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Contents

Editorial | 2

News Update on Religion and Church in China

December 2011 to March 2012 | 3

Compiled by Katharina Feith, Jan Kwee, Anton Weber, Martin Welling, and
Katharina Wenzel-Teuber

The Chinese Church's Response to Migration within Mainland China

(Part II) | 20

John B. Zhang

The Kingdom and Power:

Elements of Growth in Chinese Christianity

Some Personal Insights | 38

Sigurd Kaiser

Imprint – Legal Notice | 50

Editorial

Today we can present to our readers the second 2012 issue of *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* (中國宗教評論). As in previous issues, it includes the regular series of News Updates which give an insight into recent events and general trends with regard to religions and especially Christianity in today's China.

This number, furthermore, continues with Part II of the article “The Chinese Church's Response to Migration within Mainland China” by John B. Zhang. The main focus of this article is on Catholic expatriates in China. The pastoral services offered to German and South Korean Catholics, as well as those available to other expatriate Catholic communities in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and other cities, are closely studied in this contribution.

The third article entitled “The Kingdom and Power: Elements of Growth in Chinese Christianity. Some Personal Insights” by Sigurd Kaiser shows that there are various elements of Protestant church growth which exhibit a strong biblical orientation as, e.g., the importance of praying, witness and physical healing, its character as a lay movement, and a new attitude to western culture.

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The China-Zentrum is a non-profit organization. For the publication of *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* we are dependent on the generosity of our friends and readers. In order to help us cover inevitable costs, we would be very grateful if you could consider sending in a voluntary contribution.

Sankt Augustin, May 2012

The Editors

News Update on Religion and Church in China December 2011 to March 2012

*Compiled by Katharina Feith, Jan Kwee, Anton Weber, Martin Welling,
and Katharina Wenzel-Teuber*

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” (2012, No. 1, pp. 3-18) covered the period September 15 – December 4, 2011.

December 2011:

Zhu Weiqun: Party members are not allowed to believe in a religion. That would split the Communist Party.

In the party magazine *Qiushi* (2011, No. 24, December 26, pp. 25-28), Zhu wrote: “If we let party members believe in religion ... this would inevitably result in splits in the Party’s ideology and its organization.” It would also shatter the status of Marxism as the leading ideology of the country, weaken the ability of the Party to fight against separatist movements, and would confuse the Party’s role to supervise religions. Zhu Weiqun is executive deputy minister of the United Front Work Department of China’s Communist Party and in charge of coordinating the Party’s policies on Tibetan affairs. According to Zhu, party members are increasingly taking part in religious activities, getting involved with leading figures from religious circles, and have even become de facto religious believers. Some party members have gone so far as to call for a lifting of the prohibition against membership in religious organizations, he wrote. But in his article, Zhu argued that whoever freely becomes a member of the Party accepts the Marxist worldview of dialectical materialism and has no business believing in a religion (see *The Hindu* Dec. 25, 2011; *South China Morning Post* Dec. 19, 2011; www.chengmingmag.com/t318/select/318sel07.html).

December 6–8, 2011:

Fourth Forum on Catholic Studies in Beijing

79 researchers in the field of religious studies gathered in Beijing to take part in the “Fourth Forum on Catholic Studies for Young Chinese Scholars” organized by the Beijing Institute for the Study of

Christianity and Culture and its Director Father Dr. Peter Zhao Jianmin. In all, some 64 papers were presented on a wide-ranging spectrum of themes touching on both historical as well as current topics of interest regarding the Catholic Church. The papers included topics such as: “The missionary activity of the Divine Word Missionaries in the late Qing period (1879–1908): the work of evangelization in China by St. Joseph Freinademetz”; “The missionary activities of Western missionaries in the Tibetan area during the Ming and Qing Dynasties (1846–1919)”; “Analysis of the current social service of the Catholic Church in China”; “The positive contribution of the Catholic understanding of freedom to the common good.” Forum participants praised the atmosphere at the conference as having a “free, tolerant, pluralistic, and open spirit.” Conference organizers hope to make the event more international in the future. The Institute has been organizing this type of forum at the beginning of December each year since 2008. The papers presented will eventually be published in the “Journal of Catholic Studies” (*Fides* Dec. 15, 2011; www.shangzhi.org).

December 11, 2011:

Underground priest and six seminarians die in a tragic car accident

On December 11 there was a tragic traffic accident in the Diocese of Baoding (Hebei Province). A minibus carrying a priest and seven seminarians was involved in a head-on collision with a truck and overturned. A second truck which had been following then slammed into the overturned minibus, killing six of the seminarians outright and severely injuring the seventh. The priest driving the minibus, Fr. Joseph Shi Liming (39), was the formation director of Baoding’s underground seminary. Though badly injured, seminarian Gabriel Gao survived only because he had been thrown clear of the minibus in the initial collision. Baoding’s underground seminary is forced to change location frequently in order to stay out of the hands of the police.

The accident had an unusual sequel. The grave marker, erected on the occasion of the 100th day memorial of the underground priest’s death, was removed from the grave during the course of a police action. When relatives tried to resist, police officers smashed the grave marker with sledge hammers. They justified their action by claiming that since Fr. Shi Liming was not recognized as a priest by the government, it was not permitted to erect a grave marker with a text identifying him as such. A police contingent was on hand to prevent outsiders from arriving at the village to take part in the Requiem (*UCAN* Dec. 13 and 30, 2011; March 20, 2012).

December 16, 2011:

New guidelines for charitable organizations made public

The Ministry for Civil Affairs has published new “Guidelines for the disclosure by charitable organizations of data regarding donations” (公益慈善捐助信息公开指引). The guidelines were issued in reaction to a scandal that came to light during the summer of 2011 (see *RCTC* 2012, No. 1, p. 96), which caused mistrust among members of the public and generated intense criticism. The guidelines’ purpose is to see to it that charitable organizations disclose information about what donations they receive, their fundraising methods, how they use the funds, and who their beneficiaries are. Charities are to provide such reports within 15 days of receiving a grant and within a month of having disbursed the money. In the case of emergency aid measures following serious accidents or natural catastrophes, such information is to be provided within 72 hours after donations are received. For ongoing projects lasting a longer time, they must provide such reports on the development of the project at regular intervals, at

least every six months. According to the report of the official news agency Xinhua, the new guidelines are meant to set a standard for charity groups to develop their own information publicity system, will help local governments work out rules for supervising charity groups, and are intended to provide the public with greater transparency, to encourage meaningful use of donated funds, and to increase donors' confidence in the charitable organizations (*Xinhua* Dec. 16, 2011).

December 19, 2011:

Hong Kong Justice and Peace Commission calls for release of Chinese bishops and priests

Lina Chan Li-na, executive secretary of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Hong Kong, has appealed to the government to free incarcerated bishops and priests as well as detained human rights activist lawyer Gao Zhisheng by Christmas. Those detained are Bishops James Su Zhimin of Baoding, 79, and Cosmas Shi Enxiang of Yixian, 90, from Hebei Province. Both have been held in custody without formal arrest or open trial since 1997 and 2001, respectively. According to a report from UCAN, some 30 other priests are also being held in custody without formal arrest or trial. One Church observer, who wishes to remain anonymous, stated: "Until now, there is no news about them. We know that the government changed their names to make it hard to trace their whereabouts" (*UCAN* Dec. 19, 2011; see also the entry of Jan. 16, 2012).

December 23, 2011:

Bringing "The Good News" to Ou hai prison (Wenzhou)



Members of the Cathedral parish team meet the prisoners. Photo: www.xinde.org.

According to a report in the Catholic journal *Xinde* (*Faith Weekly*), members of the Cathedral parish of the Diocese of Wenzhou in Zhejiang and Sisters of the Congregation of St. Thérèse of Lisieux managed to obtain from the director of the Ou hai prison (1,300 inmates) the so far unheard of permission to pay a visit to the prisoners there at Christmas time. Led by Fr. Li Baoping, seminarian Liu Delong, and Sr. Qiu Xinmei, who had taken care of arranging the necessary contacts, on December 23 a team of 11 parishioners entered the prison and were met with a large red "welcome banner" bearing the words "Visit of a group of kind-hearted Catholic people." By coincidence,

a team of the local Wenzhou television station happened to be filming in the prison at the very time and their presence and film provided welcome publicity for the group's visit. Following a presentation to the group by prison staff on the life in the correctional facility, the parishioners were able to meet the prisoners face to face. During their visit the parishioners were able to distribute to the inmates little presents of soap, toothpaste, hand towels, and other small items for daily use. One by one, the parishioners shook hands with the prisoners – both male and female – and encouraged them by expressing at least a little bit of the warmth and affection of the Christmas message. Many of the prisoners were grateful and deeply touched by the visit. Among the prisoners there were at least one Catholic and one Protestant. Tears streaming down their faces, they proclaimed: "Jesus loves me!" (*Xinde* Jan. 5, 2012).

