

Death of Bishop Anthony Zhong Quanzhang of Meizhou

Reported by Peter Barry, M.M.

Bishop Anthony Zhong Quanzhang of the Meizhou Diocese, Guangdong Province, died on January 28, 2000. He was 79 years of age. His funeral was held at the Meizhou Cathedral on February 1. Bishop Zhong was born in Indonesia in 1921. His family returned to China to live when the bishop was a young boy. Young Anthony began his studies for the priesthood at St. Joseph's Minor Seminary in Kaying (the former name of Meizhou). In 1945, after the Second World War, he was sent to study theology at the South China Regional Seminary in Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

Returning to Kaying in 1948, Anthony Zhong was one of five priests ordained that summer by Bishop Francis X. Ford, MM, who died in a Guangzhou prison in 1952. The diocese of Kaying was without a



The beloved bishop of Meizhou, Bishop Zhong, is mourned by his priests, Sisters, and laity at the funeral Mass in the Meizhou Cathedral.

bishop until the consecration of Bishop Zhong, 37 years later, on May 7, 1989. Bishop Zhong was the first Chinese bishop of Meizhou. The diocesan leader for the intervening years between Bishops Ford and Zhong was Father Paul Lam, vicar-general.

During his years as a bishop, Zhong put a lot of effort into training the Sisters of the Meizhou diocesan community, giving daily lectures to them on the Bible and theology. The Sisters were being trained as catechists for the several parishes in the nine counties of northeast Guangdong Province, which make up the Meizhou Diocese. The Sisters will certainly miss Bishop Zhong's fatherly care for them.

As a wonderful preparation for departure from this world, Bishop Zhong had the joy of ordaining four young men to the priesthood in Guangzhou on January 1, 2000, only four weeks before his death. Bishop Lin of Guangzhou, too sick to perform the ordinations himself, asked Bishop Zhong to replace him.

Fifteen priests from different areas of Guangdong Province and from Fujian Province concelebrated Bishop Zhong's funeral Mass, with his classmate, Father Paul Liang, as main celebrant. After Mass, many persons gave eulogies in praise of Bishop Zhong. Then a large procession of Catholics, led by the Xiaoloc Catholic band, followed Bishop Zhong's coffin through the streets of Meizhou on the way to the crematorium. It was a final mark of respect for him.



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