

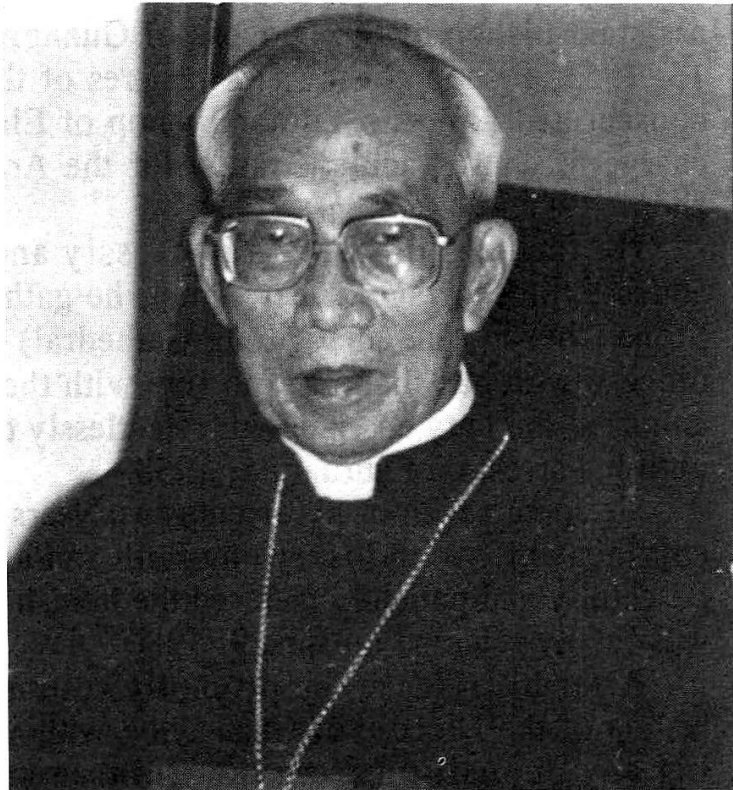
China Church and News Update

Archbishop Deng Yiming Dies at 87

*A tribute by Anthony Lam and Chau Sau Ming
translated by Michael Sloboda, M.M.*

Deng Yiming (Most Rev. Dominic Tang, S.J.), the Archbishop of Guangzhou, passed away in St. Joseph's Hospital in Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A., on June 27, 1995, at the age of 87.

This pastor, who spent 22 years in prison because of his faith, left Hong Kong in January 1995 for San Francisco. On



May 26, he left San Francisco for Stamford to attend a triple celebration for his good friend, Cardinal Ignatius Gong (Kung) Pinmei. It was Cardinal Gong's 65th anniversary of priesthood, 45th anniversary of episcopal consecration, and 15th anniversary as a cardinal. On the afternoon of that day he became ill and was taken to the hospital, where, despite emergency treatment, he returned to the Lord on June 27.

Archbishop Deng was born into a Catholic family in Hong Kong on May 13, 1908. He was one of the first students to attend Wah Yan College. He entered St. Joseph's Seminary in Macau in 1922. As a young seminarian, he hoped to enter the Society of Jesus. After receiving permission from the Bishop of

Macau, he moved to Portugal in 1930 to enter the Jesuit novitiate. In 1937, after having completed several years of study, he returned to Macau. A year later he was assigned to Shanghai to study theology. He was ordained a priest in Shanghai on May 31, 1941.

After ordination, Archbishop Deng went to Beijing for his tertianship, then returned to Shanghai to minister to the Cantonese speaking Catholics there. In 1946 he was called to Shiqi City in Guangdong and entrusted with parish and school responsibilities. In November 1950, Pope Pius XII appointed him the assistant bishop of the Diocese of Guangzhou. On December 13, 1953, Bishop Gustav Deswazieres of the Diocese of Beihai consecrated him the Titular Bishop of Elatea, and put him in charge of church administration for the Archdiocese of Guangzhou.

