

News Update on Religion and Church in China March 28 – July 7, 2017

Compiled by Katharina Wenzel-Teuber and Katharina Feith
Translated by David Streit

The “News Update on Religion and Church in China” appears regularly in each issue of Religions & Christianity in Today’s China (RCTC). Since the editorial staff learns of some items only later, it can happen that there are chronological overlaps between “News Updates” of two consecutive issues of RCTC. In these cases stories referred to in earlier “News Updates” will not be repeated. All “News Updates” can be found online at the website of the China-Zentrum (www.china-zentrum.de). – The last “News Update” (RCTC 2017, No. 2, pp. 3-21) covered the period November 13, 2016 – March 29, 2017.

Religious Policy

May 2017:

Video by the Communist Youth League: “What if atheism were a religion?”

According to the magazine *The Diplomat*, the Chinese Communist Youth League has been increasingly active in trying to influence young people in China. The magazine recently posted a video on its Weibo account propagating atheism under the title: “What if atheism were a religion?” (如果无神也是一种宗教). Evidently the same video was posted on YouTube on May 5; the credits list the propaganda department of the Youth League as the producer. In the satirical video, a young man encounters a group of atheists clad in white robes. Their “pastor” introduces him to their “atheistic religion,” whose adherents venerate scientists and philosophers as saints, recite the laws of physics, and pray for food to the “Almighty Self.” In the 2nd part of the video, professors of China’s top universities and other well-known personalities explain their atheistic convictions (*The Diplomat* May 13; the Video can be seen on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0kPxXhd6w4).

Religions in General

End of June 2017:

National training institutes of the various religions celebrate the graduates of 2017

43 graduates of the Chinese Buddhist Academy in Beijing received their Bachelor’s degrees on June 25. Also in Beijing, on June 27, the Chinese Koran Institute awarded Bachelor’s degrees to 29 graduates from three different ethnic groups: Hui, Uyghurs, and Kazakhs.

On June 30, the Protestant Nanjing Union Theological Seminary conferred 92 B.A.s and 17 M.A.s on 109 men and women. On June 29, 24 Catholic seminarians from 16 dioceses completed their seven-year study of theology with a B.A. at the National Seminary of the Catholic Church in China located in Beijing. A few days before their respective graduation ceremonies, the graduates of both the Protestant and the Catholic national seminary had separate receptions in the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA). SARA Vice Director Zhang Yantong extended congratulations and best wishes, together with political admonitions for their future activities. He also gave each of the graduates a gift of money.

As reported in Chinese State media, already on April 4, 2017, at the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, ten monks of the Gelug school had passed the exam for the highest level of the study of Tibetan Buddhism, the Geshe Lharangba (chinacatholic.cn July 5; chinaislam.net.cn June 28; njuts.cn July 4; *Renminwang* April 7; sara.gov.cn June 19, 27; zgfx.cn June 25).

Each of the five recognized religions has an official “national” institute for religious education, which is promoted as a political priority. The degrees awarded by these national and regional institutes for religious education have in recent years been standardized across the nation, although they are recognized only within the respective religious circles. In addition, there are also unofficial systems of religious education and formation in the “underground.”

Buddhism

April 8, 2017:

Tawang: The Dalai Lama speaks out on the question of his reincarnation

From April 8–10, the 14th Dalai Lama was in Tawang in the Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh, not far from the border with Bhutan and the People’s Republic of China, to deliver a series of teachings. In a press conference on April 8, he described as “nonsense” the Chinese government’s claim to be competent to decide on his reincarnation. He said that nobody knew where his reincarnation will be born; “I sometimes doubt if I’m even the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama.” It is up to the Tibetan people to decide whether there will be a next Dalai Lama, he declared. He mentioned that later this year he may resume discussions with prominent Tibetan spiritual leaders on how to proceed [with regard to his reincarnation].

In the weeks leading up to the trip, China had threatened India with serious consequences should it allow the Dalai Lama to travel to Tawang, which China regards as part of its territory. Tawang is also the birthplace of the 6th Dalai Lama. Robert J. Barnett, a Tibet expert at Columbia University, told the *New York Times* that in some cases aging Tibetan lamas had visited places where they would later be reborn. According to Barnett, the visits of the Dalai Lama to Tawang and Mongolia (in November 2016, see *RCTC* 2017, No. 1, pp. 7-8) seemed to fall into this pattern (dalailama.com April 8; *New York Times* April 7; *Voice of America* April 9).

April 9, 2017:

“Second Summit Forum of Theravada Buddhism” held in Dehong, Yunnan Province

The gathering featured lectures by representatives of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, of Thailand’s Chulalongkorn University, of the Theravada University of Rangoon (Myanmar) as well as of

the Chinese Buddhist Association. The highlight of the second day of the summit was a Theravada Buddhist ordination ceremony. The first Summit Forum of Theravada Buddhism was held in 2016, in Xishuangbanna (sara.gov.cn April 12).

In the People's Republic of China, the Mahayana school is the prevalent form of Buddhism. Theravada Buddhism of the Hinayana school, common throughout most of Southeast Asia, is the principal form of Buddhism only in China's Yunnan Province.

April 12, 2017:

Newly-founded “Nanhai Buddhist Academy” on the southern Chinese island of Hainan begins drive to enroll students – Indian newspaper speaks of significant victory of China’s “soft diplomacy”

Already at the Bo'ao Forum of 2016, Master Yinshun, Vice Chairman of the Chinese Buddhist Association and Chairman of the Buddhist Association of Hainan, had announced that the new Nanhai Buddhist Academy (南海佛学院, translated “Buddhist Academy of the South China Sea”) will begin enrolling student monks and nuns of the Theravada, the Tibetan and the Han Chinese schools of Buddhism from all the countries bordering the South China Sea (Nanhai) for the school year beginning in September of 2017. According to the academy's official website (www.nhfx.net), the goal of the new university, officially approved by the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), is to foster cultural understanding and religious exchange with neighboring countries and to serve the goals of China's state policy known by the motto “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR, i.e., the “New Silk Road”). The new university will offer its first 220 students (monks, nuns, and lay people) a basic four-year undergraduate curriculum in several courses, including courses on Buddhist music, art and architecture, temple management and social work. The 11th Panchen Lama, installed and backed by the Chinese Government, is one of the school's honorary rectors. The campus, which extends in an impressive way on the southern coast of Hainan down to the sea (see the designs on the school's website), is scheduled to be completed by late 2018.

