

## EDITORIAL

**A**s an editor for *Tripod*, I was privileged to be in Rome, October 7-28, 2012, for the 13th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. The Theme the 262 bishops from around the world discussed was “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith.” Pope Benedict, in his homily at the opening Mass, stated, “The New Evangelization is directed principally at those who, though baptized, have drifted away from the Church and live without reference to the Christian life. The Synodal Assembly which opens today is dedicated to this new evangelization.” (Bulletin 03, 7/10/2012)

The Holy See Press Office issued bulletins almost daily, containing nuggets, which rarely see the light of day. We dig a few out to highlight the theme of this issue of *Tripod*: how Catholic youth maintain their faith in a secular environment in China Today.

Near the end of their three-week long assembly the Bishops addressed a message to “the People of God.” Paragraph 7 of the 14 paragraph message concerned “Youth.” It stated in part:

“The youth are particularly dear to us, because they, who are a significant part of humanity and of the Church today, are also their future....We are not pessimistic (about youth) because in the depths of history is Christ’s love, but also because we sense in our youth deep aspirations for authenticity, truth, freedom, generosity, to which we are convinced that the adequate response is Christ. We want to support them in their search and we encourage our communities to listen to, dialogue with and respond boldly and without reservation to the difficult condition of the youth. We want our communities to harness, not to suppress, the power of their enthusiasm; to struggle for them against the fallacies and selfish ventures of worldly powers....Young people’s active role in evangelizing first and foremost their world is to be recognized.” (Bulletin 30, 26/10/ 2012)

One of the bishops, Gyorgy Udvardy, Bishop of Pecs, Hungary, shared his experiences during an intervention on the Synod floor:

“In the city of Pecs, there is a great big square in front of the cathedral where almost every evening young people gather around the walls and ledges of the church. They talk, play and sometimes shout, sometimes just fool around having fun. Looking at them, I often feel perplexed or sometimes scornful but most of all I feel a sense of responsibility: they are the “starving crowd.” Plucking up my courage, several times I have gone down to meet with them. I was surprised by their openness: they accepted my initiative towards a relationship with joy and told me enthusiastically about their studies, living conditions, worries, joys, relationships. They also asked many honest questions about the meaning of life, reason and the truth. They were especially curious about my personal opinion too: ‘Bishop, tell us what you really think!’ They want to know Jesus. One of the youths said to me: ‘Don’t tell me how Christ the Son of God was good, but tell me how Jesus lived as a human being, how he was able to love and be an obedient Son!’ Another spoke in this way: ‘Tell me simply what is good, what I have to do! Teach us!’ Since then, many of them have begun to participate in First Friday catecheses as well as silent Eucharistic adoration. During these times, many of them confess or ask questions of the priests who are present there. At the end we pray the litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which they love, and the meeting concludes with *agape*.”

In this issue, we have several articles by young Catholics in China, describing how they maintain their faith in an atmosphere, which is for the most part, skeptical, and sometimes even downright hostile, towards it. We pray that the Chinese Catholic young people remain steadfast in their faith, and that their fellow citizens, seeing their steadfast witness may one day come to embrace that faith themselves. (PJB)