



FROM

THE

EDITOR

Much has been said and written lately about the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, and what role it might play when the territory reverts to China in 1997. Our first two articles in this summer issue hone in on the possibilities of bridge-building as a key concept in identifying its future task as a local church in service to others. Bishop John B. Wu has already stated his hope that the diocese of Hong Kong may be a bridge-church, facilitating communication between the church in China and the universal church. Our lead article offers you some thoughts by the noted Australian missiologist Jim Knight on just what building a "bridge-church" might entail. Father Knight heads the Asian research branch of missiological studies for the Society of the Divine Word. He is concerned with historical models of bridge-churches, how they developed, and what we can learn from their strengths and weaknesses.

We have also reprinted an interesting and rather lengthy news release from International Fides News Service, an organ of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, which is, in fact, a commentary on Hong Kong occasioned by the Pope's choice of our diocese as the

special mission prayer intention for the universal church for July. The release seeks to educate catholics throughout the world to a better understanding of the diocese's situation vis-a-vis China and Rome.

Readers of Tripod will be familiar with the work of Jean Charbonnier M.E.P., the Director of China Catholic Communications in Singapore, who has been a regular contributor to these pages over the years. "The Church and State in China Today" is his most ambitious work for us to date. His melding of personal insight and observation with careful historical research produce their usual effects of stimulating further reflection and sparking more than passing interest on the Church in China.

You will also find in this summer issue some comments on the international gathering of world churches in Nanjing during May, an interview with Bishop Jin of Sheshan Seminary, Shanghai, and his companions after their recent visit to west Germany, and some book reviews dealing with the always controversial subject of missionary history in Hong Kong and China.

That about wraps up our summer package, which we hope will find its way into your picnic baskets, beach bags, or back-packs as you set out to restore weary bones and flagging spirits in whatever favourite watering holes the summer may find you. Have a relaxing summer holiday.