According to an article about him on the SARA website, the rector of the new academy, Master Yinshun (born 1974), advocates a “South China Sea strategy,” i.e. more exchange with Southeast Asian Buddhist circles in the service of China's overall strategy. Master Yinshun, who holds a PhD degree and who maintains contacts in many Asian countries, is the abbot of a number of monasteries, including (since 2011) the Chinese Zhonghua Temple (中华寺) in Lumbini, birth place of the historical Gautama Buddha in Nepal.

According to *The New Indian Express*, with the opening of the new Nanhai Buddhism Academy, China has taken over the “vacant Buddhist diplomacy space” which was generated by India's slow progress with its planned construction of a new Buddhist Nalanda University in Bihar. The newspaper writes that the new academy has close links to the Buddhist centers in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Cambodia, which the paper sees as an attempt to completely sideline the Indian side in soft diplomacy, “usurping the Buddhist legacy of India.” According to *The New Indian Express*, China is also “aggressively” promoting Lumbini as a Buddhist pilgrimage site with the aim of countering the attraction of the two sites of Sarnath and Bodhgaya in India, where Gautama Buddha is believed to have attained enlightenment (nhfx.net; *The New Indian Express* June 5; sara.gov.cn March 28; July 6).

May 3, 2017:

Buddha in the diplomatic service – Celebrating Buddha’s birthday in Beijing and Hong Kong

The Chinese Buddhist Association (CBA) held a festival in honor of Buddha’s birthday at Beijing’s Lingguang Temple where a tooth of Buddha is revered as one of China’s two Buddha relics (the second being a finger of Buddha in the Famen Temple in Shaanxi). As reported on the website of the CBA, the celebration was planned to commemorate Buddha’s birth as well as to spread the excellent traditional culture of China and “to create a good international atmosphere for China’s strategy of ‘One Belt, One Road’ [OBOR, i.e. the new Silk Road].” According to the report, more than a thousand people gathered at the Lingguang Temple, in addition to Buddhists from all over China including also ambassadors and diplomatic representatives from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. Three Vice-Chairmen of the CBA, representing the three branches of Buddhism in China (i.e. the Chinese, Tibetan and Theravada branches of Buddhism), joined together to lead the recitation of the Sutras and the veneration of the Buddha. A representative of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) read out a congratulatory telegram on behalf of this government department.

On May 3 in Hong Kong – where Buddha’s birthday (Vesak) is a public holiday – a big blessing ceremony was held at the Coliseum to mark the 2,561st birthday of the Buddha and to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the return of Hong Kong to China. In addition to Buddhist dignitaries, among whom were the President of the Hong Kong Buddhist Association and two Vice Presidents of the CBA, ordinary Buddhist faithful as well as political representatives from Beijing and Hong Kong were also on hand for the event. In his address to the crowd, SARA Vice Director Jiang Jianyong paid tribute to the contributions which Buddhists have made to the welfare of Hong Kong and exhorted them to continue to develop their spirit of the “love of country and of Hong Kong” (*ai guo ai Gang*) (chinabuddhism.com.cn May 3; sara.gov.cn May 8).

May 19, 2017:

Young Tibetan monk in Qinghai sets fire to himself in protest – His was the 150th self-immolation since 2009 and the fourth this year

The 22 year old Buddhist monk, Jamyang Losel, set fire to himself in the County of Jianzha (Tibetan: Chentsa) in the Huangnan (Tibetan: Malho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province. He was rushed to the hospital but later died of his burns. According to the International Campaign for Tibet, this year alone (2017) four Tibetans in the People’s Republic of China have set fire to themselves in protest, including one only 16 years old, who called for freedom for Tibet and for the return of the Dalai Lama. Overall, the wave of self-immolations, which began in 2011, has somewhat declined in recent years, also due to massive countermeasures by the authorities (tchrd.org May 20; a list of those who have set fire to themselves can be found at: www.savetibet.org/resources/fact-sheets/self-immolations-by-tibetans).

June 29-30, 2017:

Conference on “Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism along the ‘One Belt, One Road (OBOR)’” in the Po Lin Monastery at Hong Kong



The Tian Tan Buddha on Lantau Island. Photo: Jakub Hałun 2009, Wikimedia Commons.

160 postgraduate monks and researchers in Buddhism participated in the conference, organized by, among others, the Po Lin Monastery, by relevant institutions of the Nanjing University, Hong Kong University, Hong Kong Chinese University and the Hong Kong Baptist University, as well as the Mahachula Buddhist University in Thailand. Master Xuecheng, Chairman of the Chinese Buddhist Association, said in his address to the group that the Theravada and Mahayana branches of Buddhism along the Silk Road had originally been one

integral whole. He said that it was only through enhanced mutual recognition and cooperation [of the two main Buddhist branches], that Buddhist teachings would be able to reach more people and contribute to the birth of a new world civilization marked by a deep consciousness of unity. Jiang Jianyong, Deputy Director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, also addressed the participants.

On the morning of June 29 there was a big blessing ceremony in the Po Lin Monastery to mark “20 years since the return of Hong Kong [to China] as well as the 25th anniversary of the erection of the Tian Tan Buddha.” The 34-meter high Buddha statue stands near the Po Lin Monastery on the island of Lantau (chinabuddhism.com.cn June 30; sara.gov.cn July 4).

Daoism

May 10–12, 2017:

Fourth International Taoism Forum held in the Wudang mountains

According to Chinese media, 600 guests from 30 countries took part in the meeting, held in the Wudang mountains of Hubei Province, one of the holy places of Daoism. The forum was organized by the State-supported Chinese Daoist Association (CDA) and the China Religious Culture Communication Association (CRCCA), an organization under the umbrella of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA). This government sponsorship, as for the previous forums, lent a very official note to the proceedings. At the end, the participants adopted a declaration in which they advocated, among other things, a contemporary interpretation of Daoism, as well as its global spread. The First International Taoism Forum took place in October 2011 in Nanyue in Hunan Province (see: *RCTC* 2012, No. 1, pp. 10-11).

