

From the Editor

Ten Years of Grace

Let us thank God for His Ten Years of Amazing Grace!

For Holy Spirit Study Centre and its major publication TRIPOD the final quarter of 1990 marks an end and a beginning. It marks the end of their first decade of fruitful endeavor to develop liaison work with the Church in China and the beginning of a second that will bring them into the year 2000 and the new millenium.

As we look back on the past ten years and bear witness to our gratitude, we cannot refrain from making the words of the psalmist our own:

*Let us thank God for his love
for the marvels he has done for us.
Let us offer thanksgiving sacrifices
and proclaim with shouts of joy
what God has done (Ps. 107,
vs.21-22).*

First of all, we thank God for bringing us together and making us His humble instruments for building bridges with the Chinese Catholic Church. In so doing we have been awed and deeply influenced by the faith and the quality of the spiritual life of the Chinese Catholics. For our part we have tried to transmit to them the love and support of the Universal Church and to promote reconciliation and communion.

Ten years ago it was the amazing

grace of the Holy Spirit that moved, without any previous contact, the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions in Europe, the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America and the authorities of the Hong Kong Diocese in Asia to come to one and the same conclusion: namely, to assign personnel who would devise ways of manifesting a special concern for the church in China. In October 1980 Fathers Angelo Lazzarotto, P.I.M.E., Elmer Wurth, M.M., Peter Barry, M.M. and the present writer met in Hong Kong and together established what is today known as the Holy Spirit Study Centre. The first issue of TRIPOD appeared the following January.

During the intervening years the Centre has received a great deal of help from many lay Catholics, Sisters and priests. Some came at our invitation; others sought us out. We are deeply grateful to each of them for their wholehearted and faithful encouragement. We are indebted both to the Diocese of Hong Kong on which the Centre depends for financial support and to individual Catholics and organizations in Hong Kong and outside for their monetary contributions. These have enabled us not only to maintain the Centre's work but to develop further the varied aspects of the Centre's goals.

Secondly, it was also the amazing grace of the Holy Spirit which inspired

Cardinal Wu to give our Centre its name and mission. Furthermore, his choice of Holy Spirit Seminary for the Centre's location has provided us with a place of quiet suitable for research and an excellent library where reference materials are readily available. Our daily contact with the seminarians has stimulated the special concern of our Centre for the formation of seminarians and novices in China. In a word the physical and material advantages of the seminary have provided us with benefits not easily available in other circumstances. The very milieu of the seminary lends our Centre strong spiritual support.

Initially, some were critical of our Centre, but for the most part these criticisms emanated from loving and concerned hearts. These actually helped us deepen and broaden our outlook on the situation in the Chinese Church. This, we believe, was all due to God's infinite wisdom and loving providence.

Finally, it was also through the amazing grace of the Holy Spirit that the Centre's work evolved and expanded. The Centre's original plan called only for publishing the bi-monthly magazine TRIPOD, for promoting dialogue between people inside and outside of China, for engaging in research and for introducing the situation of the Catholic Church in China to friends outside to arouse their concern for it. In order to keep pace with the changes and the needs of the times, the Centre also developed. We increased

the number of our publications. Three years ago we began the monthly publication "God Loves China" as a supplement to the diocesan weekly *Kung Kao Po*. The aim of this publication is to help our Hong Kong Catholics appreciate and learn from the faith of the Catholics in China and thus to nourish their own faith. To transmit news of the universal Church to Catholic leaders in China and to help them experience the one-family nature of the Church, we began the publication of "Vox Mundi" in May 1990. In addition to these new endeavors the Centre has taken concrete steps to provide teaching materials and scholarship aid to seminaries and convents in China. The development of these new works has caused us to experience more deeply the words of St. Paul, *The charity of Christ urges us (2 Cor. 5:14)*.

Because Hong Kong is linked to the mainland by ties of nationality, culture and geography, our Centre is ideally and strategically situated to establish direct contact with the Chinese church. Therefore, mutual exchange is one of our Centre's most important works.

As our tenth year comes to an end, we call on people everywhere and in all walks of life to thank God with us, asking for his guidance to keep improving the quality of our services in the future, so that we may effectively witness to the many blessings God has showered on us and on the Catholics of China.