



## News in Brief

### POPE AGAIN CALLS FOR RECONCILIATION WITH THE CHINESE CHURCH

In early May, when Pope John Paul II was visiting Korea, he once more invited the Chinese Catholic Church to become reconciled with the universal church. The Pope again emphasized that a person could be a fervent Catholic and a true Chinese at the same time.

On the other hand, in early April, Bishop Fu Tieshan of Beijing announced that chances for a reconciliation between the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the Vatican were not great.

### BISHOP TING EMPHASIZES CONTINUANCE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AFTER 1997

On a visit to Hong Kong, Bishop K.H. Ting, Chairman of the China Christian Council, and Mr. Han Wenzao, Associate Secretary General, both emphasized that after 1997 Hong Kong will continue to enjoy religious freedom. Decisions concerning all church work and contact with churches abroad will be left to the Hong Kong Christians themselves. The mainland Chinese church will definitely not send people to administer the Hong Kong churches after 1997, the two Christian leaders pointed out.

Bishop Ting said that Hong Kong and mainland Chinese churches should observe an attitude of mutual respect for each other, with each church performing its tasks according to its own tradition. Hong Kong Christian groups would be most welcome to visit churches in China to exchange experiences. Bishop Ting also expressed the desire that at a suitable time contact would be made with Christians in Taiwan as well.

While talking about current religious developments in China, Bishop Ting reported that in the last five years over 1,600 Protestant churches have been re-opened, and that there are now over ten thousand "house churches." The number of Christians has increased from 700,000

in 1949 to three million today. Finally, Bishop Ting reported that the work of renovating and re-opening churches continues.

Bishop Ting and Mr. Han stopped in Hong Kong in early April on their return trip from Australia and New Zealand where they had led a delegation of Chinese Christians.

#### HONG KONG PROTESTANT LEADERS ISSUE A FORMAL STATEMENT OF FAITH CONCERNING 1997

After many months of discussion, some eighty Hong Kong Christian leaders issued a united statement of shared convictions. It gave emphasis to "the determination of Christians to face up to reality, to shoulder the responsibility placed on them by history and by their three identities as Christians, Hongkongites and Chinese."

The statement also expressed the hope that after 1997 a high level of self-government will be maintained in Hong Kong, and that citizens will continue to enjoy freedom of speech, publication, association, assembly, travel, belief and evangelization.

At the same time, the church leaders who drafted the statement formed a "Committee of Christians Concerned about Hong Kong's Future" to be responsible for on-going leadership and guidance.

#### PREMIER ZHAO ZIYANG DISCUSSES CHINA-VATICAN RELATIONS

On May 23, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang announced that the time was not yet ripe to discuss improving Chinese-Vatican relations.

He said, "Because the Vatican still maintains 'diplomatic relations' with Taiwan, has frequently treated Chinese sovereignty lightly, and has interfered in China's internal affairs, it is very difficult at this time to talk about an improvement in China-Vatican relations."

Premier Zhao made his statement at a press conference held at the Great Hall of the People on the afternoon of May 23rd. The Premier is aware that recent words of the Pope regarding China-Vatican relations have indicated some change in his position. However, the problem is complicated and a longer time is needed to seek a solution to it, Premier Zhao feels.

### FOUR TIBETAN MONASTERIES TRAINING NEW MEMBERS

Four monasteries of the Yellow sect of Lamaism have resumed training sessions in Tibet. The four, all located in Lhasa, are Zhepang, Sela, Gandan and Dazhao temples.

Since last year they have already recruited over 480 lamas, most of whom are young. Students come with a certain educational background and knowledge of Buddhism, and are now receiving a deeper knowledge of Buddhist scriptures as well as training in the maintenance and administration of monasteries.

Tibetan Lamaism is divided into two large branches, the Yellow (Gel'u) sect and the Red (Ningma) sect. The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Chinese Tibetans, who has lived in India for almost 25 years, is one of two living re-incarnated Buddhas of the Yellow sect.

### MASTER JU ZHAN DIES

Master Ju Zhan, Vice-chairperson of the Chinese Buddhist Association, died in Beijing on April 9. He was 76 years old.

Born Pan Chutong in 1908 in Jiangyin County, Jiangsu Province, Master Ju took the name Ju Zhan when he entered the Lingyin Monastery in Hangzhou in 1931.