December 26, 2011:

Celebrations to mark Mao's birthday

As reported in the news agency *Xinhua*, on December 26, the 118th birthday of Mao Zedong, tens of thousands of Chinese travelled to his birthplace at Shaoshan in Hunan Province and also to the Mao Mausoleum located on the Tian'anmen Square in Beijing in order to burn incense, eat noodles (symbol of longevity), and to sing the "Red songs." The local tourist bureau reported that during 2011 more than 7.5 million visitors came to see the house where Mao was born (*Xinhua* Dec. 27, 2011).

December 27, 2011:

New document on social security insurance coverage for clerics

In its document titled "Notice on further steps to resolve the problem of social security for religious personnel," the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) and four other ministries laid out regulations intended to deal with some still unresolved questions arising from the 2010 integration of (officially recognized and registered) religious personnel into the country's social security systems. On January 9, 2012 at the National Conference on Religious Work in Harbin (see below) Jiang Jianshui, Vice-Director of the SARA, reported that the process of providing social security coverage for religious personnel in Beijing, Fujian, and Sichuan has almost been completed. All Beijing clerics now have a social security card. In Anhui, Henan, Hubei, Yunnan, Gansu, Qinghai, and Xinjiang 80% now have health and retirement insurance. In a further 8 provinces 50% are now insured; in Hebei, Liaoning, and Chongqing the figure is 40% and in the remaining areas the process is currently underway, the report said. According to Jiang, some problems still occur due to high mobility among some clerics and also due to the fact that some of them are not able to come up with the required premium because of their very low salaries (*Xinhua* Jan. 9, 2012, according to www.sara.gov.cn. The full text of the new document can be found at: www.sara.gov.cn/zcfg/zc/12066.htm. For the 2010 document on this question and the developments leading up to it, see *China heute* 2010, No. 3, pp. 140-142, 158-160 [in German]).

December 30, 2011:

Underground bishop of Tianshui taken away



Bishop Wang Ruowang. Photo: UCAN.

Bishop John Wang Ruowang of Tianshui (Gansu Province) has been taken away together with some of his priests and forced to attend "study sessions." The 50 year old underground bishop was secretly consecrated with a Papal mandate in 2011. On December 30 he was taken by government officials from the church in Taijing to a guest house in the city of Tianshui. According to a source "he is safe and sound. His mindset is positive," and he could be reached via his mobile phone. When contacted, the bishop himself said he was undergoing "education and conversion classes." The source said that the bishop expects that sooner or later all underground priests of the diocese would have to attend such classes.

Meanwhile, since January 4 seven other diocesan priests were also taken away for "study sessions." Two of them were released a few days later but have been ordered to study the documents they were given at home. According to sources, the detentions are all to be seen as connected with the secret consecra-

tion of Bishop Wang. Last year Pope Benedict XVI also named Fr. Bosco Zhao Jianzhang as coadjutor bishop. Fr. Zhao is currently responsible for the official Church in Tianshui. As of now, his consecration has not yet taken place (*UCAN* Jan. 11, 2012).

December 30, 2011:

Ningxia: Clashes between Muslims and police over mosque demolition

According to reports coming from the Hong Kong Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, on the evening of December 30 there were violent clashes between police and the Muslim villagers in the village of Taoshan, in the town of Hexi in Tongxin County, which is part of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in the northwest of China. Following an attempt to forcibly tear down a large mosque, violent clashes erupted between the more than 1,000 armed police and several hundred local Hui Muslims. The authorities had declared the newly renovated mosque to be an “illegal religious site.” According to reports from the villagers two people were killed and 50 injured. The police station of Hexi denied the figures given by the information center. According to them, there were a few people injured, but no one was killed. It was also confirmed that the mosque has now been razed to the ground. The renovation of the mosque, built in 1987, had been financed with the help of donations from Muslims from Ningxia and the neighboring province of Gansu (*Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy* Jan. 2, 2012; *South China Morning Post* Jan. 3, 2012; *Zeenews.com* Jan. 2, 2012).

End of December 2011:

New official system of “spokespersons” introduced for the five religions – The YMCA/YWCA get their own spokesperson as well

At the end of December 2011 a new “Press Information System” (*xinwen fabu zhidu* 新闻发布制度) was introduced for the official national governing bodies of the religions in the People’s Republic of China. As *Xinhua* reported on behalf of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) the nine newly named press spokespersons of the religious organizations are now to be the ones competent to make available to the media and to the public “authoritative” news and documents – including news about “sudden large-scale incidents in the religious field.” Those chosen as spokespersons have been especially trained by the SARA. In addition to the governing bodies of the five major religions, the Protestant YMCA/YWCA has now also appointed a spokesperson, thereby joining the other Protestant governing bodies of the Three Self Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Christian Council. One spokesman, Fr. Yang Yu, had already been appointed for the official Catholic Church on June 19, 2011. Thus far he has produced, among other things, a July 7, 2011 response to the Vatican declaration on the Episcopal consecration of Leshan (*Xinhua* Dec. 22, 2011, according to sara.gov.cn/xwzx/xwj/11900.htm); a list of the new spokespersons can be found there and in *China heute* 2012, No. 1, p. 28. See also *RCTC* 2011, No. 2, pp. 92-93, 97).

January 2012:

Shanghai Bishop's pastoral letter for Chinese New Year advocates canonization of Xu Guangqi

The pastoral letter of 95 year old Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian, released on the occasion of the Chinese New Year celebrations, makes a strong case for the canonization of the founder of the Catholic Church in Shanghai, Xu Guangqi (1562–1633). This year the Diocese of Shanghai is celebrating the 450th birthday of its great pioneer in the faith. Xu Guangqi was the first with the rank of Mandarin to be baptized and he worked energetically for the spread of the faith and for the survival of the Church. In his pastoral letter, in order to show appreciation for his versatile talents, his deep faith, and his openness to progress and development, Bishop Jin named him a true “man for all seasons” (Chinese text at www.catholicsh.org/NewListIn.aspx?InfosID=3968&InfoCategoryID=233; German translation in *China heute* 2012, No. 1, pp. 39-46).

Between January 6 and March 30, 2012:

20 Tibetans – mostly monks – set themselves on fire in protest

As they did so, they shouted slogans calling for the return of the Dalai Lama and freedom for Tibet. Most of them were very young, although there was also one elderly reincarnated Lama among them (Sopa Tulku) as well as the former disciplinarian and teacher of a monastery (Dhamchoe Sangpo). There were also several lay persons and a nun.

- *January 6*: Ten-nyi (20), monk of the Kirti monastery, Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) District, Sichuan. He died the same day.
- *January 6*: Tsultrim (20), Ngaba. He died on January 7th.
- *January 8*: Sonam Wangyal (Sopa Tulku) (42), Darlag (Dari) County, Golog (Guoluo) District, Qinghai. He died the same day.
- *January 14*: Lobsang Jamyang (22), Ngaba, former monk of the Aduk monastery. He died the same day.
- *February 8*: Rigzin Dorje (19), Me'uruma, Ngaba County; former monk of the Kirti monastery. Condition unknown.
- *February 9*: Sonam Rabyang (42), monk of the Lab monastery in Tridu, Yushu District, Qinghai. Condition unknown.
- *February 11*: Tenzin Choedron (18), nun of the Mame Dechen Choekhorling monastery, Ngaba District. She died on February 13.
- *February 13*: Lobsang Gyatso (19), monk of the Kirti monastery, Ngaba. Condition unknown.
- *February 17*: Dhamchoe Sangpo (38), monk of the Bongthak monastery, Themchen (Tianjun) County, Haixi District, Qinghai. He died the same day.
- *February 19*: Nangdrol (18), Zamthang monastery, Zamthang (Rangtang) County, Ngaba District. He died the same day.
- *March 3*: Tsering Kyi (20), Machu (Maqu), Kanlho (Gannan) District, Gansu, middle school student. She died the same day.
- *March 4*: Rinchen (33), Ngaba, mother of 4 children. She died the same day.
- *March 5*: Dorjee (18), Ngaba. He died the same day.
- *March 10*: Gyepo (18), monk of the Kirti monastery, Ngaba. He died the same day.
- *March 14*: Jamyang Palden (34), monk of the Rongbo Gonchen monastery, Rebkong (Tongren) County, Qinghai. Condition unknown.
- *March 16*: Lobsang Tsultrim (20), monk of the Kirti monastery, Ngaba. He died on March 19.

- *March 17*: Sonam Dhargye (43), Rebkong (Tongren) County, Qinghai; father of a family. He died the same day.
- *March 28*: Sherab (20), Ngaba. He died the same day.
- *March 30*: Tenpa Dhargyal (22) and Chime Palden (21), both from the Gyalrong Tsodun Kirti monastery, Ngaba. Condition unknown.

The focal points for the incidents were the Kirti monastery and the Autonomous Tibetan District of Ngaba (Aba) in Sichuan Province. The first to set himself on fire was a monk of the Kirti monastery in February of 2009. 12 others followed his example during the course of 2011 (see, among others, *RCTC* 2012, No. 1, pp. 5-6, 13). (Lists on www.tibetoffice.ch and www.tchrd.org; numerous other reports in the media, see also: *TibetInfoNet News Digest* for that time period.)