He faced all problems fearlessly and energetically. To address the shortage of personnel, he gathered together in the Stone Church (the Guangdong Cathedral) all the clergy of the diocese who had dispersed to live with their own families. He animated the laity and labored relentlessly to build up the church until his arrest on February 5, 1958.

He spent seven of his twenty-two years in prison in solitary confinement. With his strong faith and a deep spirituality, he peacefully and patiently endured the hardships of prison life. He was finally released on June 9, 1980.

After his release, he promptly resumed his duties as the bishop of the Diocese of Guangzhou without immediately meeting any opposition from the Chinese government. A few months later, he was diagnosed as having liver cancer. On November 5, 1980 he received a visa to go to Hong Kong for medical treatment. He recovered, and in the following year (1981) he went to Rome for his *ad limina* visit. There, on June 6, Pope John Paul II named him Archbishop of Guangzhou.

Both the Chinese government and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association reacted strongly and negatively to his appointment. Archbishop Deng, sensing the hostile atmosphere, realized that he could not return to China as he had originally planned. He decided to remain in his birthplace, Hong Kong. Nevertheless, with characteristic evangelical enthusiasm, he labored tirelessly in pastoral work, and made many trips overseas visiting and lecturing to various Chinese Catholic groups

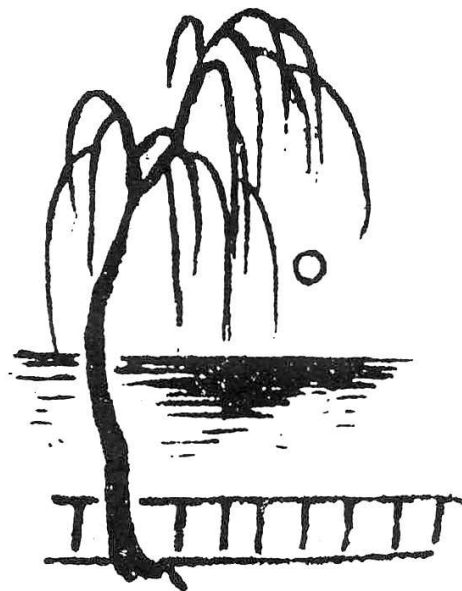
throughout the world. He was warmly welcomed wherever he went.

When he reached the age of 75 in 1983, Archbishop Deng, in accord with church regulations, submitted his request to retire as Archbishop of Guangzhou. The curia rejected his application.

During the mid-1980's, Archbishop Deng published a monthly magazine, *Hui Sheng*, to keep overseas Chinese Catholics throughout the world in touch with one another. When he was in Hong Kong, he often visited the Holy Spirit Study Centre, praised its work and gave it his heartfelt support and encouragement.

In 1991, which was both the golden anniversary of his priestly ordination and his 40th anniversary as a bishop, he received praise from Pope John Paul II for his sacrifice and contributions to the church.

Although Archbishop Deng has now left us to return to his Father's house, the testimony of his life causes us to reflect in reverent silence and recall the words of St. Paul: "I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith; all there is to come now is the crown of righteousness reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his appearing. (2 Tim 4:7-8).



China Update

Assembled by the *Tripod* Staff

Death of Bishop Paul Fan Yufei

Underground Bishop Paul Fan Yufei, 63, of Zhouzhi, Shaanxi, died of a heart attack on April 5, 1995. Bishop Fan was born on July 26, 1931 in Dayingxi village, Shaanxi province. Bishop Fan was secretly ordained a priest on May 29, 1979, and ordained bishop on January 2, 1982 by the late Bishop Zhou Weidao.



Bishop Li of Xian celebrated the requiem Mass in the village where Bishop Fan was born and where he is now buried. About 4000 people attended the funeral. The government never recognized Fan as a bishop but they did acknowledge him as a priest. (UCAN 817/A May 2, 1995).

