

Ordinations in Jilin Diocese

It was a crisp, cold March 16th morning in northeast China this year as Changchun Catholics boarded buses at 5 AM for the 2 1/2 hour ride to Fu Long Quan where the ordination of 8 young priests for the Jilin Diocese was to take place. In addition to the ordinations, the newly constructed Fu Long Quan church was to be consecrated that day.

Promptly at 9 AM the procession of Mass servers, candidates, concelebrating clergy and ordaining prelate, Bishop Pius Jin Peixian of the Liaoning Diocese, got underway, led by the local Catholic brass band. The benches having been removed; there was standing room only in the church, as Catholics from all over Jilin Province converged on Fu Long Quan for this event.



At the singing of the Litany of the Saints, the church seemed to shake with the presence of the Holy Spirit, as the Catholics with a mixture of joy and anxious supplication, called upon all the Saints from church history to bless these young men now prostrate before them.

The Catholics' joy came from the realization that they would now have priests who would celebrate the Eucharist with them after a hiatus of so many years. Many even wept as the ceremony progressed.

After Mass relatives and friends happily knelt even in the dust of the unpaved churchyard to receive the first blessing of the newly ordained. The new priests, all in their mid-20's, had graduated from the Jilin seminary in June 1995.

In the intervening years they had gained practical experience working in parishes or teaching in the seminary.

The names of the new priests are: Paul Lu Xiuming, Joseph Gan Ruibin, Paul Wang Xiquan, Joseph Cao Zhi, Peter Xu Jingcheng, Joseph Wang Guosheng, Carlos Zeng Fanchang, and Alphonse Chen Wenquan