During World War II, Master Ju edited the monthly magazine, The Lion's Roar, which urged Buddhist believers to work positively for the salvation of the country. Before the establishment of New China, Master Ju returned north from Hong Kong to help propagate Buddhism.

During his lifetime, Ju Zhan wrote many essays on Buddhist doctrine, was active as a leader in the Chinese Buddhist Association, and in recent years, was a member of the Standing-Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

### SICHUAN CATHOLIC SEMINARY OPENS

Sponsored by the Catholic Patriotic Association and Church Affairs Committees of Sichuan, Guizhou and Yunnan Provinces, the Sichuan Academy of Philosophy and Theology officially opened its doors at the beginning of May, 1984. The Rector of the new seminary is Li Xiting, Bishop of the Diocese of Chengdu. The Chengdu seminary's objective is to train

a new generation of clergy, who meet university educational standards, have a deep knowledge of doctrine, and are willing to dedicate themselves completely to the work of the church.

The seminary offers a four year course of study, which includes doctrine, scripture, dogmatic theology, philosophy, politics, Chinese language, modern Chinese history, economics and geography. To qualify for the entrance examination a student must have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Preparations are underway to receive 80-90 students per year.

### SHANGHAI COMMEMORATES ANNIVERSARY OF MA XIANGBAI

The CPPCC of Shanghai City will commemorate the 45th anniversary of the death of the Catholic patriot, Ma Xiangbai.

Ma Xiangbai was born in what today is Zhenjiang in Jiangsu Province. At eleven years of age, Ma began his studies at St. Ignatius School in Shanghai. In 1862, he entered the Jesuits and was ordained a priest in 1870, receiving at the same time a doctorate in theology. Later Ma served as a counselor at the Qing government's embassy in Japan. In 1903 Ma Xiangbai established Zhen Dan College in Shanghai, and in 1905 Fu Dan College. The latter was the forerunner of the present Fu Dan University.

After the "September 18 Incident" of 1931, Ma actively promoted the "Oppose Japan, Save the Country Movement." He became affectionately known as "the old Patriot." In 1937, Ma became a member of the Nationalist Government. Ma Xiangbai died two years later in Liang Shan, Vietnam.

Commemorative ceremonies will take place in November and will also include tributes to Shi Liangcai, another patriot who was active in the publishing field.

### CHINA TO ERECT STATUES TO HONOUR 138 PATRIOTIC HEROES

The Communist Party's Propaganda Department has compiled a first list, containing 138 names, of outstanding patriots and revolutionaries. Statues in honour of their patriotic contributions will be erected in large cities throughout the country. The list also includes famous Chinese Protestants and Catholics.

Among Protestant believers is the Father of Modern China, Dr. Sun

Zhongshan and the former Chair-person of the People's Republic, Madame Song Qingling. A Catholic on the list is the famous Ming dynasty scholar, Xu Guangqi. Zheng Chenggong, the patriotic military leader who liberated Taiwan and whose mother was a Catholic, is also named.

#### THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES BEGINS DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has decided to accept fifty-two doctoral candidates to begin their studies this Fall. Religion is included in the 21 courses being offered. The entrance examination for the doctoral program will be held August 25-27.



#### THE DEATH OF FATHER ROULEAU, S.J. (1900-1984)

China researchers were saddened by the news of the recent death of Father Francis A. Rouleau, S.J., founder and director of the China Jesuit History Project. Born in Minnesota, Father Rouleau arrived in Shanghai, China with the second contingent of volunteer Jesuits from the California Province in 1929. He was to spend the next twenty three years of his life studying and teaching there. Leaving China in 1952, he was assigned to the Philippines before going to Rome to begin work on the major research project of his life, the composition of a detailed history of the condemnation of the Chinese Rites in 1707 as experienced by Jesuit missionaries living in China during that period. In 1963, Father Rouleau was forced to return to California by ill health. However, his work continued not only on the Rites project but also in the many fields related to the history of the Church in China. His history work will go on through the establishment this year of the Sino-Western Cultural Exchange Institute at the University of San Francisco. This research will result soon, it is hoped, in the volume he was preparing before his death. Among those mourning the death of this student of China who was known for his scholarly thoroughness, contagious enthusiasm and sharp wit, is Archbishop Dominic Tang, a former student of his in Xujiahui, Shanghai, many years ago.