January 9, 2012

The State Administration for Religious Affairs reports progress in the record filing of clerics, in achieving financial supervision over places of worship, and in building up a databank of religious information

According to Jiang Jianshui, Vice Director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), in a speech at the National Conference on Religious Work in Harbin, during 2011 the process of recognizing religious personnel by the (official) religious communities and of their record filing with the government authorities (as laid down in the 2007 “Measures for Reporting Religious Personnel for the Record”) has been speeded up. As Jiang reported, 99% of religious office holders have been officially recognized and filed in ten province level administration units (Beijing, Tianjin, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Shandong, Hubei, Tibet, Gansu, Ningxia, and Xinjiang). In a further 11 units (including Hebei), the figure is 85% and in six others 70%. This process is also underway in Shanghai, Guangdong, Guizhou, and Xinjiang. Most of the national religious organizations have already issued “ID cards for religious office holders” to the majority of those filed. Some difficulties arose due to the mobility of many clerics and also due to the lack of a country-wide, centralized management information system, Jiang said.

According to Jiang, 2011 also saw progress in the implementation of the “Administrative Measures for Financial Supervision of Sites for Religious Activities (Trial Implementation).” The majority of the larger places of worship already have introduced a system of financial administration with respective bookkeeping and financial statements but there are still some difficulties to be overcome with regard to smaller places of worship, Jiang explained. Both processes should be completed by the end of 2012. It was also announced that in 2011 the SARA had begun building up a national databank of information for religious work (*Xinhua* Jan. 8 and 9, 2012, according to www.sara.gov.cn; see also *China heute* 2007, No. 1-2, pp. 23-33 [in German]).

January 9, 2012:

Shenzhen: Chinese-African Symposium on poverty reduction

In a three-day symposium, which opened in Shenzhen on January 9, the focus was on collaboration between China and African countries in the war on poverty. 50 government officials, scholars, and entrepreneurs from China and Africa as well as representatives of international organizations held talks on the possibilities for reducing poverty. The symposium was organized by the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China, the United Nations Development Program, and by Shenzhen University (*Xinhua* Jan. 9, 2012).

January 11, 2012:

***Global Times* compares the Dalai Lama with Falungong**

In connection with the recent series of self-immolations in Tibet, the *Global Times*, an English language newspaper which is part of the People's Daily media group, accused the "Dalai group" of cruelly pressuring the young monks and of misusing them for political purposes. It was stated that the previous round of self-immolation suicides in China had been carried out by members of the Falungong movement. "Hopefully the Dalai group will not become another cult," the *Global Times* wrote (www.globaltimes.cn Jan. 11, 2012).

January 13, 2012:

Civil rights activist Yu Jie has left China

In a surprise move, the 38 year old Chinese writer Yu Jie, long critical of the regime, has fled China together with his family. Yu, who in his book "China's Best Actor: Wen Jiabao" accused the Premier of hypocrisy over democratic values, wrote in an e-mail shortly after his arrival in the United States that he could no longer withstand the growing pressure being placed on him by Beijing. He wrote: "My safety was seriously threatened." A scholar in the field of literature, Yu is a Protestant Christian and was an active member of a house church. He had already been under house arrest for a considerable time. Yu is a friend of the imprisoned Chinese Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo and was one of the co-authors of "Charter 08," a manifesto calling for freedom and democracy in China (*South China Morning Post* Jan. 13, 2012; www.faz.net Jan. 12, 2012).

January 16, 2012:

***AsiaNews* appeals for release of imprisoned Chinese bishops and priests**

In an open letter addressed to both President Hu Jintao and the Chinese ambassador in Italy, Ding Wei, the news agency *AsiaNews* has appealed for the release of three bishops and six priests, who have either disappeared while in police custody or who are currently known to be detained in prison without trial. According to *AsiaNews* their release could be a gesture of friendship and hope for Catholics and for human rights activists, as well as a sign of true hope in the days leading up to the Lunar New Year, which falls on January 23 this year. *AsiaNews* appended a list, which identifies the following bishops and priests as either "disappeared" or "in prison": underground bishop James Su Zhimin (79) of Baoding, Hebei (arrested in 1997, present whereabouts unknown); underground Bishop Cosmas Shi Enxiang (90) of Yixian, Hebei (arrested in 2001, present whereabouts unknown); Fr. Joseph Lu Genjun, underground vicar general of Baoding (disappeared in 2006, present whereabouts unknown); Fr. Zhang Jianlin and Fr. Cui Tai, both underground priests from Xuanhua, Hebei (taken away on June 22, 2011 by officials of the Bureau for Religious Affairs, present whereabouts unknown); Fr. Liu Honggen, underground priest from Baoding (arrested on December 27, 2006 together with 8 other priests, currently in prison at Qingyuan); Fr. Ma Wuyong, underground priest from Baoding (arrested in August of 2004 together with 8 other priests, currently also in prison at Qingyuan); Fr. Wang Chengli, underground priest from Heze, Shandong (sentenced on August 25, 2011 to two and a half years of "re-education through labor," currently at the forced labor camp at Jining); Bischof Wu Qinjing of Zhouzhi, Shaanxi (secretly ordained, under house arrest at the minor seminary of Xi'an since November of 2007) (*AsiaNews* Jan. 16, 2012).

January 30, 2012:

Arrest of six priests of the Diocese of Suiyuan (Inner Mongolia) – further acts of repression follow



Rector Joseph Ban Zhanxiong. Photo: *UCAN*.

Six priests of the underground diocese of Suiyuan were arrested on January 30 in Erenhot, one of the border towns on the border to Outer Mongolia. Among them was the rector of the underground seminary, Fr. Joseph Ban Zhanxiong. The seminary was closed on February 14th, and the seminarians were sent home.

On January 31, the diocesan administrator, Fr. Gao Jiangping, and one other priest were arrested and taken to an undisclosed location. The other priests were in hiding. After a short time, four of those arrested on January 30 were

released, but with the obligation of reporting to the police station every day and of submitting to study sessions. According to further reports by *UCAN*, on February 13 they were forced to concelebrate with Bishop Meng Qinglu and two other official priests. 20 government officials were on hand to witness the Mass in the city of Baotou and immediately afterwards took the priests away again, it said. *AsiaNews* is of the opinion that the attacks were in connection, among other things, with conflicts within the diocese, which in turn were connected with the “ambiguity of the official bishop, Msgr. Paul Meng Qinglu” of Hohhot. Paul Meng is recognized by both the Holy See and by the Chinese government. At his consecration he had expressed his hope for reconciliation with the underground Church. However, in November of 2011 he took part in the illicit Episcopal consecration in Chengde and in December of 2010 was appointed Vice-President of the Patriotic Association. *UCAN* also mentions disputes concerning the transfer of priests.

Approximately 30,000 faithful belong to the underground diocese of Suiyuan, which has 35 priests and 90 nuns. It covers a large territory which includes the central and southern parts of Inner Mongolia. As far as the government is concerned, the diocese is part of the official Diocese of Hohhot. In recent years, prior to the current harassment, the diocese had been able to develop undisturbed and the priests were able to go peacefully about their pastoral work (*AsiaNews* Feb. 2 and 24, 2012; *UCAN* Jan. 31, Feb. 8 and 23, 2012).

End of January 2012:

Course for Volunteers in the Diocese of Shanghai

The end of January saw the beginning of the first course for volunteers of the year 2012. The course was organized by the Guangqi Social Service Center of the Diocese of Shanghai, which was founded in 2005. The center’s different groups exchanged accounts of the experiences gained during their volunteer service the previous year. The volunteers were mainly involved in the following areas: scholarship programs for students from underprivileged families; assistance to the elderly; work with migrant workers and volunteer services in the area of health. Volunteers were also brought in to respond to natural disasters (*Fides* Feb. 1, 2012; for an article on the center, see *China heute* 2010, No. 1, pp. 45-47 [in German]).

February 1, 2012:

Chiang Han-sun is the new President of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei

Celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the re-opening of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taiwan reached their high point on December 8, 2011 in Hsinchuang (Xinzhuang), Taipei, in the presence of Church and civil dignitaries (including among others Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, and Archbishop Savio Hon Tai-fai of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples). Earlier, on December 3, there had been the groundbreaking for the construction of a US\$ 132 million dollar university hospital. On February 1, 2012 in a dignified ceremony, outgoing President of Fu Jen Catholic University, Prof. Bernard Li, handed over his office to his successor, Vincent Chiang Han-Sun (Jiang Hansheng). The 61 year old Chiang is a doctor of urology (he received his doctorate at the Technical University of Munich) and was already serving as Dean of the Medical School as well as the University's Vice-President. The new president said that Fu Jen University was not only an institute of higher learning that could be proud of its more than 170,000 graduates, but he also pointed to a visionary goal: by 2025 he wants Fu Jen to belong to the 200 best universities of the entire world (www.pro.fju.edu.tw/press_show.asp?press_id=1301).

February 4, 2012:

German Chancellor Angela Merkel visits Bishop Joseph Gan Junqiu of Guangzhou

During the course of her official visit to the People's Republic of China, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany paid a visit, arranged at her request, to the Catholic Bishop of Guangzhou. The bishop said after her visit that Chancellor Merkel had encouraged him "to set up more charitable organizations such as nurseries and homes for the aged to promote social harmony, freedom, and equality" (*UCAN* Feb. 10, 2012; cf. *China heute* 2012, No. 1, p. 5-6 [in German]).



