ROME NEWSPAPER REPORT OF VATICAN SEVERING TIES WITH TAIWAN DENIED

A leading Rome newspaper reported recently that the Vatican is in the process of cutting its diplomatic links with Taipei and of establishing official relations with Beijing, but the report was denied by all

three parties, the Vatican, Taiwan and China.

Although Vatican spokesmen have periodically expressed the desire to increase contacts with Beijing, they have consistently denied that the Vatican will sever diplomatic ties with Taiwan as a concession to Beijing. The Taiwan Foreign Ministry called the Rome newspaper report absolutely groundless, saying that although the Vatican has downgraded its representation in Taipei, it is unlikely that the Vatican would establish diplomatic relations with Beijing.

Archbishop Lo Guang, President of Fujen University in Taipei, pointed out that the Pope had recently asked the Catholics of Taiwan to serve as a bridge between the Vatican and their compatriots in China. This appeal, he added, might have been mistakenly interpreted as a sign of a move towards diplomatic recognition of Beijing.

When the Holy Father received the seven Taiwan bishops in February, he called upon Taiwan Catholics to take up the task of serving as a bridge church and strive to establish contacts with Catholics on mainland China. The Pope said that such contacts could serve to overcome the "temporary historical separation," and produce abundant fruit.

On their part, Beijing officials denied having any contact with the Vatican at the present time. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman also denied the Rome newspaper report that the Vatican was currently in formal dialogue with the Chinese government. However, he did not rule out the possibility of future contacts.

#### DEATH OF FATHER FRANCIS ZHU, S.J. REPORTED

Father Francis Zhu Shude of the Society of Jesus died in prison in Hefei, Anhui Province in December. He was 71 years of age. Father Zhu was born in Shanghai in 1913. He entered the Jesuit Society at the age of 23 and was ordained ten years later in 1946. The following year, Father Zhu was sent to Paris to pursue doctoral studies in science at the University of Sorbonne. Upon his return to China in 1949, he was made pastor of Christ the King parish in Shanghai. During the next 35 years, Father Zhu was incarcerated three times, first in 1953, again in 1960, and finally in 1980. When not in prison he was sent to work in labour camps. He was allowed to return to Shanghai in 1979 where he lived until his re-arrest in 1980, a brief but constructive period in which he managed to complete his book on the noted anthropologist and fellow Jesuit, Teilhard de Chardin, discoverer of the Peking Man. He was re-

turned to Anhui Province, sentenced to Hefei prison, and remained there until his death from illness on December 28, the Feast of the Holy Innocents.

### RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRECTOR DIES

Qiao Liansheng, director of the Chinese State Department's Bureau of Religious Affairs, died on January 15, 1984. He was 66 years of age. Qiao was born in Mengli County, Henan Province. During the Japanese War, he taught at Hangzhou University, and at military academies in Shaanxi, Shandong, Shanxi, Henan and north China. Later Qiao became Director of the United Front Work Department, and Deputy Secretary General of the Party's Central Committee. In 1979, he was appointed Deputy Director of the Bureau of Religious Affairs. In 1981, Qiao succeeded Xiao Xianfa as Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau.

### SOCIAL SERVICE DAY HELD BY GUANGZHOU DIOCESE

On the second Sunday of Lent (March 18) the Diocese of Guangzhou held a "Catholic Day of Social Service." After Mass on Sunday, the Catholics dispersed to carry out a variety of social service activities. These included giving medical consultations, distributing reading materials, helping primary school students with their homework, and ministering to widows and the elderly.

### BAIYUN DAOIST TEMPLE IN BEIJING REOPENS IN BEIJING

The famous Baiyun Daoist temple, which has a history of more than 1200 years, reopened recently to visitors and worshippers after extensive renovations.

At the present time, twenty-two Daoist priests serve at Baiyun temple. The Abbot, Liu Zhiwei, is 72 years old. The average age of the other monks, who have been assigned to Beijing from other temples in Shanxi, Henan and Zhejiang, is 25.

### RELIGIOUS BOOKS TO BE EXHIBITED IN HONG KONG

A "Shanghai Book Exhibition" will be held at the Hong Kong City Hall June 2-10, 1984. Among the more than six thousand volumes to be displayed are books on Buddhism, Protestantism and Catholicism, which will be appearing in Hong Kong for the first time.

Twenty Shanghai publishing companies will participate in this

exhibition. The Protestant and Catholic books have been published by their respective organizations, whereas the books on Buddhism have, for the most part, been published by non-religious organizations.

#### FURTHER DECLINE NOTED IN CHINESE BIRTH RATE IN 1983

During 1983, the birth rate in China was estimated at less than 13 per thousand, lower than the 14.49 per thousand rate recorded in 1982.

The above figures represent the preliminary estimates of the National Birth Planning Commission of the Department of State. However officials were also of the opinion that the actual statistics could even be lower.

#### FOREIGN BISHOPS RESIGN CHINESE SEES

The 1984 edition of the Annuario Pontificio, the official Vatican yearbook, has dropped all titles of archbishops and bishops previously held by foreign missionaries in China.

Altogether 29 foreign prelates are involved in the change. One foreign archbishop and twelve bishops are now simply referred to as former bishops (*episcopi emeriti*) and 16 foreign prefects apostolic are dropped from the list altogether.

#### POST-SECONDARY VOCATIONAL COLLEGES FLOURISHING IN CHINA

Newly formed vocational colleges are a rapidly growing part of China's post-secondary education system. There are now 27,000 students attending 52 such schools. Most offer three year courses in technology and two year courses in the practical arts. The schools are financed mainly by provincial and municipal governments, although students are expected to pay school fees. Graduate placements are based on student achievement and recommendations by the school. Nanjing's Jinling Vocational College, Wuhan's Jiangnan and Wuxi Vocational College are three among the 52 with a long history of outstanding performance.