According to a report on the website of the Chiesa Taoista d'Italia (Daoist Church of Italy) the official preparatory meeting for the founding of a World Taoist Federation (世界道教联合会) took place on May 12, 2017, with Master Li Guangfu, Chairman of the Chinese Daoist Association, presiding; for more on this subject, see the article in *China heute* 2017, No. 2, p. 72 (in German) (<http://daoxie.daoisms.org/xinwenzixun/xinwenjujiao/2017-05-13/2417.html> [bi-lingual text of the declaration]; <http://daoxie.daoisms.org/s/4djl/> [official website of the forum]; www.daoitaly.org/2017.html May 12).

Popular Religion

July 1–7, 2017:

Statue of the sea goddess Mazu travels on the “Silk Road of the Sea” from Meizhou Island to Kuala Lumpur and on to Singapore

The island of Meizhou, lying off the coast of Fujian province, is regarded as the birthplace of the historic Mazu (i.e. of the girl Lin Moniang). The goddess Mazu is commonly invoked as the patron deity of fishermen and sailors. Travelling by plane, the statue of the goddess from the Mazu Temple of Meizhou was accompanied by the statues of two helper deities and a delegation of 130 persons, including teams for the performance of “Popular Culture.”

As reported in the Singapore *Straits Times*, on July 5 the statue of Mazu from Meizhou was carried in procession to seven different temples in Singapore and was then finally set up in the Mazu temple of Thian Hock Keng. There, the goddess was worshipped the next morning in a festive ceremony, to which many of Singapore's 38 Mazu temples had also brought along their own statues of Mazu.

According to the official Chinese news portal chinanews.com, the tour was under the theme of “Cultural Exchange of the Mazu Culture in the Spirit of the Silk Road,” and thus within the context of the national project “One Belt, One Road.” Almost three quarters of the population of Singapore are of Chinese descent (*AsiaNews* July 5; chinanews.com June 6; straitstimes.com July 6).

Islam

April / May / June, 2017:

Radio Free Asia reports on pressure on religious life in Xinjiang exerted by various government measures, including the placing of cadres in Muslim families during Ramadan

As reported by the American broadcaster *Radio Free Asia*, which cited local sources, the measures taken by the regime against religious fasting during Ramadan (May 26 to June 24) were even sharper this year than in previous years. So this year in Hotan, government cadres were reported to have been stationed for 15 days in Muslim families in various villages, mainly in order to prevent them from observing the Ramadan fast.

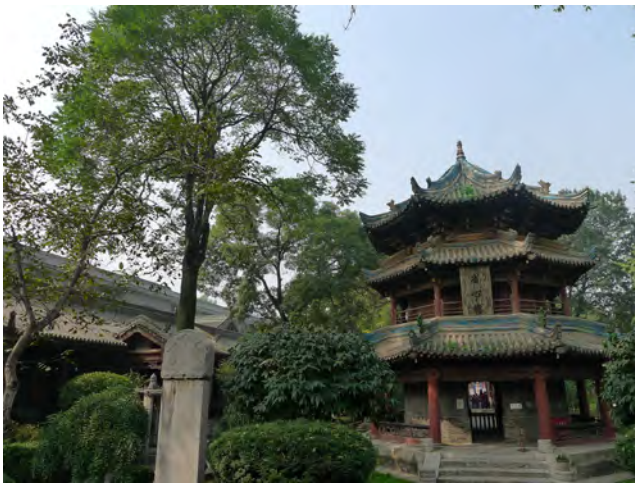
Furthermore, according to *Radio Free Asia*, in the middle of January, the inhabitants of Barin Township in Kashgar Prefecture were informed that they were required to turn in all editions of the Qu'ran published before 2012 – including those published with government approval – on the grounds that they contained “some signs of extremism.”

In addition, *RFA* reported on June 1 that according to a decree from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region's Public Security Bureau, Uighur parents were ordered to legally change all "overly religious" names – such as Islam, Koran, Mecca, Jihad, Imam, Saddam or Hajj – of children under 16 years of age; parents who refused to comply with this order were threatened with the loss of their children's household registration (*hukou*), which gives access to health care and education.

The Chinese state-controlled newspaper *Global Times* reported on April 11 that the party chief of a village in Hotan, Xinjiang, had been demoted because he "did not dare" to smoke in the presence of religious figures. *The Global Times* quoted another official from Hotan as saying that the party chief's behavior was indicative of "extreme religious thinking" (*Global Times* April 11; *Radio Free Asia* May 25, 26; June 1, 8).

April 6–7, 2017:

Conference on mosque architecture deals with the problem of "imitating foreign models"



Old mosques of the Chinese-speaking Hui Muslims were mostly built in the style of Chinese temples, such as the great mosque of Xi'an from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) (top). Newer mosques, such as this one in the Province of Henan (bottom), tend to be built in the style favored in Arabic countries. Photos: Ariane Reimers.



A conference in Xi'an, organized by the Chinese Islamic Association (CIA), the official umbrella organization of Islam in China, has called for mosque buildings in China to be adapted to the situation in the country and built in a Chinese style. Furthermore, mosques are to be practical buildings and should be built economically; excessive size and splendor are to be avoided. According to the conference report, which appeared on the websites of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) and the Chinese Islamic Association (CIA), throughout history Islam in China had oriented itself toward traditional Chinese construction and had developed a style of mosque with Chinese characteristics, something which shows the high grade of identification of Chinese Muslims with Chinese culture. In the last ten years, however, a tendency to "Arabize" had surfaced in the construction of Chinese mosques, with the inclination to compete in size and grandeur and to build mosques larger than had been envisioned in original building permits, the conference report said. Zhang Yantong, one of the Deputy Directors of the SARA, explained at the conference that the problem of blind imitation of foreign models in mosque construction was due to a lack of consciousness, and stressed the necessity to adhere to the basic direction of the

Sinicization of Islam. He added that mosques ought not to be built with the idea of turning them into tourist destinations. Representatives of Islamic associations as well as experts took part in the conference (chinainislam.net.cn April 8; sara.gov.cn April 7).

April 12, 2017:

The “Xinjiang class” of the Chinese Koran Institute receives a visit from the director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA)

After a hiatus of 15 years, 2016 saw the establishment once again of a “Xinjiang class” in the Chinese Koran Institute in Beijing, the central educational institute in China of official Islam. According to a report on the website of the SARA, twenty-four students from different prefectures of the Uighur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang were admitted to the 5-year course. SARA director Wang Zuo’an told the students from Xinjiang that the Central Committee of the party paid the greatest attention to the Xinjiang work, and especially to the training of young Islamic talent. He exhorted them to study well and to become “really good Islamic clerics, who are politically reliable, morally convincing in their character and morals, have good religious knowledge and an impact in decisive moments,” by displaying among other things a clear stand against all religious extremism. Wang called on the Koran Institute to take good care of the students from Xinjiang and to actively encourage and promote their contacts with the students from other parts of China (sara.gov.cn April 13).

