



FROM THE EDITOR

'The autumn wind is blowing and the days are getting cooler, the dew like beads of crystal clings to the waving grass and fallen leaves.' (Cao Pei) In the fresh breeze and bright moon of October, the 23rd issue of Tripod sees the light of the day.

We are happy to be able to offer our readers a special issue of Tripod focusing on Catholic Seminaries in China. Since the churches in Hong Kong and Taiwan are also particular churches belonging to the Chinese local church, there is every reason to include them in our concern. The lead article Priestly Formation in Hong Kong's Holy Spirit Seminary: Past, Present and Future, is offered to our readers by Rev. Thomas Kwan, the former Rector of Holy Spirit Seminary in Hong Kong. The article explains in detail the goals, directions, policies, and concrete plans of the different stages of Holy Spirit Seminary formation programmes. With the most challenging issue of 1997 in mind, Fr. Kwan has made some positive and constructive suggestions.

The author of A Visit to Catholic Seminaries in China is Rev. John Tong, editor-in-chief of Tripod. During the summer he, with Fr. Peter Barry, visited five seminaries in China, including the National Seminary in Beijing, seminaries in Shenyang, Wuchang, Sichuan and Sheshan Seminary in Shanghai. The article is an interesting report of the academic and extra-curricular activities of different seminaries.

Sister Maria Goretti Lau has written for us A Brief Introduction to the School of Theology at Fujen University and a brief report on Saint Thomas Seminary. The School of Theology at Fujen University was originally named Xujiahui Seminary. It was built by the Jesuits in Shanghai in 1927 before it moved to the Philippines in 1952 and then onto Taiwan in 1967. The School is now a Pontifical institute for theological training, recognized by the other Pontifical Seminary Colleges around the world. Saint Thomas Seminary, founded by Cardinal Thomas Tien, belongs to the Taipei diocese. In 1983, the diocese entrusted the administration of the seminary to the Jesuits in Taiwan.

We have also included two articles on the St. Pius X Seminary in Tainan, Taiwan; one by Rev. Francis Suen, the Rector of the Seminary, the other by Sr. Maria Goretti Lau. The two authors have given us different pictures of the Seminary each in his/her own fashion. Fr. Suen is more detailed with regard to the organization of the faculty, while Sr. Lau offers an overall view.

In Memory of the Most Rev. Carlo M.J. Van Melckebeke, CICM ----
The First Apostolic Visitor for Overseas Churches has been contributed by Mr. Paul Li I Te from Singapore. This lively portrait of Bishop Carlo M.J. Van Melckebeke flows from the deep affection of Mr. Li for his friend. The memory of the Bishop is still fresh in the hearts and minds of Mr. Li and hundreds of Overseas Chinese Catholics.

A Review of The Rise of Modern China is written by William Dockery. After critically evaluating both the strengths and the weaknesses of Immanuel Hsu's work, he finds Hsu's methodology of writing a contemporary history 'far from a total success.'

So we bring to a close our October issue, hoping that you, our readers, are enjoying the Autumn winds and the cooler days.



On the left, students from Beijing seminary
marching in the parade, on national day.