Bishop Charles Lemaire, MEP, dies in Hong Kong

Bishop Charles Lemaire, 95, who served in Jilin (Kirin) north-

east China from 1930-1945, died in Hong Kong on April 22. Bishop Lemaire will be remembered for his love of China "which was daily in his mind and prayers," said Fr. Raymond Rossignol, MEP superior general. Cardinal John Baptist Wu Cheng-chung presided over the concelebrated requiem Mass.

Bishop Lemaire was born in 1900 in northern France. He entered the MEP in 1925 and was ordained a priest in 1929. He left for China the following year. In 1939, he was ordained coadjutor bishop of Jilin and later was appointed superior general of the MEP in 1945, a post he held until 1960.

In behalf of the Catholics of Jilin, Father Yan, vicar of Jilin diocese, when informed of the Bishop's death, sent condolences to the MEP house in Hong Kong and said that daily Mass and prayers had been offered for the Bishop from April 23 to 26.

China-appointed Bishop Liu Huanbo of Heilongjiang and two other deceased China-appointed bishops, Li Xuesong of Jilin and Wang Ruihuan of Heilongjiang, were his former students (UCAN 816/B April 26-28, 1995).

Joseph Chen Xu Ordained Official Bishop of Zhanjiang

Bishop Chen is the new bishop of the newly erected diocese of Zhanjiang, erected on the Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, 1995, and situated in southwestern Guangdong.

Bishop Chen was ordained a



priest on June 11, 1949, in Guangzhou. Besides its new bishop, the diocese has four priests, 20 Sisters and an estimated 20,000 Catholics (UCAN 811/A March 21, 1995).

Underground Christians Arrested and Fined

During the past eight months, police in Henan's Zhoukou city have launched a massive crack-down on Christians who worship at unofficial or house churches. The raids were reported by a Christian women who escaped to Hong Kong. She said that the police have detained more than 200 Christians. They were released only after paying fines ranging from 300 yuan to 1,800 yuan.

The latest crackdown was apparently sparked by the tremendous increase in the number of Christians in the area.

According to the report, there are at least 30,000 house church Christians who worship at more than 1,000 meeting points (SCMP, July 3, 1995).

In another account reported by Deng Zhaoming, editor of *Bridge* magazine, Public Security officials in Huoqiu county, in Anhui raided underground churches in March and arrested everyone present. One of the

leaders arrested had his hair shaved into the shape of a cross and his hands stabbed with scissors. Others were severely beaten. Property was confiscated and houses were demolished.

The authorities forced all underground preachers to take part in law and discipline classes and each participant was required to pay 20 yuan to join such classes (SCMP, May 12, 1995.)

According to other informed and reliable sources, 67 Protestant house church members and at least three overseas Chinese Christians were also arrested in another raid in April in Hubei province. Group members were taken, handcuffed, to the Zhongxiang Public Security Bureau detention centre. Some were interrogated for up to 20 hours. After several days in custody, the local Christians were told they would be released upon payment of a 200 yuan fine. Those who refused to pay have remained in detention (SCMP, May 4, 1995).

Mass Arrests in Jiangxi province

According to various reports, thirty to forty Catholics, not associated with the official church, were arrested immediately before and after Easter in Jiangxi province. Arrests were made on April 13, 14, 18 and 19. Most have now been released.

Although the PSB continued to search for the leaders of the community, the arrests did not deter more than 20,000 members of the underground church from gathering on Yujia mountain for Easter Sunday Mass.

Easter in Tianjin

The Catholic Church in Tianjin, both official and underground, report record attendance at the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday liturgy. Feelings between the two groups have intensified since underground Bishop Joseph Shi Hongchen became bishop in the official church in May 1992. Many Catholics who have refused to follow the bishop chose to attend Mass in village churches of the underground. Bishop Shi was secretly ordained Auxiliary to underground Bishop Stephen Li Side in 1982. Bishop Li, who is restricted to a suburb of Tianjin, has been under surveillance since 1989.

