

FROM THE EDITOR

Priests and Sisters have a unique and important role in the Church. Committed to an evangelical life they witness to God's love through prayer and dedicated service to the People of God. They also seek to encourage individual Christians and the whole of the Christian community to bear witness to the Gospel and to render generous service to others. Therefore, the formation of future priests and Sisters is a number one priority not only of the Chinese Catholic Church but of the universal Church as well. We have chosen FORMATION, therefore, as the special topic for this issue of TRIPOD.

Our first article, "Priestly Formation in Asia Today" is a reflection on the document on priestly formation to be discussed at the worldwide Synod of Bishops this month in Rome. It is written by the eminent Indian theologian, Michael Amaladoss, S.J. In it he explores possible new directions in the formation of today's priests, especially as these apply to the situation of the Church in Asia. Father John Tong, our director and Sister Goretti Lau, our executive editor, discuss the present situation and future hopes of the formation programs in the seminaries and convents of China. These articles are must reading for all concerned about the formation of future leaders in the Chinese Church.

Finally, we offer a series of brief articles which deal with a variety of matters: Anthony Lam our executive secretary brings us up to date on the situation of bishops appointed by the Pope in the early 1950's. Father Alphonse Savioz gives us an account of the situation of the Catholics in eastern Tibet. Other articles bring news of the arrest of "underground Catholics" in Fujian Province's Fuan district and the struggle of two Catholic organizations in Yunnan Province to protect church property. For our English readers, we are providing a translation of a document issued by the Religious Affairs Bureau of Kunming entitled, "Provisional Regulations Governing Places for Religious Activities in Kunming".

The selection of the materials mentioned above reflects the stand of our publication: the study of the past to foresee the future, faithfulness to the truth, objectivity and the promotion of reconciliation.