Bishop Joseph Gan Junqiu showing the German chancellor the church.
Photo: *UCAN*.

February 5, 2012:

Underground Administrator of Kunming, Dali, and Zhaotong dies



Fr. Lawrence Zhang Wenchang (Photo: *UCAN*) has died at the age of 92 in the Autonomous County of Shilin of the Yi nationality. A member of the Sani ethnic group, a sub-group of the Yi people, Fr. Zhang was the Apostolic Administrator of the three ecclesiastical territories in Yunnan Province: Kunming, Dali, and Zhaotong. As underground administrator, he had no ties whatsoever to the official Church, and had been living under police surveillance for years in the city of

Kunming. The Diocese of Kunming has not had a bishop recognized by Rome for more than 60 years. The current official Bishop of Kunming is Joseph Ma Yinglin, who was consecrated in 2006 without papal mandate. Fr. Zhang was born in 1920, studied at the major seminary of Kunming, and was ordained a priest in 1946. He spent almost 25 years in prison and in labor camps between 1958 and 1982. He was officially rehabilitated in 1987 and in 2000 was appointed by Rome Administrator of the Dioceses of Kunming and Dali as well as of the Apostolic Prefecture of Zhaotong (UCAN Feb. 7, 2012).

February 9, 2012:

Introduction of annual “study month on religious policy and legislation”

The State Administration for Religious Affairs has sent out a corresponding circular, dated February 9, to all of its branch offices on the provincial level. According to the bulletin every year, between June 1 and June 30, they are to organize appropriate study activities for the leaders of all religious organizations and places of worship and for their co-workers. Included are all office holders, teachers, and students in religious educational institutions as well as the faithful. The aim of this program is to “strengthen their national, civic, and legal awareness.” An obligatory reading list with three titles was appended to the document. By the end of July 2012, all provincial level Bureaus for Religious Affairs are required to report back to the central office in writing, with accompanying photos of their activities (the text of the document can be found at: www.sara.gov.cn/zzjg/zjwhcbs/xxfb13/12407.htm).

February 13, 2012:

CPJ: Ten of the 27 journalists currently in prison in China are Tibetans

This assertion was made by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ, New York) in its global annual census on imprisoned journalists. Six other journalists detained in China are thought to be Uyghurs (according to *TibetInfoNet News Digest* Feb. 11–24).

February 15, 2012:

The Bishop of Macerata begins Taiwan visit

Bishop Claudio Giuliodori of Macerata, Italy, birthplace of Matteo Ricci, paid a week-long visit to Taiwan this February. One purpose of this visit was to locate witnesses who might possibly help advance the beatification process of Matteo Ricci. His spiritual heritage “of mutual respect and open-minded dialogue between East and West is still relevant today,” said Bishop Giuliodori in a conversation with Archbishop John Hung Shan-chuan (Hong Shanchuan) SVD, which took place in the course of a meeting with Church leaders at the Taipei Archdiocese curia on February 16. In the course of the conversation, the bishop also mentioned the Li Madou Study Center (Li Madou is the Chinese name of Matteo Ricci), which was founded in his diocese for the purpose “to serve Chinese clergy who pursue studies in Europe and to hold theological seminars.” He also expressed the hope that the Diocese of Shanghai will speed up its cause for Paul Xu Guangqi, Ricci’s collaborator in China, so that “the two Catholic sages of East and West would be canonized together.” Bishop Giuliodori also visited Paul Cardinal Shan Kuo-hsi (Shan Guoxi) in the Diocese of Kaohsiung (Gaoxiong) as well as the Diocese of Tainan, where

he unveiled statues of Matteo Ricci and Xu Guangqi's granddaughter, Candida Xu (1607–1689) (*UCAN* Feb. 17 and 21, 2012).

February 17, 2012:

Chinese Minister of Health calls for a campaign against corruption

In a statement published on the website of the Ministry of Health, Minister Chen Zhu is quoted as calling on the health authorities and officials “to step up supervision of medical workers’ practices and the operations of both public and private hospitals.” The fight against corruption in the purchase and sale of medicines and of medical equipment needs to be carried out more intensely and the system of remuneration of hospital personnel needs to be reformed, Zhu stated. He also challenged all hospitals and hospital personnel to improve the quality of their service. After numerous reports of conflicts between doctors and patients, which, on occasion, have even resulted in physical assaults, the malfunctioning relationship between doctors and patients has aroused great concern. The ministry wants to improve existing emergency measures for the management of conflicts over medical treatment and improve the security and safety of hospital employees. At the same time, the ministry called on the general public to remain alert to any possible misconduct on the part of doctors (*Xinhua* Feb. 18 and 24, 2012; March 15, 2012).

February 18, 2012:

Bishop John Tong of Hong Kong becomes new member of the College of Cardinals



Cardinal Tong at a press conference in Hong Kong on March 2.
Photo: *UCAN*.

Bishop John Tong Hon, Bishop of Hong Kong, is among the 22 prelates whom Pope Benedict XVI, during the Consistory in St. Peter's in Rome, has made members of the College of Cardinals. The 72 year old is the 7th Chinese Cardinal in the history of the Church and the 3rd Cardinal of the Diocese of Hong Kong, succeeding the deceased John Baptist Cardinal Wu Cheng-chung and Joseph Cardinal Zen Ze-kiun, who retired as bishop of Hong Kong in 2009. John Tong characterized his elevation to the rank of cardinal as a sign of the Holy Father's great appreciation and concern for the Church in China and an encouragement to the Diocese of Hong Kong in

its efforts to achieve reconciliation and the restoration of full unity between the Church of China and the universal Church. In the Vatican, Cardinal Tong is, among other things, a consultant of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and a member of the China Commission (see *China heute* 2012, No. 1, pp. 4-5 [in German]).

February 19, 2012:

Demands made by the Diocese of Hong Kong to the government of the Special Administrative Region

In the run-up to the election of the new administrative head of Hong Kong on March 25, 2012, the Diocese of Hong Kong has spoken out decisively in a statement titled: “Some expectations concerning the future SAR government envisioned by the Catholic Church in Hong Kong.” Most importantly, the Church is advocating the introduction of universal suffrage for the election of the Chief Executive and all the members of the Legislative Council. In addition, four areas were mentioned in which there are great shortcomings and for which, in the mind of the Church, the government has undertaken far too little. They are: housing – especially for young people; medical care; education, and retirement protection. In all of these areas suggestions were made for the adoption of remedial measures in view of the increase of social disparity and economic recession. Given the number of broken marriages, the Diocese of Hong Kong is calling on the government to shoulder the responsibility for the protection of marriage and family (*South China Morning Post* Feb. 21, 2012; sundayex.catholic.org.hk/).

February 27, 2012:

New campaign launched: “Practice Lei Feng spirit”



"Pop icon" Lei Feng on a *Beijing Review* cover.

A new propaganda campaign has been launched to mark the 50th anniversary of a man who, already in Mao's time, had become a moral icon of a highly stylized national hero. To the slogan coined by Mao, “Learn from Lei Feng,” has now been added the motto “Practice Lei Feng spirit.” – The 22 year old soldier Lei Feng died in an accident in 1962 and after his death he became famous because of his diary entries, in which he had written down his thoughts and good deeds. These were to make of him a moral role model for the whole country. According to the *South China Morning Post*, the new campaign aims at improving the moral standards of the people by means of the visible characteristics of Lei Feng's personality (such as helpfulness, selflessness, kindness, and humility) and at shoring up the stability of society. *UCAN* points out that, despite almost 50 straight years of continuous campaigns, modern Chinese society is riddled with corruption, food scandals, mismanagement, inconsiderateness, and injustice, with traditional Chinese moral values increasingly falling into oblivion. The government hopes that this new propaganda campaign, which presents a more human portrait of this long idealized national idol, will counteract this tendency (*South China Morning Post* Feb. 28, 2012; *UCAN* March 18, 2012).

February 27, 2012:

New document on the encouragement and regulation of charitable activities of religious groups

A new document, jointly issued by six government departments, and bearing the title “Views on the encouragement and regulation of charitable activities of religious groups” (关于鼓励和规范宗教界从

事公益慈善活动的意见), welcomes the charitable activities of religious groups and affirms that they will benefit from tax advantages and state subsidies, provided that they register [though often quite difficult]. But, according to the new regulations, they are not allowed to propagate any religious content along with their charitable work and they must operate free from foreign influence. For this reason they may not accept subsidies and donations from abroad if there are any religious or political conditions attached to them. In addition, religious charitable organizations are required to operate under the close supervision, management, and inspection of the corresponding government departments under whose authority they function. When making out their annual plan of charitable action, they must report to the religious affairs departments above the county level. According to an *AsiaNews* source, the real goal of the new regulations “is to stop the flow of money to the Islamic groups and the Tibetans: these groups are religious, but also have a strong political aspect that the government wants to slow down at all costs” (*AsiaNews* Feb. 3, 2012; *South China Morning Post* Feb. 28, 2012).