Christianity

May 15, 2017:

New online platform on Christianity in China

According to a press release of May 15th, researchers now have access to “the worldwide largest online Collection on Christianity in China.” The “Online Chinese Christianity Collection” (OCCC) is jointly operated by the Kingdom Business College in Beijing and Globethics.net in Geneva, Switzerland. According to the press report, “Over 34,500 full text documents, multilingual and for free can be downloaded on www.chinesechristianity.online.” Two-thirds of the texts available to date are in Chinese, the remainder are in English, German, French and other languages. The following are listed as academic partners and institutes from which the texts in the collection have been drawn: China National Knowledge Infrastructure, Beijing; Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, Hong Kong; Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong; Fujian Theological Seminary, Fuzhou; Hong Kong Baptist University; Nanjing Union Theological Seminary; Yale Divinity School at Yale University; China Information Desk, Hamburg; China-Zentrum, Sankt Augustin; Sino-Western Studies, Finland; Foundation of Theological Education in South-East Asia and, finally, Open Access Repositories (globethics.net May 15; *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* May 17; *UCAN* May 29).

Catholic Church

March 28–29, 2017:

Conference in Nanchang: “Matteo Ricci and Nanchang: Sinicization and Inculturation of the Catholic Church”

The Conference was jointly organized by the Diocese of Jiangxi, the Catholic Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (FICS) in Shijiazhuang and two institutes of Fudan University in Shanghai: the Institute for Globalization and Religious Studies and the Xu-Ricci Dialogue Institute. The researchers presenting papers came from a number of universities and from the ranks of the Christian churches: some of them from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Italy (including a Professor of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome) and the United States. Representatives from the State Administration for Religious Affairs as well as some local authorities were also on hand. Most of the papers dealt with an analysis of Christianity and Chinese culture in the history of Christian missionary activity in China, in particular at the time of the China missionary Matteo Ricci SJ (1552–1610). In his paper, Father Zhang Shijiang, Director of the FICS, pointed to a recent survey regarding the attitude of Christians to ancestor worship; the survey was conducted simultaneously by two Chinese Church newspapers, the Catholic *Xinde* (Faith Weekly) and the Protestant *Jidu shibao* (Christian Times) (for more information on the results of this survey see *China heute* 2017, No. 2, pp. 72-73 [in German]). In her conclusion to the conference, Fan Lizhu of Fudan University rated the conference as a successful start of cooperation between religious and scientific circles regarding the research into the inculturation of the Church in China (*Xinde* No. 718, April 9).

April 6 / May 18, 2017:

Forced disappearance of underground Bishops Guo Xijin of Mindong and Shao Zhumin of Wenzhou – Bishop Shao still missing



Bishop Vincent Guo before 2008, while still a priest before his episcopal consecration. Photo: UCAN.

Both bishops were appointed coadjutor bishops by the Vatican and assumed the management of their respective dioceses following the death of their predecessors – underground Bishop Huang Shoucheng of Mindong, who died in July of 2016, and Bishop Zhu Weifang of Wenzhou, who was recognized also by the government and died in September of 2016. Both cases also have one other thing in common, that is, in the Diocese of Mindong as well as in the Diocese of Wenzhou, the underground Catholic community is very strong. In each case, it is thought that the authorities abducted the two bishops in the hope of convincing them to join the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association as well as the official Bishops' Conference. Fifty-nine year old Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin disappeared after an April 6 or 7 visit to the local government's religious affairs department in Fu'an and was released again on May 6. A Church source quoted by UCAN said that Bishop Guo was detained at a special center, which is otherwise used to convince party cadres under *shuangguai* (the party's internal

disciplinary proceedings) to confess their crimes. After Bishop Guo was released, three senior priests of his diocese were taken away by the police and detained for three days.



Bishop Peter Shao. Photo: *UCAN*.

Fifty-four year old Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin was taken away on May 18 by police and officials of the religious affairs department of Zhejiang Province, after the department had summoned him to a meeting. That was already his fourth arrest since the death of Bishop Zhu in September of 2016. According to *AsiaNews*, he was seen just by chance on June 16 by a Roman Catholic at the airport of Wenzhou, accompanied by government officials, who were taking him to an unknown destination. Both *AsiaNews* and *UCAN* reported that the authorities are allegedly demanding that Bishop Shao persuade the Vatican to name a priest of the official Church as his coadjutor. The German Ambassador in Beijing and the Holy See have each expressed their concern about the situation of Bishop Shao (see the entries of June 20, 2017, and June 26 / 27, 2017, in the section “Sino-Vatican Relations”).

In February of this year the underground Bishop Cui Tai of Xuanhua (Northern Hebei) was also taken into custody by security authorities and brought to an unknown location. As of May 24, his whereabouts were still unknown (*AsiaNews* April 10; June 6, 17, 19, 21; *UCAN* April 11; May 11; June 22, 28).

April 16, 2017:

Easter Baptisms for 2017: 19,087 newly baptized Catholics across Mainland China



Easter of 2017: Newly baptized Catholics in the Diocese of Baotou, Inner Mongolia. Photo: *Xinde*.

According to statistics published in the Catholic weekly newspaper *Xinde*, during the Easter celebrations this year a total of 19,087 persons were baptized into the Catholic Church in the various dioceses on the Mainland. It should be noted, however, that the statistics are not complete since some dioceses had not yet handed in their final numbers but the figure given is roughly the same as for the year 2016, when 19,615 baptisms were reported. As in previous years, the largest number reported was from Hebei Province, namely 4,464 (2016: 4,063). The Diocese of Xingtai alone reported 1,395. Beijing reported 444 baptisms and Shanghai 263. As far as is known, there was one baptism in Tibet and eight in Hainan.

“We have tried our best to collect figures from both open and underground communities,” said Father Li Rongpin, chief editor of Hebei Faith Press (*UCAN* May 8; *Xinde* April 30).