Social Welfare and the Church and Social Welfare

In 1992 underground-ordained Bishop Julius Jia Zhiguo of Zhengding opened up several church-run foundling homes for orphans and handicapped children. The Wuqui home has recently received official recognition from the government.

The approval of the government of such church-run institutions is an indication of the need and demand for such welfare services. (UCAN 815/B April 21, 1995).

Following the tradition of the Catholic Church to provide medical help to the sick and poor, several priests and Sisters in China, who are also medical professionals, have recently opened a number of clinics and hospitals. These are located in Hebei, Henan, Hubei, and Hunan provinces as well as in other areas

of China. (UCAN 816/B April 28, 1995).

New Religious Bureau Chief Appointed

A conservative cadre, Ye Xiaowen, former head of Section 2 of the United Front Department, has been appointed the new head of the State Council's Religious Affairs Bureau. He replaces Zhang Shengzuo, 63, now in charge of the RAB's Culture Publishing House, established for the publication of Bibles and other devotional literature.

According to sources, Mr. Ye is an avowed atheist with no formal religious training or overseas experience (SCMP, July 8, 1995).

National to be Relocated

Daxing county, a suburb of southern Beijing, is the site for the new national seminary and National Catholic Headquarters. The new location is six times the size of the present seminary site in Changwa in the Haidian district of Beijing.

The cost of the new construction is estimated at US\$4.5 million and is designed to accommodate 300-400 students. The present site can house 110 students.

The new seminary will focus on further training and refresher courses for priests. Theologians from outside of China and priests from mainland China who have studied abroad will be invited to teach there. When the present national seminary building in Changwa is vacated, it will be used by the BCCCC (Bishops' Conference of the Catholic

Church in China) and CCPA (Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association) for offices (*UCAN* 816/B April 27, 1995).

Hostel Opening Provokes Controversy

A newly opened hostel on former convent property in Tianjin has sparked controversy among Catholics. The convent, confiscated during the Cultural Revolution, was returned to the diocese in 1985 and elderly Sisters took up residence in it. In 1988, the Sisters were moved to a former priests' residence and the property was rented to a boutique. According to reports, proceeds from the rent were then shared between church and government officials. In 1994 government authorities converted the premises into a hostel and decided that the hostel, the Tianjin Minzu Hotel, would be run jointly by official church authorities and the Tianjin Nationality Affairs Commission. The RAB denies the report that the commission is getting a larger share of the profits than the church or that it has the right of management. Catholics object to having a dance hall and a bar on the premises. Bishop Shi explained that the affair was started by the RAB in an effort to help the church alleviate its financial difficulties, including financing the education of seminarians.

Amnesty International Attacks Death Penalty

Amnesty International has criticized mainland China for its use of the death penalty for non-violent crimes ranging from car theft to embezzlement.

The human rights group said it recorded 2,496 death sentences for violent and non-violent crimes last year and at least 1,791 executions were carried out, 372 more than in 1993.

The London-based group said, "These figures are far below the actual number of death sentences passed and executions carried out during the year."

Amnesty reported that 33 people were executed in Guangdong on May 27, 1994 for stealing cars (*SCMP*, May 1, 1995).

Intellectuals Petition Government

Forty-five leading intellectuals, scientists and dissidents sent President Jiang Zemin and head of the National People's Congress, Qiao Shi, a petition calling for an end to the persecution of 1989 pro-democracy activists, "Chinese citizens have the right to present petitions to the relevant departments of China, and these departments shall, in accordance with the laws and regulations, handle these cases," Foreign minister spokesman Shen Guofang said.

Previous petitions have been dismissed by the government saying they were submitted by people who had lost their political rights through criminal activity.

Analysts suggested that the authorities were wary of attacking the petition because of some of the distinguished signatories including Wang Ganchang, the 88 year-old inventor of China's atomic bomb (*SCMP*, May 19, 1995, also *Agence France* and *United Press International*.)