March 5, 2012:

Wen Jiabao announces program to alleviate poverty and promote rural development – last year the official poverty threshold was raised

At the opening of the 5th session of the National People’s Congress in Beijing on March 5, the Chinese Premier announced the introduction of a program to alleviate poverty and promote the development of rural areas for the period 2011–2020. The program is meant to benefit those regions of China which are particularly poor. The target regions are the 11 mountainous regions and those parts of the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu, and Qinghai which are inhabited mainly by Tibetans, as well as the more southern area of the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang. The government considers the ever widening gap in material goods between urban and rural populations, between coastal regions and the provinces of the interior, as well as the obvious difference between rich and the poor, as a source of ongoing worry. For example, in 2010 the average income for a city dweller was 3.23 times higher than that of farmers. In the Province of Guizhou, one of the poorest of all Chinese provinces, the gross domestic product is at present only one sixth of that of Shanghai, yet approximately 15 million people live in the province with 45% of that population living below the newly defined poverty level, which the Chinese government adjusted on November 29, 2011, raising it to a net income of 2,300 Yuan a year for the rural population. Included among the measures to combat poverty is a plan to relocate a total of 1.5 million poor villagers away from those areas of Guizhou Province, which are unfit for human habitation due to the rocky nature of the soil (*Xinhua* Nov. 29, 2011; Feb. 13, 2012; March 12, 2012).

March 7, 2012:

Xindra Tenzin Chodrak: 27,000 monks and nuns in Tibet have been added to the state healthcare system

In addition, 14,000 monks have joined pension programs, and 4,300 monks coming from poor families have received allowances for minimum living standards, said Xindra Tenzin Chodrak, deputy director of the Standing Committee of the People’s Congress of the Autonomous Region of Tibet during a panel discussion at the National People’s Congress. All of the 46,000 monks and nuns, who are currently living in monasteries in the Autonomous Region of Tibet, will eventually be included in the social security system. Padma Choling, chairman of the Autonomous Region, said at the same meeting that the Dalai Lama and his followers have been attempting to attract young Tibetans. He added that the

government doesn't need to compete with the Dalai Lama, rather, the key to raising the government's popularity is going to be improving the standard of people's livelihood (*Xinhua* March 7, 2012; see also *RCTC* 2012, No. 1, p. 15).

March 11, 2012:

The Catholic Church in Taiwan keeps its distance from anti-nuclear protests



Indigenous people demand the removal of nuclear storage facilities from Lanyu Island. Photo: *UCAN*.

In connection with the first anniversary of the catastrophic Tsunami and the associated atomic energy disaster in Fukushima, leading figures of the Protestant churches, the Buddhists, Muslims, and of the Daoist Zhengyi sect issued a common statement in which they warn against the use of nuclear energy and call on the government to eliminate this form of energy in Taiwan and to promote the development of sustainable green energy. Together with 70 other groups and with thousands of other Taiwanese they took part on March 11 in public protests in the cities of Taipei, Taichung (Taizhong), and Kaohsiung (Gaoxiang). *UCAN* has reported that the Catholic

Church neither signed the statement nor has it taken an official public position against the use of atomic energy. A spokesman for the Bishops' Conference explained that the Church in Taiwan was consciously conforming to a decision of Vatican policy to maintain a neutral position in the controversy over the peaceful use of nuclear energy. However, "Church leaders had no objection to Catholics wanting to join the protests in a personal capacity," according to an official from the Bishops' Conference who did not wish to be quoted by name (*UCAN* March 12, 2012).

March 14, 2012:

Wen Jiabao deplors self-immolations carried out by Tibetans

At a press conference, the Chinese Premier commented on the recent phenomenon of the self-immolations in some areas of Tibet by a number of monks. "We are opposed to such extreme actions that have disturbed and undermined social harmony," Wen declared. He also said that the young Tibetans involved were innocent and that "we feel deeply distressed by their actions." With or without the direct participation of the Dalai Lama, the so-called "Tibetan Government in Exile" in Dharamsala is a combination of politics and religion with the express purpose of separating Tibet from the Motherland, something about which China has a very clear position, Wen stated. He added that the economy in Tibet needs to be developed, but at the same time environmental concerns and the cultural traditions need to be considered. "We respect the religious freedom of the Tibetan people," Wen said (*Xinhua* March 14, 2012, from www.sara.gov.cn).

March 15, 2012:

UCAN: 20–30 theology students from the Mainland are studying in Taiwan

UCAN has reported on an interesting development in cooperation between Taiwan and Mainland China in the realm of theological formation. According to reports by the president of the Bishop's Conference of Taiwan, Archbishop John Hung Shan-chuan (Hong Shanchuan) SVD, at the beginning of 2012 between 20 and 30 priests, sisters, and brothers from Mainland China ranging from 20–30 years of age are now studying at the Faculty of Theology of Fu Jen Catholic University in Hsinchuang (Xinzhuang), Taipei. This possibility arose out of a) the willingness of Taiwan to admit students from Mainland China in particular to private universities on the island; and b) from an agreement at the end of 2011 between the government of Taiwan and the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education that academic titles and degrees of the Faculty of Theology of Fu Jen are to be officially recognized in Taiwan (see *RCTC* 2012, No. 1, p. 17-18); and last but not least c) because of negotiations initiated almost two years ago and carried forward by Archbishop Hung with Wang Zu'án, Director of China's State Administration for Religious Affairs. The first group of students from the Mainland began their studies at Fu Jen in the fall of 2011. Taiwan is currently working on developing this program further. Archbishop John Hung sees advantages for the Church on the Mainland, inasmuch as the students will receive a solid theological formation within the framework of the universal Church, but he also sees advantages for the Church of Taiwan, which hopes to see some help in view of the low number of vocations from the island, even if the laws of Taiwan as they now stand would severely limit the possibility for clerics or religious sisters from Mainland China to be assigned for pastoral work in Taiwan (*UCAN* March 15, 2012).

March 18, 2012:

Shanghai: Priesthood ordinations – after resignation of the auxiliary bishop, nomination of new vicar general

Seven deacons – six from Shaanxi Province and one from Inner Mongolia – were ordained priests by 95 year old Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian on March 18, eve of the Feast of St. Joseph, in the cathedral church of Shanghai. The ordination had originally been scheduled for last December 10, but it had to be postponed at the last moment after Bishop Jin broke a rib in a fall. A cloud hung over the ordination due to the absence of 49 year old Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Xing Wenzhi, who had not appeared in public for many months. According to a report in *Eglises d'Asie*, after months of rumors, Bishop Jin had finally announced the resignation of his auxiliary bishop. In the week before Christmas Jin named Fr. Thaddeus Ma Daqin, born and bred in Shanghai, as Vicar General of the diocese. Initially, Fr. Ma worked in the underground. For some years now, he has been taking on important assignments in the diocese (*Eglises d'Asie* March 21, 2012; *UCAN* Jan. 13, 2012, *Vatican Insider* Dec. 30, 2011).

March 19, 2012:

Tibet Daily calls for tighter controls of “migrant” monks and a long-term mechanism for the management of Tibet’s monasteries

In an editorial, the Party newspaper *Xizang ribao* (*Tibet Daily*, Lhasa) has called for stricter controls, especially with regard to “migrant” monks and nuns (*liudong sengni* 流动僧尼) and for strengthening the

building up of the institutes for Tibetan Buddhism. The paper also wants to see the controls tightened over the reincarnation of Living Buddhas and a “long-term mechanism for the management of the monasteries (*simiao guanli de changxiao jizhi* 寺庙管理的长效机制)” to be put in place. According to the *South China Morning Post*, Padma Choling, chairman of the Autonomous Region of Tibet, has confirmed during a session of the National People’s Congress that government cadres would be stationed within the Tibetan monasteries on a permanent basis, and that 21,000 cadres have already been placed in 5,451 villages of the Autonomous Region.

According to a March 16 report from Human Rights Watch, the new policy, known as the “Complete Long-Term Management Mechanism for Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries,” is a new form of government surveillance: The “democratic management committees” which had previously been elected by the monks (even though under supervision) and which were comprised entirely of monks will now be placed under the direct control of non-elected administrative committees, on which the inserted government cadres will be members (Human Rights Watch March 16, 2012; *South China Morning Post* March 20, 2012).

March 19, 2012:

Underground Bishop of Wenzhou taken away by the government to attend “learning classes”



Coadjutor Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin (right) and Father Paul Jiang Sunian of Wenzhou.
Photo: *UCAN*.

49 year old Coadjutor Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin of Wenzhou and his chancellor Fr. Paul Jiang Sunian were taken away by government officials so that they could take part in “learning classes.” In 2007, the Vatican appointed Bishop Shao leader of the underground Church in Wenzhou and he is not recognized by the government. Local Church sources quoted government officials saying that they would be allowed back soon, if the two of them are “intelligent enough in their learning.” If that does not turn out to be the case, they will be detained longer. “This implies their release depends on whether they accept the government’s religious policies,” said one of the

sources. Several of the seventeen priests of the underground diocese were also summoned for interrogation. It is more than likely that all of this is a direct result of the secret Episcopal ordination in Tianshui Diocese in Gansu Province last year. Apparently the government is trying to find out who was involved in that ordination. Bishop John Wang Ruowang of Tianshui was also taken away for “learning classes” at the end of December (*UCAN* March 22, 2012, see entry of December 30, 2011).

