

## *Hua Ming Art Gallery*

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By Jiang Xin

Translated by Norman Walling, S.J.

- 1 I provided seven art works for the first eight Sacred Art exhibitions. With the closure of the Huaming Gallery, however, I was unable to take part in any further exhibit.
- 2 Towards the end of the summer holiday in 1993, the executive director of the Guangren Culture and Education Foundation, Mr. Chen Mingqing, phoned me saying he wanted to discuss something. It was only after we met that I discovered that the Huaming Gallery, which had closed for a long time, was to reopen. He was also inviting me to come to work there. Because Mr. Chen had been my senior officer, (we had been at Kuang Jen Middle School and known each other more some 30 years), I decided to join him.
- 3 Once the decision was made, we hired a designer, made a budget and had the place refurbished. After three months the physical aspects were ready.
- 4 While the work was in progress Mr. Chen invited four art directors: Sr. Yu Huiying, Mr. Guo Binsheng, Miss Zhao Rongzhu, and Mr. Wang Ruimin. Sr. Yu was a member of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. She was a graduate of the Art Academy in Paris and a distinguished artist. Mr. Guo Binsheng was, at the time, the director of the Pastoral Center, a fervent missionary and Gospel preacher. He was vitally interested in reading and explaining the Bible. Miss Zhao Rongzhu was his successor at the Pastoral Center. Mr. Wang Ruimin was a high school art teacher. Later, pressing duties precluded him from taking part in committee meetings. This was a great loss.
- 5 After several meetings the Committee decided to hold six exhibitions annually. After consulting with a variety of people, the gallery enlarged its scope and vision. As a result, the gallery has already held 25 exhibitions. (Cf. enclosed schedule.)

6. **Nature of the exhibits divided into eight types.**
  1. ***Articles used in Catholic liturgy.*** These exhibits were presented by the Sisters of the Congregation of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master. Besides priests and Sisters many non-Catholics came to the exhibits.
  2. **Painting exhibition by primary and high school students depicting *Our Lady and the Holy Family.*** The purpose of this exhibit was to foster the seeds of religious faith in the hearts of these youngsters. The Guangren Cultural Foundation has also offered scholarships to encourage the students in their artistic efforts.
  3. ***The paintings featured in the exhibition of Chinese Holy Pictures were earlier works produced by the teachers of the Art Department of Beijing's Fu Jen University.*** Among these artists were Chen Ludu, Lu Hongnian, Wang Xiaoda and others. These paintings always win the highest praise. Special thanks must be given to the principal of Heng Yi High School, Fr. Jia Xiang, for submitting the highly prized work of art, the first Chinese painting of the Virgin and Child.
  4. ***The Catholic Artists Painting and Calligraphy Exhibition*** is presented annually. The purpose of this exhibit is to gather together our Catholic artists to discuss the development and future of local church art. It also provides an opportunity for these artists to meet annually for an exchange of views and mutual encouragement.
  5. The ***Exhibition of Pottery and Paintings*** of young students. This proved to be a very real challenge. At first we wondered what these children might be able to produce. Would their articles be sufficiently mature and acceptable to viewers? After many contacts with the teachers of the schools that joined the exhibition, everybody agreed to proceed with the plan. The works of these youngsters were put on display at the exhibit. They were a feast for the eyes. The objects were sold at a charity bazaar organized at the same time. Several reporters from the major papers were on hand,

eager to report on the event. The publicity served to increase the number of visitors. All agreed that this exhibit was a most satisfying experience.

6. A *Priests and Sisters' Painting and Calligraphy Exhibition* was probably the first one of its kind organized for the Catholic Church in Taiwan. The purpose was to bring Catholics closer to the church and help both Catholics and non-Catholics realize the talents of those who serve in it. It was also hoped that this exhibition would bring together priest and sister artists with talent in writing and painting to discuss the future of religious art and practical ways to carry out plans to develop sacred art within the church. Bishops, priests and sisters eagerly took part in this exhibition. Bishop Cheng Shiguang was the first to send us his contribution. He was followed by Bishops Luo Guang, Jia Yanwen, Fathers Shi Antang, Li Hanyi, Lu Yaowen, Lin Zhiding, Ma Wencai, Wu Zhenduo, Wu Daoyuan, Liu Zhiqiang, Sisters Chen Meijin, Lu Youse, Shen Chengzhao, Yao Jingru, Zhang Cuiwen, An Delan, Chen Xiumei, You Huiying, Chen Meihua, Mai Yase—there were altogether more than 30 participants all having their own individual style. Despite the differences in quality, their works opened up new possibilities.

7. There was the *Catholic Teachers Sacred Art Exhibition*. We asked all art teachers to hold an annual exhibition of their works. They responded enthusiastically. Their works included traditional Chinese painting, calligraphy, oil paintings, water colors, engravings, and pottery. The majority of these works emphasized God's glory, extolled Chinese culture and promoted the development of local religious art.

8. There is also the *Christmas exhibition* celebrating works of modern artists. Calligraphers who take part span three generations: the old generation of artists of long standing fame and those who have become famous recently, and the talented influential middle aged and young calligraphers. The works exhibited are all above average.

***Exhibits: Hua Ming Gallery: 1994-1998***

Year	Month/Day	Exhibition
94	1.22-2.20	Inauguration—Liturgical Articles
94	5.14-6.13	Mary: the Center of Our Hearts (Primary students
94	8.6-8.25	Painting and Calligraphy in Sacred Art
94	10.8-10.27	Pottery in Sacred Art
95	2.18-3.9	Children's Art
95	5.6-5.25	Mary: Center of Our Hearts. Middle/Primary School students
96	2.24-3.8	Catholic New Spring Painting and Calligraphy
96	4.13-4.26	The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ
96	6.1-6.14	Priests' and Sisters' Painting and Calligraphy
96	8.17-8.30	Life of Faith Art: Fr. Lu Yaowen
96	10.12-10.24	Children's Art (Pottery, Painting, Handicrafts
96	12.14-12.27	Celebrating Christmas—Modern Catholic Artists
97	2.15-2.28	New Spring Painting and Calligraphy, Catholic artists
97	4.26-5.9	Holy Family Art, Senior/Middle school students
97	6.21-7.4	Priests' and Sisters' Painting and Calligraphy
97	8.16-8.30	Catholic Teachers Art Exhibit
97	10.18-10.30	Children's Art
	12.20-12.31	Celebrating Christmas, Modern Catholic Artists
97	5.17-5.24	Ecological Art Exhibit, Sacred Heart Girls' Middle School
97	11.15-11.21	Reminiscences of Tan Fangming
98	2.14-1.26	New Spring Painting and Calligraphy, Catholic artists
98	4.18-4.30	Kindergarten students Exhibition
98	6.20-7.2	Photo Exhibit, Senior High School students
98	8.15-8.27	Yi Zhi Exhibit
98	10.17-10.29	Catholic Teachers Art Exhibit
98	12.19-12.31	Celebrating Christmas—Modern Catholic Artists