

CHINESE CATHOLIC BISHOPS APPOINTED IN CHINA BY POPE PIUS XII 1949 TO 1955

by Anthony Lam Sui-ki

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INTRODUCTION

Although the Communist government assumed power in China in 1949, the Catholic Church continued its long-term commitment to Chinese Society. Foreign missionaries were expelled in large numbers, but most Chinese church leaders remained at their posts to serve the Church. In 1949 communications were still possible and the Holy See appointed at least eighteen Chinese bishops in mainland China to pastor the Church during a period of possibly difficult period.

This article gives a brief account of the lives of these 18 bishops. Some of them have passed away while others are still serving the Church. I hope to write a longer article about them sometime in the future.

Other Chinese Bishops, appointed and consecrated before 1949, remained in China after the establishment of the People's Republic.¹ Someday I hope to write an article about them also.

The names, dioceses and dates of the bishops' appointments² are presented in the following table:

APPOINTEE	PROVINCE DIOCESE		DATE
Duan Yinming, Matthias	Sichuan	Wanxian	June 9, 1949
Deng Jizhou, Paul	Sichuan	Leshan	June 9, 1949
Lei Zhenxia, Simon	Shanxi	Fengyang	June 9, 1949

Gong Pinmei, Ignatius	Jiangsu	Suzhou	June 9, 1949
Pi Shoushi, Ignatius	Liaoning	Shenyang	July 26, 1949
Zhang Kexing, Melchior	Hebei	Siwanzi	Nov. 3, 1949
Han Tingbi, Francis	Shanxi	Hongtong	Apr. 18, 1950
Zhou Weidao, Anthony	Shaanxi	Fengxiang	May 31, 1950 ³
Deng Yiming, Dominic	Guangdong	Guangzhou	Oct. 1, 1950
Fan Xueyan, Peter Joseph	Hebei	Baoding	Apr. 12, 1951
Li Boyu, Alois	Shaanxi	Zhouzhi	May 10, 1951
Li Daonan, Joseph	Hubei	Puqi	May 10, 1951
Yi Huanhua, Francis	Hubei	Xiangyang	May 10, 1951
Zong Huaimo, Alfons	Shandong	Yantai	Jun. 14, 1951
Wang Xueming, Francis	Nei Mongol	Hohhot	Aug. 29, 1951
Li Huande, Pacificus	Shaanxi	Yan'an	Dec. 13, 1951
Wan Cizhang, Joseph	Hunan	Hengyang	Feb. 14, 1952
Yang Guangqi, Humilis	Shanxi	Yuci	Sep. 20, 1955 ⁴

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF THE BISHOPS

DUAN YINMING

Born on February 22, 1908 in Mutou Town, Daxian City, Sichuan Province, Duan studied in Rome in the 1930s and was ordained priest on March 27, 1937 in Rome. He was consecrated on Oct. 18, 1949 after the former prelate, Mgr. Wang, retired. He endured forced labour at Chenjiaba, from 1966 to 1973, and then stayed in his home town from 1973 to 1979. He resumed charge of his diocese in 1980, and now resides in Wanxian City, Sichuan Province.

DENG JIZHOU

Born on November 9, 1902 in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, Deng studied in Rome in the 1930s. He was ordained on February 9, 1936 in Rome and was consecrated on September 21, 1949. He was sentenced to labour camp in 1969 at the age of 67 and released four years later. He resumed direction of his diocese in 1979 and passed away in Leshan City on August 10, 1990.

LEI ZHENXIA

Born in 1914 and ordained in 1940, he was consecrated in 1951 in Shanghai by Mgr. Riberi. He was imprisoned in 1955 and sentenced to death in Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, in 1971.

GONG PINMEI

Born in Pudong County, Shanghai City, on August 2, 1901, Gong was ordained on May 28, 1930, and consecrated on October 7, 1949 in Shanghai. He was appointed bishop of Shanghai in 1950 and administrator of Nanjing and Suzhou in 1951. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1955, and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1960. Bishop Gong was released on parole in 1985 and regained his civil rights on January 5, 1988. He went to the United States for medical treatment in May 1988 and is now residing there.

PI SHOUSHI

Born on February 1, 1897, Pi was ordained on July 1, 1928, and consecrated on October 11, 1949. He was briefly detained in the early 1950s. He was elected President of the Catholic Patriotic Association in 1957 and again in 1962. Archbishop Pi passed away on May 16, 1978 in Beijing.

ZHANG KEXING

Born in Siwanzi, Qihar Province (now included in Hebei Province) on January 6, 1914, Zhang was ordained in Rome on March 18, 1938. He was imprisoned by the Japanese invading army in Hebei Province during the Second World War and was again imprisoned by the Communist government in 1949. He was in jail until 1985 with two brief releases in 1951 and 1957. Zhang had been consecrated by Mgr. Leo De Smedt in 1951. He was released on parole in March 1985 and passed away at Huanhua City, Hebei Province, on November 6, 1988.

HAN TINGBI

Born in Changzi County, Shanxi Province, on February 22, 1908, Han was ordained priest in July 22, 1934. He was consecrated by Archbishop Riberi in Shanghai on June 25, 1951. He underwent house detention in 1957 and endured forced labour from 1958 to 1979. He resumed leadership of his diocese in 1980 and presently resides in Hongdong County, Shanxi Province.

