

EDITORIAL

I remember when I was teaching English at a college in China in the late 1980s, we were not allowed to speak about religion in the classroom. But one day outside of class, one of my students asked me if I believed in a religion. “Yes,” I replied, “I believe in Christianity; more specifically, I am a Catholic.” He then said, “You are an educated man, how can you believe in God?” I replied: “You have a point. It is difficult to come to believe in the existence of God by human reason alone. But God has helped us. He has given us a revelation. He has told us about Himself. That revelation is contained in the Bible. After I read the Bible, and listened to explanations of it, I said to myself: I can accept this revelation from God. If one accepts God’s revelation, that is called ‘faith.’ It helps that my family has been Christian for generations, and I have attended Catholic schools. So, yes, I believe in the Christian faith.” He answered, “Then you are a ‘slave’ of God, and you have to do everything that God commands you to do.” “No,” I replied, “We are not slaves of God. The Bible tells us (*Gen. 1:26*) that we human beings are made in the image and likeness of God. We believe that God created the world and us, and that we cooperate with God to create a better world. We are co-operators with God, and not slaves.” I then asked the student if he believed in God? “No,” he replied, “I believe in myself.” I said, “I believe in myself too, but I like the idea of cooperating with God because we get help on our life’s journey from God’s Holy Spirit.”

I don’t know if I convinced that student that having a religious faith is a good thing, but I thought of that conversation, as we at Holy Spirit Study Centre were preparing this issue of *Tripod* for the printer. The theme of this issue is Education in China, and Religious Faith. In the lead article, Mr. Chan Pui Kai investigates how President Xi Jinping’s theory of “The China Dream” influences the teaching of ethics in the Chinese educational system. Li De, a Catholic graduate student, describes how some university students come into contact with Christianity in their search for truth in their university studies. At the same time, Catholics sustain their

faith, and attract other students, by meeting in small groups off-campus.

Joseph, a Catholic student studying abroad, describes his experience as a Catholic studying in primary and secondary school on the mainland. Santiago Miro, a previous contributor to *Tripod*, compares Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto of 1848* with Pope Francis 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel*. Along the way, he makes some interesting observations on "common concerns and contradictory strategies."

Shorter articles include a sketch of Madame Curie and the "Flying University" in Poland in the 1880s, a comment on a mainland Catholic's adaptation of Catholicism to the Core Values of Socialism, and 2 letters regarding the dismantling of crosses from churches in the Wenzhou area, one by Bishop Zhu Weifang of the Wenzhou Diocese and one by the Wenzhou diocesan priests.

The Catholic Church and the other Christian churches in China should be granted more freedom to propagate the message of the Gospel. It seems to me that this would make a great contribution to the development of ethical education among young people in that economic powerhouse.

Finally, we here at the Holy Spirit Study Centre wish to offer our wholehearted congratulations to the three new auxiliary bishops for the Hong Kong Diocese, who were ordained at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Hong Kong on August 30, 2014. They are Bishop Michael Yeung (69), Hong Kong diocesan priest, Bishop Stephen Lee (58), member of Opus Dei Prelature, and Bishop Joseph Ha (55), member of the Order of Friars Minor (OFM). May God bless them in their episcopal ministry. (PJB)