

# NEWS FROM SICHUAN:

by Paul Li I Te

translated by Francis Tse K. S.

## Consecration of Bishop Chen Shizhong

Chen Shizhong, presently the Dean of Studies at Chengdu Seminary, was consecrated bishop on June 14, 1985, the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, at the Catholic Church in Yibin City, Sichuan province. Officiating at the ceremony was the Most Rev. Duan Yinming, Bishop of Wanxian Diocese, Sichuan. In attendance were He Zhaozong (何朝宗) of the Religious Affairs Bureau, Sichuan, Su Houzhong (舒厚忠) and Wang Shouren (王守仁), of the District Party's United Front, Mr. Ho, Secretary of Municipal Committee of the Communist Party, and Liu Ronghui (劉榮輝), of the United Front Department of Chengdu City. Also present were the Chairman of the People's Political Consultative Conference, representatives from Protestant, Muslim and Buddhist organizations, five bishops, ten priests and about five hundred Catholics. The liturgy was solemn and festive. Speaking during the ceremony, Bishop Chen said that he did not feel qualified for the office but because of the confidence and love placed in him by the priests and Christians of the diocese, he had no alternative but to accept. He pledged to dedicate himself whole-heartedly to the glory of God and salvation of souls.

At present, the pastoral administration of both Luzhou City and Zigong City are under the jurisdiction of the Yibin diocese. Neijing district is now under the diocese of Nanchong and the pastoral administration of Leibo, Mabian and Pingshan belong to the diocese of Leshan. The diocese of Yibin has seven priests, three Franciscan sisters, eight local sisters and approximately thirty thousand Catholics.

The newly consecrated bishop was born on December 26, 1917 in Nanxi. Upon graduating from Chengdu Seminary in 1943, he taught for some years in a Catholic middle school before being ordained a priest in February of 1947. He has served as a parish priest in Luzhou, Jiang'an and Yibin.

Bishop Chen will shoulder the responsibilities of administrating Yibin diocese while continuing to perform his duties as Dean of Chengdu Seminary. He will reside at the seminary in Chengdu, and Fr. Song Wenji will be his acting administrator in Yibin.

### The Jurisdical Districts of Yibin Diocese, Sichuan



The boundaries of Yibin diocese, Sichuan, were redrawn in June of last year in order to facilitate administration of the 18 districts now under its jurisdiction. The following cities and counties make up the present Diocese: Zigong City, Weiyuan, Fushun, Lushou City, Lu Xian, Hejiang, Naxi, Yibin City, Yibin, Nanxi, Jiang'an, Changning, Gao Xian, Gong Xian, Xingwen, Junlian, Xuyong and Gulin.

So far only four churches in the diocese have been reopened (Yibin City, Luzhou, Xuyong and Changning), but a church in Zigong City presently under construction will be opened at the end of 1985, and another located in Jiang'an is also being prepared for reopening.

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