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The Chinese Church's Response to Migration within Mainland China (Part II)

John B. Zhang

IV. Pastoral Services for Catholic Expatriates in China

According to the Exit and Entry Administration of China's Ministry of Public Security, 382 million people crossed China's borders in 2010. They include 114 million mainland citizens, 215 million Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan residents, and 52.112 million foreigners.¹

Most expatriates entered China briefly, mainly through Shanghai and Beijing and mostly for tourism, leisure, meeting and business purposes. But 3.46 million others stayed longer – 2.463 million service staff, 807,000 employees, and 190,000 students. The percentage of Catholics among foreign nationals working or studying in the Mainland is unknown, but providing pastoral care to them is a common issue for the Church in China and overseas Church communities.

Paying attention to and focusing on Catholic expatriates is a significant Church concern in China and abroad. For this reason, Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (FICS) has been cooperating with dioceses, parishes, and organizations that celebrate the Eucharist in foreign languages, especially to ascertain the number, location, language, and time of Sunday Masses for such Catholics in China.

On June 15, 2011, according to a limited survey conducted by FICS, about 14,630 expatriates were taking part in Sunday Masses offered in a foreign language in China. About 2,600 of them attended Mass in Beijing, 4,670 in Shanghai, and 500 in Tianjin (Xikai Church, in English). Another 3,020 Catholic expatriates went to English and French

This article is Part II of a public lecture delivered by John B. Zhang (Faith Institute for Cultural Studies – Jinde Charities, Shijiazhuang) on June 30, 2011 at the China-Zentrum in Sankt Augustin. The contribution has been translated from Chinese into English by Paul Han and proofread by Robert Astorino and Jacqueline Mulberge. Part I of the English version has been published in *Religions & Christianity in Today's China*, II (2012) 1, pp. 23-46. The German translation of the lecture has been published in *China heute* 2011, No. 3, pp. 166-177 (Part I) and No. 4, pp. 225-236 (Part II). For the Chinese version of Part I, see Zhang Shijiang 张士江, "Zhongguo jiaohui huiying yimin wenti (shang) 中国教会回应移民问题 (上)," in: *Tianzhujiao yanjiu ziliao huibian* 天主教研究资料汇编 2011, No. 115, pp. 99-137; Chinese version of Part II, forthcoming.

1 Su Xuefeng 苏雪峰, "2010 nian wo guo chu ru jing ren yuan da 3,82 yi ren ci" 2010年我国出入境人员达3.82亿人次 (The number of exit and entry population in China amounted to 382 million in 2010), in: *Renmin gongan bao* 人民公安报 January 13, 2011.

Catholic expatriates attending English-language Mass in China
(outside Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai, June 15, 2011)

Diocese	Church	Language	Time	Attendants	Nationality of the Celebrating Priest
Xiamen	Gulangyu	English	Sunday 9.30	100	Chinese
Ningbo	Cathedral	English	Sunday 10.30	100	Chinese
Chengdu	Church of Our Lady	English	Saturday 16.00	200	Chinese
Kunming	Cathedral (temporarily stopped)	English	Saturday 19.00	30	Chinese
Guangzhou	Shishi Church	English	Sunday 15.30	1,000	Chinese
		French	Sunday 17.00	30	French
Wuhan	Wuchang, Huayuan-shan Church	English	Sunday 10.30	150	Chinese and other nationalities
Jiangmen	Bishop's House	English	Sunday 15.30	300	Chinese
Wenzhou	Church of Our Lady in Nanmen	English	Saturday 16.00	20	Chinese
Shenzhen	St. Anthony's Church	English	Sunday 13.00	150	Chinese
Xi'an	Cathedral	English	Sunday 15.30	60	Chinese
Taiyuan	Cathedral	English	Sunday 9.00	30	Chinese
Shenyang	Cathedral	English	Sunday 11.30	150	Chinese
Hangzhou	Cathedral	English	Saturday 20.00	150	Chinese
Changchun	Cathedral	English	Sunday 14.00	50	American
Nanjing	Cathedral	English	Sunday 18.00	100	Chinese
Wuxi	St. Joseph's Church	English	Sunday 10.30	100	Chinese
Suzhou	Yangjiaqiao Church	English	Sunday 10.30	300	Chinese
				3,020	

Masses in 17 other cities, while 150 German Catholics and 3,690 South Korean Catholics attended Sunday Masses celebrated in their respective languages in various cities.²

English-speaking groups are the largest number of persons attending Masses in a foreign language, and Korean-speakers are the second largest segment. French, German, Italian, Spanish, Filipino, and Indonesian-speaking Catholics also attend Sunday Mass offered in their respective languages.

Catholic expatriates include not just a large number of Europeans and Americans, but also many students and young workers from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They bring vitality to their parish communities in China. The pastoral services offered to German and South Korean Catholics, as well as those available to other expatriate Catholic communities in Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin, are worth studying more closely.

² Please see the special topics below for more details on various foreign language communities.

Case V: The Pastoral Care of German-Speaking Catholic Communities in China³

Two Divine Word Fathers were the first to take care of Catholic expatriates in Beijing by offering Sunday Masses in German, English, Spanish, and French. The German, English, Spanish, and French pastoral services that these two priests pioneered for Catholics in Beijing laid a firm foundation for the growth and further development of those communities.⁴

In 1987, several months after he had arrived in China, Fr. Willi Müller SVD was asked by the German Bishops' Conference to take care of the Catholic German-speaking community in Beijing and Shanghai. From 1987–1996 he celebrated Holy Mass for the German-speaking expatriates in the German embassy in Beijing on a weekly basis and occasionally in Shanghai. In 1996, Fr. Arnold Sprenger SVD succeeded Fr. Müller in taking care of the German-speaking Catholics in Beijing.

At first from 30–40, up to 80 Catholics – but sometimes as many as 100 – attended Mass in the German embassy. The weekly Mass in English in the embassy of the Philippines attracted 100–200 Catholics from the embassies of countries in Asia, Oceania, Europe, and Africa.

The Cologne Diocese assigned Father Michael Bauer to study in China in 2004 and he gradually became responsible for the pastoral care of German Catholics there. With the blessing of the secretary of the Overseas Pastoral Care Committee of the German Bishops' Conference, he promoted the establishment of the “Saint Joseph Freinademetz Community” [Katholische Sankt Josef Freinademetz Gemeinde deutscher Sprache Peking] for German Catholics in Beijing in 2006. He now heads that community and is its spiritual director, while two German Catholics are responsible for its financial and liturgical needs. During the past seven years, Father Bauer has also traveled extensively to Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Hangzhou, Wuxi, Suzhou, and other places to provide pastoral services for other German Catholics in the Mainland.

More and more Germans have been entering China to study, travel, and work, thanks to China's open-door policy and rapid economic development, as well as the growing cooperation between China and Germany in science, technology, culture, education, economy, trade, and commercial activities. In recent years, German companies have been basing themselves in Shanghai and this has led to the numbers of Germans there being far more than in Hong Kong and in Singapore. There are now about 10,000 Germans in

3 The German-speaking Catholics in China include those from Germany, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy.

4 In the late 1980s, at the invitation of the Argentinian ambassador, Fr. Müller started to celebrate Holy Mass in Spanish every Sunday, first in the Argentinian embassy, after September 1992 in the embassy of Chile. During the democracy movements that erupted in 1989, both German fathers stayed in the Argentinian embassy for a few days; there Fr. Müller offered Mass in Spanish, and many Catholic ambassadors and embassy staff attended. In the same year, Fr. Sprenger was invited by the ambassador of the Philippines to offer Holy Mass in English in the embassy of the Philippines. Because there soon were too many people attending, he later held a second weekly English Mass in the Canadian embassy. Also in the late 1980s, Fr. Müller was invited, first by diplomats from Benin, to celebrate Holy Mass in French every Saturday. This became a flourishing African francophone community. For a few years, practically all French speaking embassies, including the French embassy, hosted this event in turn. In 1992, when Fr. Müller had to leave Beijing for a few months, Fr. Sprenger also celebrated Mass for the German, Spanish, and French speaking communities.

Shanghai and 6,000 in Beijing and of these around 3,000 in Shanghai are Catholics and 2,000 in Beijing.

Every Sunday about 80 German Catholics in Beijing and 100 in Shanghai attend German-language Mass, while another 150 or so attend German Mass irregularly in other cities. According to Father Bauer, German Catholics represent about one-third of all Germans in the Mainland. The German Catholics have encountered some difficulties in celebrating Sunday Mass and assembling community members, and they have also evidenced some special characteristics.

