

# FROM THE EDITOR

Fundamental to traditional Chinese thought is reverence for God and love of humanity. Within this context of love for one's fellow human beings, love for parents is paramount. This ideal is to be found in the often repeated maxim: "Among all virtues, filial piety holds the first place." When speaking of filial piety, the Chinese give particular place to the love of one's mother. A primary reason why Buddhism was able to achieve such rapid success in China was due to its zealous propagation of the cult of the goddess Guan Yin. There may be a lesson here for Christians. If the Christian faith is to take firm root in Chinese soil, the church cannot neglect the role of Mary, the Mother of God, in its teaching. This has led us to our choice of Mary as our special topic for this issue of Tripod.

We begin with an article by Mark Fang, S.J., who is not only the rector of Fujen University's School of Theology in Taiwan, but also a well-known scripture scholar. Father Fang's brief but lucid commentary on an article by Father Aloysius B. Chang, which will appear in Collectanea Theologica #75, directs our attention to some new and interesting insights into contemporary studies in Mariology. He finds Father Chang's approach creative and timely, given the present warm climate of ecumenical dialogue. He also feels that Father Chang offers Catholic readers important clarifications of popular misconceptions on the Church's teaching about Mary that will help to off-set many misunderstandings.

Our second article is a commentary on the Mother of the Redeemer, the encyclical of Pope John Paul II which opened the Marian Year, and is by Father Aloysius B. Chang himself. Here Father Chang takes a theologian's look at the encyclical's contents and finds it to be in the mainstream of the Church's teaching on salvation history. The encyclical also can serve an added function as a valuable tool in preparing Christians for the 2,000th anniversary celebration of the Birth of Christ.

Regular readers of Tripod will recognize the by-line of our next article. While Sister Maria Goretti Lau is on study-leave to Louvain University, she still manages to carry on her commitment as one of Tripod's veteran editors. "The Dawn of Salvation History: Mary, Mother

of Faith" is a fitting summary of Sister Goretta's analysis of the interior faith-life of Mary of Nazareth. It is clearly a labour of love, and a source for strength for those on the path to spiritual maturity.

Our issue on Mary would not be complete without a contribution from the China mainland, where devotion to Mary has a long and celebrated history. Here we present extracts from a sermon on Mary given by Bishop Zong Huaide, who is the current chairman of the national board of the Catholic Patriotic Association. The Bishop's filial devotion is apparent, as is his pastoral concern that reverence for the Mother of God continue to flourish among Chinese Christians.

Our final article is not on Mary but a review of an historic meeting of Catholic and Marxist thinkers which took place in October of last year in Hungary. Written by A. Periera, S.J., who is a member of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-believers - a co-sponsor of the dialogue - it offers more than a little hope for the possibility of Christians and Marxists to work together to solve common social problems.

### 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.

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