ZHOU WEIDAO

Born in Dayingli Village, Fufeng County, Shaanxi Province, on May 1, 1905, Zhou joined the Franciscan Order in 1917. He was ordained on January 18, 1930, and consecrated bishop by Mgr. Riberi in Shanghai on October 1, 1950. He was in prison from 1959 to 1979. He took over control of his diocese in 1979, and consecrated his auxiliary bishop in

1980. Bishop Zhou passed away in Fengxiang City on February 14, 1983.

DENG YIMING

Born in Hongkong in 1908, Deng studied in Europe and joined the Society of Jesus in 1930. He was ordained in 1941 and consecrated bishop on February 13, 1951 by Mgr. Gustav Deswazieres. Deng was imprisoned in 1958 and remained in jail until 1980. He resumed charge of his diocese on October 8, 1980, and went to Hongkong for medical surgery in November 1980. He was appointed Archbishop of Guangzhou by Pope John Paul II in Rome on June 6, 1981. Denounced by the Patriotic Association for accepting this, Archbishop Deng now lives in Hongkong.

FAN XUEYAN

Born on December 12, 1907, Fan was ordained a priest on December 22, 1934, and consecrated bishop on June 24, 1951. He was imprisoned from 1957 to 1979. He was sentenced to an additional ten years' imprisonment in 1984, but released on parole in November 1987. He resides in Baoding City, Hebei Province.

LI BOYU

Born in Weiqizhai Village, Shaanxi Province, on June 3, 1908, Li was ordained on July 9, 1933. He studied in Beijing from 1935 to 1938. He was consecrated bishop in August 1951, and elected Vice-president of the Patriotic Association in 1957. He spent five years in prison beginning in November 1966. He passed away at Weiqizhai on February 7, 1980.

LI DAONAN

Born at Ankiu Village, Hubei Province, on July 17, 1902, Li was ordained on August 15, 1936, and late consecrated bishop by Mgr. Ferrucius M. Rosa in 1950. He was elected vice-president of the Patriotic Association in 1957 and was principle consecrator of the first "self-elected, self-consecrated" bishops.⁵ He passed away in the early 1970s.

YI HUANHUA

Born in Laohekou City, Hubei Province, on November 18, 1900, Yi was ordained on February 14, 1926. He was consecrated by Mgr. Li Daonan in 1951, and elected vice secretary general of the National Patriotic Association in 1957. He passed away during the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976).

ZONG HUAIMO

Born in Guocun Village, Shanxi Province, on April 2, 1904, Zong joined the Franciscan Order in 1925. He was ordained on April 19, 1931, and consecrated bishop by Mgr. Giuseppe Giuliano Oste on July 29, 1951. He resided in Beijing, and passed away there in 1975.

WANG XUEMING

Born in Xiaoluo Village, Dalita, Inner Mongolia on October 4, 1910, Wang was ordained on July 28, 1935 and consecrated bishop by Mgr. Morel in 1951. He was imprisoned from 1955 to 1957, and underwent forced labour from 1966 to 1970. He resumed leadership of his diocese in 1980 and now resides in Hohhot City, Inner Mongolia.

LI HUANDE

Born in Tongyuanfang Village, Sanyuan County, on March 1, 1904, Li joined the Franciscan Order in 1927, and was ordained priest on May 17, 1930. He was consecrated bishop by Mgr. Zhou Weidao in 1953 and imprisoned from 1955 to 1965. He returned to his hometown in Sanyuan County and remained there until he passed away on February 16, 1972.

WAN CIZHANG

Born in 1907, Wan was ordained in 1932 and consecrated bishop by Mgr. Li Daonan in 1952. He was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment in 1958, and died in 1961 in First Changsha Prison, Changsha City, Hunan Province.

YANG GUANGQI

Born in Qixian County, Shanxi Province in 1912, Yang joined the Franciscans in 1935. He was ordained in 1940 and was secretly appointed as Bishop of Yuci Diocese in 1955. Imprisoned in 1955, he passed away in prison in Taiyuan City on November 11, 1957, without having been consecrated.⁶

Notes

1. Cf. "The Catholic Church in Chinese Dawn" by Thaddaeus Hang, PP. 73-77. (Tainan, 1963)
2. According to Josef Chao Qingyuan's book "A Brief History of The Hierarchy in the

Church of China" Window Press, Tainan, Taiwan, 1980.

3. Ignatius Gregory Larranaga was appointed Bishop of Pingliang on June 24, 1950. However, he left China soon after his consecration in Shanghai. Foreign bishops are not mentioned in the above name list.

4. There is a minor mistake in Hans Kung and Julia Ching's new book "Christianity and Chinese Religions" (Munich, 1988) It states on p. 249 (English version, New York 1989) that "no bishops were appointed anymore (after 1952)."

5. Cf. "The Catholic Church in China, Past and Present" by Gu Yulu, p. 150. (Shanghai, April 1989)

6. "Annuario Pontificio 1971", still kept the name of Bishop Yang Guangqi (Yang Kuang Chi) on the records however. According to his elder brother, who was the Vicar General of the diocese, Bishop Yang passed away two years after being imprisoned.