April 16, 2017:

Controversial concelebrated Mass between Bishop Ma Daqin (Shanghai) and Bishop Zhan Silu (Mindong)

Although still under house arrest, Shanghai Bishop Ma Daqin celebrated his first public Mass since 2012 together with Bishop Zhan Silu (Mindong), who is not recognized by Rome, while at the same time the bishop of Mindong Diocese recognized by Rome, Bishop Guo Xijin, had been abducted by government authorities (see above entry of April 6 and May 18, 2017).

Bishop Ma has been under some sort of house arrest since on July 7, 2012, he openly announced that he was leaving the Patriotic Association (PA) at the end of his the Mass at which he had been consecrated a bishop. In retaliation, the State-sanctioned leadership bodies of the Catholic Church in China have revoked his title of bishop. Bishop Zhan was present at Bishop Ma's consecration in 2012 (contrary to the explicit wish of Shanghai's Bishop Jin Luxian and of the diocese), although at the moment of his ordination, Ma would not allow Bishop Zhan to lay his hands on his head as is usual for concelebrants at both priestly and episcopal ordinations. According to press reports, at the surprising concelebrated Mass on Easter Sunday of 2017, Ma was actually introduced to the congregation as "Bishop Ma."

According to *UCAN*, Ma's concelebration at Mass with the illegitimate Bishop Zhan Silu "shocked" many Chinese Catholics – as had the June 2016 article Bishop Ma had published on his blog expressing his regret at having withdrawn from the Patriotic Association and his renewed acceptance in September of 2016 and January of 2017 of two positions in the Patriotic Association. Yet his concessions to the authorities have not so far seemed to have brought Bishop Ma any closer to being able to take up his position as bishop of the Diocese of Shanghai. At the priestly ordination in Shanghai on June 7, 2017, the first in the diocese since 2013, Bishop Ma was not present. The ordination to the priesthood was presided over by Bishop Shen Bin of Haimen (Jiangsu Province), who is considered to be (according to *UCAN*) "currently the most influential" man in the official Church. Scarcely a third of Shanghai's clergy showed their faces at the ordination. On May 18, 2017, seventeen religious Sisters of Shanghai Diocese professed either their temporal or perpetual vows. As *UCAN* has reported, in 2013 the authorities had put a halt to the profession of vows by religious Sisters. A person whom *UCAN* cited as one of their sources believes that the authorities only decided to allow the resumption of ordinations and profession of vows in Shanghai after Bishop Ma had made the compromises mentioned above. At this time, the Diocese of Shanghai is effectively without episcopal leadership and is in an unstable state (*AsiaNews* April 16; June 8; *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* April 22; *UCAN* April 17; June 9).

April 20, 2017:

Bishop Anicetus Wang Chongyi of Guizhou dies

Ninety-seven year old Bishop Wang Chongyi, recognized by both Rome and the Chinese Government, has died at a hospital in Guiyang. Bishop Wang was born into a Catholic family on October 26, 1919, and entered the minor seminary of Guiyang at the age of 13. He was ordained a priest in 1949 and worked as a pastor in various parishes. He was arrested during the Cultural Revolution and was sent to work in the countryside. In 1979 he was able to resume his parish work. Father Wang Chongyi was ordained Bishop of Guiyang on December 4, 1988. He resigned from the episcopate on September 8, 2014. Pope Francis accepted his resignation on March 4, 2015. His Coadjutor, Bishop Paul Xiao Zejiang, whom Bishop Wang had already ordained on September 8, 2007, assumed the leadership of the diocese. In 1999, the regime merged the Dioceses



Bishop Anicetus Wang in 2010.
Photo: Mario Bard.

of Anlong, Guiyang and Shiqian to the Diocese of Guizhou. Bishop Wang was regarded as a very kind and generous person. In addition to Bishop Xiao, the diocese currently counts 23 priests, more than 40 Sisters and somewhere between 80,000 and 90,000 Catholics, of whom many are members of various ethnic minorities. Bishop Wang's funeral took place on April 22 in the Cathedral of Guiyang (*Fides* May 8; *UCAN* April 20).

May 13, 2017:

Chinese Catholics celebrate “Our Lady of Fatima” and “Our Lady of China” on the same day

Sixteen Chinese dioceses held public celebrations in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the titles of “Our Lady of Fatima” and “Our Lady of China,” despite earlier problems with the government regarding the meaning of Fatima and its partly anti-Communist message. This year May 13 marked the 100th anniversary of the first apparitions of the Blessed Virgin in Fatima. The celebration of the feast of Our Lady of China, commemorating a Marian apparition in Donglü (Hebei Province) in 1900, is traditionally celebrated on the eve of Mother's Day, the second Sunday in May. This year the two feasts happened to fall on the same day. As reported in *UCAN*, the government imposed taboo about the veneration of Our Lady of Fatima appears to have faded in recent years (*UCAN* May 19).

June 9, 2017:

Death of Bishop John Liu Shigong of Jining



Bishop Liu Shigong. Photo: *UCAN*.

during the Cultural Revolution, he worked as a farmer and also spent some time in a reform-through-labor camp. He was ordained bishop of Jining in 1995. He was said to have been a friendly man, who did not care much for formality.

UCAN writes that back in 2010 the Holy See had already appointed 52 year-old Father Anthony Yao Shun, Vicar General of the diocese, as Bishop Liu's successor, but the election required by the Chinese Government has not yet taken place. As one unnamed source told *UCAN*, Bishop Liu was hesitant, because he feared that an illegitimate bishop might concelebrate at the Episcopal ordination. Father Yao Shun was ordained a priest in 1991 and graduated from St. John's University in the United States in 1996. He is considered a liturgy expert and taught at the National Seminary in Beijing until his nomination to the office of bishop.

Bishop Liu Shigong of Jining in Inner Mongolia, recognized by both Rome and the Chinese Government, died of liver cancer at the age of 88. Bishop Meng Qinglu from Hohhot presided over the Requiem Mass, which was held in the East Church of Jining. Bishop Liu was buried in the Church cemetery at Huaershan.

He was born August 18, 1928 in Sizi Wangqi, Inner Mongolia. At the age of 14 he entered the minor seminary and later studied at the Seminary of Hohhot.

He was ordained a priest in 1956. Dur-

Jining has some 30 priests, one deacon, 12 Sisters and around 60,000 Catholics (*Fides* May 8; *UCAN* April 20).

June 17, 2017:

New tombstone erected for Dutch missionary murdered by the Japanese in 1938



Photo: Msgr. Schraven Foundation.

