

*From
the
Editor*

1981-1991

*Editorial
Policy
and
Goal*

From the Editor

In Tripod's very first edition, January 1981, Father John Tong, the editor-in-chief, set the editorial policy and goals of the new publication.

As everyone knows, the Four Modernizations of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and defense are today setting China on fire. They are becoming the orientation for both the present and future construction of the country.

The four modernizations are indeed an urgent necessity for China today, and are also helping her to take the first step on the road towards a complete and total modernization. But, how are the four modernizations related to China's religious and ethical attitudes? What, in fact, is the relation between this not yet complete and total modernization and those religious and ethical views? This is the problem we Christians have to pay special attention to, and, in fact, will be the focus of this periodical. We hope through this periodical to be able to share and to discuss these with our brothers and sisters in the Church.

This periodical is named "DING", which is one of the 64 Chinese hexagrams. This Chinese character, according to one commentator, symbolized the wood which is used for kindling a fire and for cooking. The sage's cooking is a sacrifice to the Sovereign on High, and at the same time it is nourishment for the wise man. This exchange brings true wisdom. The wise man makes progress

by proceeding calmly and gently. By keeping to the middle way he is able to overcome adversity. This is the key to an effective creativity. The meaning of this character reflects the attitude of concern and persistence we Christians should have towards religious and ethical problems in China today.

This periodical's fervent hope is to try by means of an empathetic dialogue to experience today's religious and ethical problems in China and, in a simple way, to introduce these problems and to report on them. We hope thereby, to have a more complete understanding of the situation, to be able to reflect upon our responsibilities.

Since the staff of this periodical is still small and their abilities limited, editions will have to be published at irregular intervals. We plan to bring out a few editions annually. We hope that you, brothers and sisters not only show your concern by accepting, correcting and propagating this periodical, but that you also enthusiastically contribute by submitting articles and pictures. Let us all join together to work diligently, so that through the modernization of our country we might all look forward to a brighter future, so that the Kingdom of God might soon be realized in our country.

[Fr. John Tong]

In the second issue of Tripod, using the year of the rooster as his starting point, Father Tong delineates further the purpose of the periodical.

The year of the Rooster has just begun. For thousands of years, we Chinese, observing the Rooster's external appearance and actions, have said that he has the "five virtues": literary and military ability; courage; charity; faithfulness. The crown on the Rooster's head shows his literary powers, his spread-out feet his military prowess. He is always ready to guard against the enemy at the door, and so he is brave. He calls out to others as soon as he finds food, and so he is charitable. He watches through the night without rest, and thus he is faithful.

Through this periodical we especially hope to imitate the charity of the Rooster. The flock of chickens scratches the earth for food. When they find it, they call out to their companions to come and enjoy the food with them. In the same way we are "scratching" and searching among the various questions about contemporary China.

When we find some material on religion and ethics, we hope to be able to proclaim it aloud, and share and reflect upon it with our brothers and sisters. [John Tong]

In Tripod's tenth anniversary issue, Father Tong, in his editorial comment, thank God for ten years of Amazing Grace. He wrote:

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.