German-language Sunday Mass attendance in China (June 15, 2011)

	No. of Faithful	Venue of Mass	Times
Beijing	80	German Embassy	Once in two weeks
Shanghai	100	St. Peter's Church	Once in two weeks
Chengdu	25	Consulate General	Twice a year
Guangzhou	50	Consulate General	Twice a year
Suzhou	25	Residences	Once per month
Wuxi	25	Residences	Every six weeks
Hangzhou	25	Residences	Every six weeks
	330		

a. Difficulties Regarding Spiritual Direction and Sunday Mass Time, Place, and Venue

Only one German-speaking priest now serves the German Catholics scattered in seven places in China. Mass is offered at the local Catholic church in Shanghai, but German Catholics elsewhere must gather for Mass at the embassy, a consulate, private home, or hotel. In Shanghai, German Catholics attend Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Church every two weeks, but 15.00h is not the most convenient time for their assembly. Moreover, the venue is far from residential areas of the German Catholics, so some cannot attend Mass regularly. Fewer than 200 now attend Sunday Mass in Beijing and Shanghai, so pastoral services for German Catholics in China clearly face double difficulties and challenges within the community itself and from the external environment.⁵

b. Constant Change and Relocation Challenge Community-Building among German Catholics

Most German Catholics in China are German company personnel who usually live and work in the Mainland for 3–5 years, so a large number of them are replaced every few years. Father Bauer, the spiritual director, has said, "This is the permanent challenge that the German Catholic community in China must face." Even so, German Catholics still want the opportunity to share and celebrate Mass in their mother tongue and thereby foster peace of mind.

⁵ The small number of church-going German Catholics is not only a result of limited time, location, and distance, but also a result of world-wide secularism.

c. German Catholics in China Are Young and Energetic

German Catholics in China are young – 35 years of age on average. This clearly contrasts with Catholics in Germany, where regular Mass-goers are usually much older. As company employees living overseas, they belong to the mid-upper class and typically have a high income as well as a car, house, driver, and nanny. They enjoy considerable economic potential, and are full of energy and vitality, so they can conduct various activities and go on pilgrimage to many places.⁶



Pilgrimage of Saint Joseph Freinademetz Community in Beijing to the tomb of their patron saint on May 8, 2011 – community youth in the church of Daijiazhuang next to the statue of the Saint.
Photo: Freinademetz Community.

d. Great Concern of the German Church and a Strong Sense of Belonging to the Community

Both the Cologne Diocese and the Overseas Pastoral Care Committee of the German Bishops' Conference pay great attention to the pastoral care organized for German Catholics in China. On May 15, 2011, Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Heiner Koch of Cologne, who chairs the Overseas Pastoral Care Committee, joined German Catholics in China to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the "Saint Joseph Freinademetz Community" at Beijing's Wangfujing Church (East Church).

The fact that a German priest regularly visits German Catholics in China and serves them in their mother tongue, while other clergy from their mother land occasionally visit China to care for and encourage the German Catholics to live out their faith life overseas, is considered vital for the German speaking Catholic community. The German Masses not

⁶ German Catholics in Beijing often organize group activities. For instance, on May 8, 2011, Father Bauer led 41 German-speaking Catholics on pilgrimage to the tomb of their patron, Saint Joseph Freinademetz, in Daijiazhuang Town, Shandong Province, and celebrated Mass at the nearby church.

only enrich their faith life but also create a good opportunity for them to deepen friendships and share their stories with one another.

The pastoral services of a German spiritual director have been helping German Catholics in China to grow in faith and to strengthen their sense of belonging to a Church community as well.



Confirmation in Saint Joseph Freinademetz Community in Beijing in May 2011 – Auxiliary Bishop Dr. Heiner Koch with the young people in front of East Church. Photo: Freinademetz Community.

Case VI: Difficulties Concerning the Pastoral Care of Korean Catholics in China

Masses in Korean are offered every Saturday and Sunday, and pastoral services for Korean clergy and faithful are provided in more than 20 parishes or venues in more than a dozen cities.⁷ At Beijing's Dongjiaominxiang Church, two Korean Masses are offered every Sunday morning. Two parishes in Shanghai, three in Qingdao, two in Guangzhou, and two in Hangzhou also offer Mass in Korean every Sunday. In Wuxi and Zhangjiagang, where only temporary gathering places are available, one Sunday Mass is celebrated each month.⁸

7 These cities are Beijing, Shanghai (Jinjiaxiang and St. Peter's), Tianjin, Guangzhou (Shishi and Dongguan), Shenzhen, Hangzhou (Hangzhou and Yiwu), Nanjing (Cathedral and Wuxi), Suzhou (Cathedral and Zhangjiagang), Qingdao (Cathedral, Chengyang, and Huangdao), Yantai, Weihai, Shenyang, Dalian, Changchun, Yanji, Harbin.

8 This information comes from the dioceses and parishes that provide Mass in Korean, and from Korean priests who are working or studying in China. Their help is much appreciated.



Confirmation Mass of the Korean Community in St. Peter's Church in Shanghai on November 20, 2011.
Photo: Korean Community Shanghai.

According to a limited survey, about 5,090 Korean Catholics in China normally attend Sunday Mass in Korean.⁹ However, the number going to Mass is double on special feasts such as Easter, so more than 10,000 Korean Catholics would attend such celebrations in the Mainland. According to Fr. Benedictine O Sang Jik and Fr. Francis Lim Beom Jong, who serve Korean Catholics in Beijing and Shanghai respectively, other Korean Catholics may take part in an English or Chinese Mass at nearby parishes for various reasons, such as the inconvenience of time and/or location of the Korean Mass. Others, due to various reasons, are unable to attend Mass at all.

The FICS has learned that in most cities Korean priests usually celebrate Korean Masses for Korean Catholics, while Chinese priests celebrate Korean Masses in Changchun and Yanji, two cities of Jilin province. The Korean Catholic Church is concerned to provide pastoral services to its Catholics overseas, but the number of priests who enter China is small compared to all the priests sent abroad by the Korean Church.

According to Fr. Paul Sung Jaeki from the Korean Foreign Mission Society (KMS), a PhD candidate of Beijing University, apart from 14 Korean priests working in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, more than 30 Korean priests from various dioceses or religious communities in South Korea are serving the pastoral needs of Korean Catholics in the

⁹ Though 1,500 Korean Catholics are registered in Beijing and Shanghai respectively, only 800 go to Dongjiaominxiang Church in Beijing for Sunday Masses, 400 to St. Peter's Church at South Chongqing Road in Shanghai, and 200 to Jinjiaxiang Church of Pudong in Shanghai. Another 300 or so Korean Catholics attend Sunday Mass at a hotel in Tianjin. Together with others elsewhere in China, a total of 5,090 Korean Catholics in the Mainland attend Sunday Masses offered in their own language.



First communion of Korean children in Shanghai on November 13, 2011.
Photo: Korean Community Shanghai.

Mainland.¹⁰ Twenty of those priests serve China-based Korean Catholics on a full-time basis; the others do so part-time. According to Fr. Francis Lim Beom Jong, thirteen of the Korean priests are from Daegu Archdiocese, three from Suwan Diocese, and two from Incheon Diocese, while Daejeon Diocese and Andong Diocese as well as the Jesuits and the Passionists each provide one priest.

At the same time, more than ten Korean priests are studying Chinese or pursuing Master's or Doctoral degrees, and still others are involved in social services. For example, some priests of the Korean Foreign Mission Society take turns visiting and serving leprosy patients in mountain areas of South China at certain times. The former Franciscan Fr. Stephen Shin Dongmin served leprosy patients in China from 1997 until his return to Korea several years ago when he joined the Incheon Diocese.

According to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCK), the Korean Church sent 330 Korean priests overseas in 2010. In the United States, 114 parish churches or venues now offer Mass in Korean, but only 19 priests are providing pastoral services in 22 parish churches or venues within Mainland China.¹¹

About 27.2% of all Catholics in South Korea regularly attend Sunday Mass. The ratio of Korean Catholics who attend Sunday Mass overseas usually is higher than at home,

10 Recently, three Korean priests (one diocesan priest and two religious priests) have been serving people in Macau. The Korean Foreign Mission Society sent 11 missionaries to Hong Kong (two priests) and Taiwan (nine priests in Xinzhu Diocese) for pastoral service. In the Mainland there are more Korean diocesan priests than priests from religious orders.

11 See the website of CBCK for "Statistics of Overseas Korean Catholics 2010," published by the CBCK's Committee for the Pastoral Care of Koreans Living Abroad on February 17, 2011.

Korean Catholics attending Korean Mass in China (outside Beijing and Shanghai) (June 15, 2011)

Diocese	Church	Time	Attendants	Nationality of the Celebrating Priest
Guangzhou Diocese	Shishi Church	Saturday 16.40	300	Korean
	Dongguang, private residence	Sunday 9.00 and 11.00	250	Korean
Shenzhen	Anbao Church	Sunday 11.00	300	Korean
Shenyang Diocese	Chapel in Bishop's House	Sunday 9.00	180	Korean
	Church in Dalian	Sunday 11.30	100	Korean
Hangzhou Diocese	Chapel, Hangzhou	Saturday 16.00	60	Korean
	Church in Yiwu	Sunday 10.00	40	
Suzhou Diocese	Catholic Church	Sunday 10.30	200	Korean
	Zhangjiagang Church, monthly	Saturday 18.30	40	
Changchun	Cathedral	Sunday 11.00	30	Chinese and Korean
Nanjing Diocese	Cathedral	Saturday 16.30	80	Korean
	Church in Wuxi	Once a month	60	Korean
Yanji	Church in Yanji	Sunday 8.00	350	Chinese
Harbin	Cathedral	Sunday 8.00	100	Korean
Qingdao Diocese	Cathedral	Sunday 10.30	500	Korean
	Chengyang (Office building)	Saturday 17.00	300	
		Sunday 10.30		
	Kirche on Huangdao Island	Sunday 17.00	100	Korean
Yantai	Catholic Church	Saturday 18.00	150	Korean
		Sunday 11.00		
Weihai	Church in Weihai	Saturday 16.00	250	Korean
		Sunday 11.00		
			3,390	

but the proportion of those attending Sunday Mass in China is far smaller than in South Korea.

