
FROM THE EDITOR

Habitual readers of these pages will recognize the search for Christian unity as one of our constant, recurring themes. In the past, many of our articles have stressed the importance of theological dialogue, inter-faith exchanges, and cooperation in those practical tasks that manifest our common concern for the world in which we all live. Our present issue takes for its theme an essential ingredient without which a true and lasting unity is not possible, and that is prayer. When Christians pray together, they tend to create an atmosphere of openness which goes a long way in breaking down the barriers that separate us. Prayer that is humble and sincere leads beyond mere tolerance to an experience of communion.

In our first offering, Monica Liu, an artist from Taiwan who now resides in the United States, explores the common ground shared by poets and painters -- their hunger for beauty and truth. She reminds us of our own vocation to become artists of life, and encourages us to use our capacity for wonder which can lead us beneath the surface realities of our lives to discover a world rich with new meaning and possibility. Our response is, of course, a prayer of homage and of praise.

In the ever-increasing complexity of a technological society, the simple, self-effacing life of Charles de Foucauld and his Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus stands out in contrast. The anonymous writer of our second article points to how such a life of unaffected love and dedicated service may demand much faith, but it is the kind of faith that is able to transform the world.

Father John Reilly is an Australian Jesuit and a much traveled spiritual director in the Ignatian tradition. He has given many workshops throughout Southeast Asia and Oceania on the exercises of St. Ignatius and their contemporary relevance. He sees the process of

spiritual discernment as an encounter with God, from which we can draw upon his presence to achieve maturity of spirit and inner harmony. The act of discernment is itself a prayer.

Our present issue on prayer closes with a brief collection of familiar and unfamiliar prayers. What joins them together in a common unity is the theme of man's weakness and vulnerability in the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit.

October is our 'birthday' month. We have reached the age of seven, the age of reason according to traditional moral theologians. Without commenting on how well we have used this most abused faculty, we take the opportunity to thank you all for your inspiration and support throughout the years. We can only acknowledge our need, express our gratitude, and, most fitting for this issue of Tripod, offer our prayer.

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.