

Editor's words

Evangelization is the Church's primary mission, its unique grace, and its profound characteristic. Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization in the New World), was promulgated over fifty years ago, states that the Church exists precisely for the purpose of evangelization, bringing people reconcile with God. This exhortation explores in detail the content, methods, beneficiaries, workers and spirit of evangelization, thereby examining what means and methods should be employed to truly transform people and make it effective.

How the Gospel is spread in different places and cultures, and shared among different audiences has always been a key concern for local churches and missionaries. Regarding the Asian church, the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences held its Second World Mission Congress in Penang, Malaysia last November (2025), with the theme "The Great Pilgrimage of Hope." Apostolic Prefect of Ulaanbaatar Cardinal Giorgio Marengo, in his concluding remarks, points out that the Asian Church are discovering mission as "a spiritual conversation, enlightened by the Emmaus episode." Evangelization is "like a prayer, it transforms us." Asians have their own way of sharing the Gospel and are a tremendous gift to the Universal Church. "Every culture is

original, and the many noble cultures of Asia are a mirror of God's multifaceted beauty.”¹ In mainland China and Hong Kong, based on different cultural backgrounds and social circumstances, each place has its own unique characteristics and focus in evangelization.

This issue of *Tripod* focuses on the theme of evangelization in the modern world, exploring the Catholic Church's understanding and practical pastoral challenges, as well as feasible suggestions. This issue features six thematic articles. The first of which is written by **Fr. James Kroeger, MM**, discussing Pope Paul VI's apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World). The author points out that the Second Vatican Council and recent popes have placed evangelization at the heart of the Church's identity and mission. His article focuses on Paul VI's unique contributions to understanding the rich, complex, multifaceted, and interconnected aspects of evangelization. The document presents evangelization as an integrated and holistic process, encompassing preaching, catechism, witnessing, social liberation, cultural adaptation, and dialogue. Thus, the scope of evangelization extends to the full transformation of humanity and cultures in the light of the Gospel. Such comprehensive presentation, in later years, has become widely accepted in the Church. This can be seen in two other papal documents on evangelization:

1 Cardinal Giorgio Marengo, “Concluding Remarks,” in *The Great Pilgrimage of Hope, Nov 27-30, 2025 Penang, Malaysia*, eds. Shelton Pinheiro et. al. (Bangkok: FABC Central Secretariat, 2026), p. 224.

Redemptoris Missio [RM] of Saint John Paul II (1990) and *Evangelii Gaudium* [EG] of Pope Francis (2013).

The following three articles explore evangelization within the context of the Church of China in mainland. **Sr. Feng Boyi** argues that respecting culture plays a significant role in evangelization, allowing the gospel to integrate into people's lives. Therefore, she identifies similarities and points of communication between Chinese culture and Christianity, thereby enabling the Chinese Church to grow and develop. Emphasising the importance of cultivating a spirit of synodality in the mission of evangelization, **Fr. Li Jingxi** explores the evangelizing mission of the laity—especially the laity in the Church of China, as well as the role of women in evangelization. He offers several suggestions to better utilize the charisms of each member of the Church. **Sr. Chen Xiaoqiong**, likewise employing the perspective of “synodality,” examines the role and mission of women in the local Church. Employing the Catholic Church in the Southwest region of China as an example, she points out that while it is easy to speak of women's participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church, it is difficult to put into practice. She deeply experiences that women, whether in the family, society, or the Church, often situate in a subordinate position, making it hard for them to fully exercise their gifts and contribute meaningfully to the Church and society. After reviewing the unique regional culture, historical background, and current circumstances of the Catholic Church in the Southwest, and discussing the call

to synodality in the universal Church, she proposed concrete suggestions to enable women to participate in the Church in China, especially in the Southwest region, in diverse ways, including the decision-making level.

Two other articles explore the methods of evangelization that are suitable for newcomers from mainland China studying or working in Hong Kong. The two authors, **Huang Huidong** and **Effie Ye** are both young people from mainland China pursuing postgraduate studies in Hong Kong. Employing the experiences of the Christian churches in Hong Kong as examples, they discuss the situation and challenges faced by these newcomers, reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of existing means of evangelization and pastoral practices. They propose alternative approaches that are worthy of consideration by the Catholic Church. Huang addresses the needs of these newcomers with “water-like evangelization,” emphasizing unconditional hospitality, active companionship, and preaching only at appropriate times. Ye explores a pastoral model centered on theologian Christoph Theobald’s idea of “style and encounter”, emphasizing the establishment of unconditional and intimate relationships by emulating Christ’s virtues of hospitality to demonstrate the love and goodness of the Christian faith.

In addition, this issue also includes an article written by **Sr. Victoria Lau, FMM** on the constitutional revision process of religious women’s orders in the Church in China. Sr. Lau delineates the situation and challenges faced by

women religious orders in China since the 1950s. Based on her rich experiences in contact with the Church in China, Sr. Lau analyzes the Vatican's requirements for religious regulations and the challenges of revising them, including the need for the participation and cooperation of all nuns, the difficulty of confirming the charisms of the religious community, issues of continuity and discontinuity, and the difficulties of religious life.

Furthermore, this issue also features a book review by American ethicist **David DeCosse**. Following the discussions on the human rights teachings of John XXIII and John Paul II in a previous issue, DeCosse further discusses the notion of human rights within the Catholic tradition through the book *Human Rights in a Divided World: Catholicism as a Living Tradition* by David Hollenbach. He affirms that there is a close relationship between upholding human rights and proclaiming the Gospel. As always, this spring issue includes a review of major events of the Church in China in 2025. Finally, I would like to thank all the authors for their generous contributions and the editorial board for their hard work.

Mary Yuen