

FROM THE EDITOR

For anyone who grew to maturity in the years during and after the Second World War, the most dramatic change in catholic parish life has been the emergence of lay men and women in roles that once were considered to be part of the sacred domain of the clergy. Not only have the laity invaded the sanctuary, where they now serve as ministers of Word and Sacrament, but they have, through such organizations as the Parish Council, breached the walls of that most sacred of clerical castles, where the decisions are made on behalf of the Christian community, the rectory. Happily this trend continues. The old saw about the place of the laity being in the pews listening to the pastor who stood in a pulpit three feet above criticism, no longer gets the laughs that it once did. Today as the role of the laity expands at an ever accelerating rate, more than one pastor finds himself in the position of Alice in Wonderland who is told by the Queen that in her land she must run twice as fast just to stay in the same place.

What better time than the present to devote an issue of Tripod to "Lay Ministries"?

We have asked Father Adolfo Nicolas, SJ to contribute some thoughts on the "Ecclesiological Underpinnings of Lay Ministry." Father Nicolas is well known in Asia for his work at the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila before taking up his current post as Professor of Theology at Sophia University in Japan. He has also been playing a key role in the Hong Kong Diocesan Renewal through his participation in its annual Clergy Renewal Camps, where he urges pastors towards those changes that will bring "meaningful theory into concrete and dynamic practice." Fr. Nicolas' article is a rich and rewarding review of the history of the laity in the Church with a solid projection into the future.

Bishop John B. Wu of Hong Kong, just back from the World Conference of Bishops in Rome, was invited a second time by government officials to visit the China Mainland. His journey took him to his hometown and a joyful reunion with his mother after 40 years of separation. Since our director John Tong was a member of the delegation, we are able to bring you an eyewitness account of the bishop's trip as well as the text of his public addresses there.

Fans of Sister Goretti Lau, our Assistant Editor who is now on study-leave at Louvain in Belgium, will be happy to see she has not forgotten us. She was on the spot to report the historic visit of the Chinese Bishops to one of Christendom's oldest and most revered institutions of higher learning.

We close this issue with a most sincere wish that the Year of the Tiger bring you peace, joy and happiness. Kung Hei Fat Choi.

CALLING ALL AUTHORS !

If you would like to contribute a manuscript to TRIPOD, the following guidelines may be of use:

1. TRIPOD'S focus is Christianity and China. Articles relating to this field are most welcome. Our more specific emphasis is on religion and morality, Church history - events and personalities, philosophical and theological approaches to the East - West dialogue, and the exchange of research materials among China study groups.

2. We encourage a wide variety of literary forms: dissertations, China travel reports, critical reviews of books and the arts, pictorial essays and personal comment.

3. The ideal length of an article is about two to three thousand words. If in English, please type and double space. If in Chinese, please use Chinese manuscript paper.

4. Submitted manuscripts will be returned at the request of the author.

5. Also upon the authors request, the final English and Chinese versions will be returned for comment and correction before publication.

6. The authors of published material will receive, in addition to five complimentary copies of the issue in which the work appears, a one year free subscription to TRIPOD.

7. Please submit all manuscripts to: The Editor, TRIPOD, Holy Spirit Study Centre, 6, Welfare Road, Aberdeen, HONG KONG.