



## FROM THE EDITOR

The Year of the Rat, a year of anxiety when Hong Kong's attention remained rivetted on the 1997 Issue, slips quietly away; the Ox stands at the door bearing the promise of renewed peace and prosperity - the recent signing of the Joint Anglo-Chinese Agreement, hopefully, a harbinger. Such are the circumstances surrounding *Tripod's* 25th edition.

Apropos of the above, our lead articles this month address Hong Kong and the sensitive situation of the Christian Churches here. Both Father Secondo Einaudi (Vicar-general of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong) and Rev. Kwok Nai Wang (Chairman of the Hong Kong Christian Council) are in a position to throw some light on the future. Using the past history of the churches here, they surface certain strengths and weaknesses that will have strong implications for the future of christianity in a unique situation. They both also share a firm committment to the local Church and realistic hopes in her ability to emerge from these difficult times with new life and spiritual vitality.

Next we turn to some recent highlights effecting the Church on the mainland: Mother Teresa's visit, the reopening of the Catholic Church of Zhanjiang, and an eye-witness account of the consecration of Li Side and Jin Luxian as the new auxiliary bishops of Shanghai.

In "Theory and Practice", our Assistant Editor Peter Barry gives us some background and focus on what has to be the most dramatic of China's recent shifts in policy - the economic reforms. Peter follows the development of policy as it appeared in the *People's Daily* and other official publications.

Finally, we welcome back to our pages Lingnan College Professor William Dockery who reviews Paul Cohen's *Christian Missions and their Impact to 1900* (from *The Cambridge History of China*). He offers some fresh insights into missionary activity against the backdrop of modern Chinese history during the tumultuous 19th century.

We wish you all peace and prosperity in the New Year.