On the occasion of his 110th birthday, with the participation of both ecclesiastical and civil representatives, the 3.1 meter high tombstone (representing his 31 years) for the Dutch Franciscan Father Aemilianus van Heel (1907–1938) was solemnly unveiled on June 17, 2017. The grave marker is at the site of his former missionary labors in Changzhi in Shanxi Province. Father van Heel was murdered by Japanese soldiers after he had provided refuge in his church for 2,000 Chinese, mostly women and girls, who were attempting to flee from the Japanese. He fought off a soldier intent on dragging one of the Chinese girls out of the church. The next morning Fr. van Heel was found dead, with his wrists slit and with bullet wounds in his body. The reverse of the stone bears the inscription: “Aemilianus van Heel, Franciscan missionary, born June 8, 1907 in Leiden, the Netherlands. In 1933 he came to China and from 1937 worked in the church of Shitou (Changzhi) in Yuanqu. He protected thousands of refugees, particularly women, against Japanese military forces during the Japanese aggression and in retaliation was murdered on October 8, 1938.” During the ceremony, presided over by Bishop Peter Wu Junwei of Yuncheng (Xinjiang) letters were read from former (1986–1992) Dutch Ambassador Roland van den Berg, who had received an inquiry from Shanxi about Father van Heel in 1990, as well as from the Dutch Franciscan provincial superior Father Rob Hoogenboom (*Fides* June 27; Press release of the Msgr. Schraven Foundation, the Netherlands, received on June 26).

June 20–23, 2017:

New study course for Catholics on the “Spirit of the National Conference on Religious Work” – SARA representative on the “correct view of Sino-Vatican relations” – Bishop Ma Yinglin on the difference between “Inculturation” and “Sinicization”

According to a report published by the leadership bodies of the official Catholic Church, 150 Catholics – bishops, priests, Sisters and lay people from across China – took part in the four day course organized by the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) in Beijing. In her presentation, Dai Chenjing, head of the Second Department of SARA, which is responsible for the Christian churches, urged Catholics to adopt a “prudent and correct view of relations between China and the Vatican.” The prin-

ciple of independence, autonomy and self-government is something which the Constitution requires of all religions, Dai said. For the Catholic Church in China, this means independence and autonomy “in political, economic and religious matters,” thus Dai. She stressed that this principle “will not and cannot change.” As for Church teaching and Church regulations, the Catholic Church of China does not differ from the Catholic Church in other parts of the world, Dai said, adding that the Church in China prays daily for the Holy Father. According to the report, Dai said that before there is any improvement in Sino-Vatican relations, the autonomous election and consecration of bishops is to be continued. Bishop Ma Yinglin, the Chairman of the official Bishops’ Conference (although not recognized as such by the Holy See), explained for the first time his understanding of the difference between the two concepts of “Inculturation” (*bendihua* 本地化) and “Sinicization” (*Zhongguohua* 中国化). “Inculturation” Ma said, refers to the correlation between the local Church and local culture. “Sinicization,” on the other hand, is the demand which both the party and State make of all religions, with emphasis on political, social and cultural adjustment, Ma explained. Both are urgent tasks for the Chinese Catholic Church, the conference report quoted the Bishop as saying. – At the first training session on the “Spirit of the National Conference on Religious Work” in June of 2016, Bishop Ma had still argued that for the Catholic Church in China, inculturation [a theological concept] and Sinicization are the same concepts, something for which Catholic commentators had criticized him, according to *UCAN*. The “Sinicization” of the religions is a requirement of the National Conference on Religious Work in April of 2016, (see: *RCTC* 2016, No. 3, pp. 8-9 and *China heute* 2016, pp. 72-74, 83-86 [in German]). SARA also organized similar courses on the “Spirit of the National Conference on Religious Work” for Muslims (April 17–24, 2017) and for the Protestant circles (May 22–27, 2017). The revision of the “Regulations on Religious Affairs” was also on the agenda – at least for the Protestants and the Catholics (*chinacatholic.cn* June 26; *Eglises d’Asie*, June 28; *sara.gov.cn* April 25; May 31; June 27; *UCAN* July 10).

June 21–25, 2017:

Conference of Women Superiors organizes “First Evangelization Workshop” at the National Seminary in Beijing

Fifty-one religious Sisters belonging to 19 different congregations and involved in evangelization, 17 priests and 20 laypeople took part in the workshop, which the Conference of Women Superiors had organized together with the two official Catholic governing bodies and the National Seminary. Bishop Shen Bin, Vice-Chairman of both governing bodies, Sr. Wang Haiqin, superior of the Sisters of the Mother of God of Daming in Hebei Province and Vice-Chair of the Conference of Women Superiors, and the Vice-Rector of the National Seminary, Father Li Shuxing, opened the conference. One conference participant, Father John Baptist Zhang, said that in light of the stagnating number of baptisms in the Catholic Church of China in recent years everyone should be experiencing a “sense of crisis,” adding that the Church in China needed to make a fresh beginning. Other presenters also spoke of a crisis. Some of the key factors in this crisis were identified: declining numbers of candidates requesting Baptism; the lack of a sense of the urgency of the need for evangelization among both clergy and laity and the overall impact of urbanization; as well as homosexual relations and premarital sex among young people. There was an exchange of experiences on the topics of evangelization in the city and in the countryside; evangelization through “discipleship courses,” through media and youth ministry. Those working in these areas shared their own experiences. Among them there were also a pastor and two lay members of the Protestant church. Conference participants recognized and expressed their appreciation for the increasingly active and innovative role of the laity in the field of evangelization. “Today many lay people are way ahead of the priests and sisters in the area of evangelization,” one participant said. One lay representative suggested that a national training course for catechists be established and

that a pool of lecturers be drawn up, made up of priests, sisters and laity returning from abroad who have attained ecclesiastical degrees (adapted from the conference report found at chinacatholic.org June 26.; there you will also find a link to a 45-minute video).

Sino-Vatican Relations

May 21 / May 24, 2017

Day of prayer for the Church in China – call of the Pope and pilgrimage figures from Shanghai

In his noonday remarks to the crowds assembled in St. Peter's Square for the Regina Caeli Prayer on May 21, Pope Francis said: "On 24 May, we will all join in spirit the Catholic faithful in China for the celebration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 'Help of Christians' venerated in the Shrine of Sheshan in Shanghai. To the Catholics of China I say: let us lift our gaze to our Mother Mary, to help us discern God's will concerning the concrete journey of the Church in China and to support us in generously welcoming his project of love. May Mary encourage us to offer our personal contribution to the communion of believers and to the harmony of the whole of society. Let us not forget to bear witness to the faith with prayer and with love, always remaining open to encounter and to dialogue."

This year the Diocese of Shanghai published a list of the groups who had registered for the pilgrimage to the Marian shrine on Sheshan Mountain between April 29 and May 29, 2017. On this list, more than 19,300 pilgrims were counted, not only from Shanghai, but also from the Provinces of Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Guizhou, Shanxi, Hebei, from Tianjin and Beijing (*AsiaNews* May 24; catholicsh.org May 27; www.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/angelus/2017/documents/papa-francesco-regina-coeli_20170521.html). – See also the entry of June 30, 2017 in this section.

End of May / Beginning of June, 2017:

In an article in the review *La Civiltà Cattolica*, Jesuit Father You Guo Jiang calls for a "Chinese Catholic Church with Chinese characteristics" and a redefinition of the Church's relationship with the Party

In his article entitled: "Catholicism in 21st Century China," You Guo Jiang (Jiang Youguo), a Chinese Jesuit priest currently at Boston College, writes of the methods of evangelization which the Catholic Church of China, in his opinion, should be pursuing. Under the heading: "Dialogue with the local culture," Jiang says, among other things: "Because China is so different from the rest of the world, the Chinese Catholic Church needs to learn how to deal with the local culture and political authority. In other words, while keeping its Catholic identity, the Church has to establish a 'Chinese Catholic Church with Chinese Characteristics,' if it is to enculturate Church teachings and gospel values [...]" As long as the Chinese Communist Party is the only leading party in the government, Marxism will, thus Jiang, "continue to be the ideological guideline for society. Thus, the Chinese Catholic Church will have to redefine its role and relationship with the Party and its ideological theories. This does not necessarily mean that the Church has to agree completely with Party politics and values, but it must find flexible and effective way[s] to continue its mission and ministry in China." In his call for dialogue and encounter Jiang relied on various statements of Pope Francis.

The review *La Civiltà Cattolica* is published by Italian Jesuits with the approval of the Vatican's Secretariat of State, which is why Michael Sainsbury of *UCAN* described the publication of the article as a “strong statement about accepting China culture – including that of the ruling Communist Party” on the part of “influential sources close to the Vatican” (English version of Jiang’s article can be found at: <https://laciviltacattolica.com/may-2017/catholicism-in-21st-century-china>; *UCAN* June 2, 7; *L'Espresso* – *La Repubblica* June 22).

June 20, 2017:

German Ambassador in Beijing expresses concern for missing Bishop Shao Zhumin of Wenzhou

On the home page of the website of the German Embassy, Ambassador Michael Clauss released the following statement (in English): “I welcome China’s declared intention to achieve progress with regard to the Catholic Church. However, despite progress in this direction, we also see setbacks in guaranteeing religious freedom. One case of growing concern is the treatment of Bishop Shao Zhumin by the authorities. Since autumn last year he seems to have been forced to move to unknown locations no less than four times and now seems to have been confined to his home since his return. His full freedom of movement should be restored. I am also concerned about a number of new rules in a draft regulation on religious affairs. If unchanged, they could place further restrictions on the right to freedom of religion and belief.”

AsiaNews described the public stance taken by the German Ambassador as a novelty in the diplomatic world. It said that after the European Union and US President George W. Bush had earlier pleaded the fate of some imprisoned bishops and on behalf of religious freedom, diplomatic silence has prevailed on the topic for at least ten years. The declaration of the Ambassador was also reported and discussed in Chinese by international media and on the Chinese Catholic website tianzhujiao.online (Original of the declaration at: www.china.diplo.de/Vertretung/china/de/___pr/Kopie_20von_202016/politik/190620Statement-pm.html; *AsiaNews* June 21).

June 26 / 27, 2017:

Declaration of the Press Office of the Holy See on the case of Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin – China rejects the interference on the part of “any country whatsoever”

On June 26, the Vatican News Agency *Fides* released the following statement of the Director of the Holy See Press Office, Greg Burke, regarding the case of Bishop Shao Zhumin: “The Holy See is observing with grave concern the personal situation of Mgr. Peter Shao Zhumin, Bishop of Wenzhou, forcibly removed from his episcopal see some time ago. The diocesan Catholic community and his relatives have no news or reasons for his removal, nor do they know where he is being held. In this respect, the Holy See, profoundly saddened for this and other similar episodes that unfortunately do not facilitate ways of understanding, expresses the hope that Mgr. Peter Shao Zhumin may return as soon as possible to the diocese and that he can be assured the possibility of serenely exercising his episcopal ministry. We are all invited to pray for Mgr. Shao Zhumin and for the path of the Catholic Church in China.”

According to *AFP*, on June 27, Lu Kang, spokesperson of China’s Foreign Ministry, declared: “China refuses to accept that any country whatsoever has the right to interfere in any way at all in China’s internal affairs using so-called individual cases.” He said that China, in accord with the law, protects the right of its citizens to freedom of belief, to normal religious activities and the legitimate rights of religious

groups, but at the same time, in accord with the law, reinforces its management of religious affairs just as other countries do. According to Lu, the Chinese Catholic Church, too, unfolds its religious activities according to its history and traditions and in accord with the relevant laws and regulations (*Fides* June 26; *AFP* citing *cn.rfi.fr* June 27).

June 27, 2017:

***Global Times* analyzes slowed-down pace of Sino-Vatican negotiations**

Global Times, an English-language newspaper appearing under the aegis of the party newspaper *Renmin ribao*, quoted from the article by Father You Guo Jiang SJ, which had appeared in *La Civiltà Cattolica* (see entry of End of May / Beginning of June, 2017, above), which it described as a “signal of goodwill” in the ongoing Sino-Vatican negotiations, since the article had appeared “with the approval of the Vatican’s Secretariat of State.” The journalist Francesco Sisci said to *Global Times* that “the article signals a new thinking in the Catholic doctrine. It opens up the possibility of collaboration with the Communist Party of China ...”

According to *Global Times*, there has been no progress in the negotiations in recent months. The newspaper quotes the Christianity researcher Wang Meixiu (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) as saying that “From what I heard, the two sides seem to have reached a near consensus on the appointment of future bishops. But they disagree on the treatment of existing bishops.” *Global Times* reports that China is obviously distrusting some of the underground bishops and that China’s treatment of some of the bishops such as the underground bishop of Wenzhou, often results in Catholic opposition. In addition, the newspaper also goes into Chinese demands for the Sinicization [in the article “sinification”] of religions. The newspaper quotes Wang Meixiu, according to whom Christianity has always embraced “localization” whereas the politically-sounding idea of Sinicization sets off alarm bells among some Catholics. Many Catholics fear that this could undermine their relationship with the Holy See, *Global Times* writes (*Global Times* June 27).

June 30, 2017:

Tenth anniversary of the publication of the letter by Pope Benedict XVI to the Church in China – “as important today as it was 10 years ago”

The only open instruction given so far by Pope Francis to the Chinese Church was to re-read the letter of Pope Benedict XVI, said Anthony Lam Sui-ki, executive secretary of the Holy Spirit Study Centre of the Diocese of Hong Kong. Lam made the statement at a May 7 seminar held in Hong Kong on the subject of Pope Benedict’s letter. Speakers described the letter as being “as important today as it was 10 years ago.”

In writing his letter, Pope Benedict XVI intended to provide “guidelines concerning the life of the Church and the task of evangelization in China.” He also wrote on the topic of reconciliation within the Church and of the relationship between the Church and State authorities. The – since 2008 – annual May 24 World Day of Prayer for the Church in China also had its origin in that letter.

At the time of its publication in 2007, the Chinese authorities had placed a ban on the distribution of the Pope’s letter. *AsiaNews* reported that in May of 2017 many Catholics posted Pope Benedict’s prayer to “Our Lady of Sheshan” as well as the text of his letter on the platform WeChat together with the call to re-read the letter (*AsiaNews* May 24; *UCAN* May 11). – The text of Pope Benedict’s letter can be found at: w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20070527_

china.html; related material and commentary can be found in: *China heute* 2007, No. 4-5, pp. 150-183 (in German).

End of June 2017:

New round in Sino-Vatican negotiations with new negotiators – Why such slow progress?

Toward the end of June a Chinese delegation was in Rome for a new round of negotiations (*Eglises d'Asie* reported on June 28 that they had left “a few days ago”) – that is, close to the slugfest between China and the Vatican over the case of Bishop Shao Zhumin (see above), which prompted a Chinese commentator quoted by *UCAN* to conclude that the latest round of negotiations “was not as smooth as expected.”

On June 15 *UCAN* had reported that after the last round of talks this past March, one of the delegation members had been replaced on each side. The new member on the Chinese side of the table is now Ms. Dai Chenjing, currently head of the Second Department of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) responsible for Christian affairs (for more about her go to the entry of June 20-23, 2017 in the section “Catholic Church”).

Writing in the *Verbiest Update*, Father Jeroom Heyndricks CICM indicates that any rumors that Rome – as requested by China – has already recognized the seven bishops consecrated without papal appointment are clearly unfounded. *UCAN* further reports that the Chinese side suspects that the Vatican, despite ongoing negotiations, continues to appoint bishops in secret. *UCAN* writes that John Cardinal Tong, in his article on “The future of Sino-Vatican dialogue from an ecclesiological point of view” published on February 9, 2017 (see text at <http://sundayex.catholic.org.hk/node/4047>), mentions “more than 30” underground bishops, while in March, in an interview with the *Catholic National Reporter*, he talks about “close to 40.” Fr. Heyndricks adds that we also need to know whether Chinese government and Vatican secretly have already prepared or appointed their own candidates for the office of Bishop for the 40 dioceses which are currently vacant. It can also be assumed that the recent attempts by the Chinese Government to extend its control over the Chinese Bishops (see the cases of bishops Guo Xijin, Shao Zhumin, Ma Daqin, etc.), have not contributed to the general building up of confidence between the two sides in their negotiations (*EDA* June 28; *UCAN* June 15; July 10; *Verbiest Update* No. 38, June 2017).

Hong Kong

June 4, 2017:

Hong Kong: Commemoration of the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre

Around 110,000 people participated this year in the candlelight vigil held each year in Hong Kong's Victoria Park for the victims of June 4, 1989 in Beijing. According to media reports, this year's crowd was the smallest since 2008. As also occurred last year, the ceremony was boycotted by student groups, who described the event as irrelevant. They claimed instead to advocate a policy of “Localism.” Before the memorial service, there was once again an ecumenical prayer vigil, in which approximately 900 persons took part (*UCAN* June 5).

July 1, 2017:

20th anniversary of the return of Hong Kong to China

On July 1, 300 Christians attended a prayer gathering, organized by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, the Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students and four other Christian organizations. Then, they joined the estimated 60,000 participants of the annual pro-democracy rally. The number was significantly lower than in the previous year, when 110,000 people gathered. At the prayer gathering Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Ha Chi-sing urged those present not to lose hope despite many setbacks. He told the gathering “that many issues like the development of democracy, wealth disparity, housing affordability and labor rights had not improved despite people’s efforts over many years,” thus *UCAN*. “The ‘one country, two systems’ and talk of a ‘high degree of autonomy’ are empty words,” the bishop said. Joseph Cardinal Zen Ze-kiun, Bishop Emeritus of Hong Kong, was also present for both the prayer meeting and the rally that followed.

Chinese President Xi Jinping made his first visit to Hong Kong for the celebrations commemorating the return of Hong Kong to China on July 1, 1997. And on this occasion, Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, was officially installed as the new leader of Hong Kong. In his address, President Xi said that “The people of Hong Kong enjoy more extensive democratic rights and freedoms than at any other time in its history.” At the same time, however, Xi also warned against any attempt to challenge the power of the central government in Beijing. That would be “absolutely impermissible” and tantamount to crossing the red line. According to *Spiegel* online, Xi also called on Lam to strengthen the security and the “patriotic education” in the city.

Just a few streets from the site of the inauguration, pro-democratic protests broke out with a clash with supporters of Beijing. The police arrested a number of demonstrators, including Joshua Wong, one of the leaders of the “Umbrella Revolution” of 2014 (*South China Morning Post* July 1.07; *spiegel.de* July 1; *UCAN* July 5; *Xinhua* July 1).

See also the article of Anthony Lam “A Unique Situation: The Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Twenty Years after the City’s Handover” in *RCTC* 2017, No. 2, pp. 22-25.

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