There are several factors which make the Sunday Mass attendance of South Korean Catholics in China lower than in Korea, such as: inconvenient time and location of Mass, small number of parishes and gathering venues for Korean communities, and limited number of Korean priests. Fr. Francis Lim Beom Jong, secretary of the South Korean Catholic priests' association in China, says that South Korean Catholics take limited part in and contribute little to their own community in China due to their short stay in the Mainland and their lack of a deep sense of belonging there.

South Korean priests in China can obtain visas and temporary residence permits with the help of South Korean Catholics and their companies. They can also get tacit permission from local religious bureaus in the Mainland with the help of local Church com-

munities and Catholic faithful of both Chinese as well as Korean nationality. Koreans are allowed to attend Mass and to get pastoral care for their spiritual needs. Even so, in light of the current policy and environment in China there are still many obstacles that make it difficult for a number of Korean priests to enter China for pastoral work among Korean emigrants.

Therefore, the existence and the pastoral needs of foreign Catholics, including Korean Catholics, should be given close attention both by the Chinese government and the Church in China. Hopefully, both parties would start with people-oriented ideas, open up more places of worship and provide more favorable conditions, in order to properly resolve the pastoral difficulties of foreign Catholics, and to satisfy their reasonable and appropriate needs.

Case VII: Pastoral Services for Foreign Catholics in Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai

In the mid-1980s, some foreign priests began offering Mass in foreign languages, regularly or occasionally, for Catholics of various nationalities in Beijing. The Masses were often celebrated in embassies. By their active participation, many Catholics speaking different languages gradually established themselves as groups. Starting in the late 1980s, the German Divine Word Fathers Arnold Sprenger and Willi Müller – as described above – regularly presided at Masses in German, English, Spanish, and French for foreign nationals in Beijing.

Fr. Albert Haase OFM, an American Franciscan, was in charge of Mass for the English community in Beijing for several years (1997–2004). When Fr. Haase left in January 2004, there were over 800 English-speaking Catholics from 27 different countries attending the English Mass in Beijing. Fr. Haase helped English-speaking Catholics to develop and become very well organized and involved in charities during his time of service.¹²

Fr. Joseph Loftus, an Irish Vincentian missionary, then served at the invitation of the English-speaking community as their spiritual director for some years (2004–2006). During that period, the “International English-Speaking Catholic Community” in Beijing was officially renamed “Our Lady of China Community, Beijing” (OLC, Beijing). In 2006–2009 another American priest served this community as spiritual director. Even now he still helps to offer English Mass in Beijing diocese. Since it had become more difficult to rent a place for celebrating the Mass, in 2009 the community moved to the East Church at Wangfujing Street in Beijing, and its parish priest was appointed by the Bishop of Beijing as spiritual director of the English Mass community. The identity and development of “OLC, Beijing” needs to be reviewed and possibly revised.

Many embassies and foreign agencies, as well as large numbers of international students, are based in Beijing, the Chinese capital, so the Beijing diocese early on established its “Of-

12 In order to meet the needs of those Catholics, Fr. Haase had to celebrate three English Masses every weekend. During the Easter season of 2003, for the first time, Fr. Haase received permission to confirm 15 young people who had completed a two-year Confirmation course. Managed by a special committee established by Fr. Haase, about 50% of the weekly financial donations were distributed among various charities in Mainland China.

Catholic expatriates attending foreign language Masses in Beijing (June 15, 2011)

Diocese	Church	Language	Time	Attendants	Nationality of the Celebrating Priest
Beijing (4)	Cathedral, Couples For Christ	English CFC	Sunday 10.30	600	Chinese
			Sunday 13.00	300	Chinese
	East Church	English	Sunday 16.00	80	Chinese, American
	West Church	French	Sunday 11.00	300	Dutch
	Dongjiaominxiang Church	Korean	Sunday 10.15	400	Korean
			Sunday 11.30	400	Korean
	Embassies, institutions, residences, etc.	German	Every two weeks	80	German
		Polish	Sunday 10.00	40	Polish
		Italian	Sunday 10.00	100	Italian
		English etc.	Other foreign Catholics	300	Foreign nationalities
					2,600

rice for Foreign Affairs.” In recent years, it has also opened South, East, West, and Dongjiaominxiang churches for expatriate Catholic communities. An “international parish” set up in South Church enables Chinese and foreign priests to offer Sunday Masses in different languages and to provide pastoral services through cooperation and collaboration.

The French Mass in Beijing originally had been at South Church but officially moved to West Church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, on May 1, 2011. This Mass is offered at 11.00h every Sunday. Generally, all members of a French Catholic family in Beijing attend the Mass together. Their children are altar-servers, holding candles, bread, and wine as they line up before processing to the altar and then stand in the sanctuary for the rest of the Mass. The Francophone Catholic community also provides catechism lessons on weekdays, thanks to the availability of many volunteers. Currently, the chaplain for the French Mass is Fr. Jos Simons, a Dutch member of the Paris Foreign Mission Society. Many parishioners are prepared each year for Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, and Anointing of the Sick. Numerous groups have formed in recent years and the lively community often gathers for prayer, including adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The Catholics are very grateful to Fr. Justin Liu, West Church’s Chinese pastor, who welcomed the community to the parish and who fosters the wellbeing of all in many ways. Christian unity is enhanced when his Chinese parishioners play the organ to accompany the Francophone choir at the French Mass.

During Lent in 2007, Fr. Zhang Liang, pastor of Xikai Church in Tianjin, accepted a suggestion by Fr. Joseph Loftus and invited him to start offering English Mass in the parish. Since this initiative was so successful, Fr. Zhang held a discussion with the government and received permission to have English Sunday Mass at his church. Meanwhile, Our Lady of China Community (OLC, Tianjin) was launched for English-speaking Catholics in Tianjin and in 2008 Fr. Francis Cruz, a Filipino Vincentian, was asked to take full-time care of the English Mass. About 500 Catholic expatriates now attend every Sunday. The

Catholic expatriates attending foreign language Masses in Shanghai (June 15, 2011)

Diocese	Location	Language	Time	Attendants	Nationality of the Celebrating Priest
Shanghai (5)	St. Peter's Church, Chongqing South Road	English	Saturday 17.00	400	Chinese
			Sunday 12.00	600	Chinese
		French	Sunday 10.00	400	Chinese and French
		German	Sunday 15.00	100	German
		Korean	Sunday 17.00	400	Korean
	Cathedral in Xujiahui	English	Sunday 12.00	600	Chinese
	Church St. Francis Xavier, Dongjiadu	English	Saturday 17.00	200	Chinese
			Sunday 10.30	400	Chinese
			Sunday 12.30	200	Chinese
	Zhangjialou Church	English	Saturday 17.00	200	Chinese
			Sunday 10.30	700	Chinese
	Jinjiaxiang Church	Korean	Sunday 10.00	200	Korean
	Consulates, residences, and hotels	Polish	Sunday 10.00	20	Polish
		Spanish	Once a month	50	Foreign nationalities
		Indonesian	Irregularly	200	Indonesian
				4,670	

community contributes 3,000 RMB a month to the parish to help cover the costs of water and heating, the spiritual director's salary and the community's administrative expenses. It may be worth promoting this model of happy cooperation between Chinese and foreign priests and among the Catholic expatriates.

Shanghai Diocese, situated in another international city, recently set up a "Pastoral Services Group for Foreign Catholics" which grew out of the diocese's previously established "Foreign Affairs Office." In accord with relevant laws and regulations, the diocese opened five churches (St. Peter's Church at South Chongqing Road, Xujiahui Cathedral, Dongjiadu St. Francis Xavier's Church, Zhangjialou, and Jinjiaxiang) to provide Sunday Mass and pastoral services at different times for Catholic expatriates. Compared to other places in China, Shanghai has the largest number of participants at foreign language Masses. This reiterates the importance of pastoral service for foreign nationals in an international city such as Shanghai.

Shanghai is the only Chinese diocese that has set up formal structures to serve foreign Catholics in the Mainland. Its experience is worth considering as a model for other dioceses across China.

Local churches in other provinces and cities have also launched Sunday Masses to meet the pastoral needs of Catholic expatriates. Some local churches have no contact with expatriate priests and Catholic laity, nor have they applied for the required permission, so Sunday Mass in such places must be offered in a private home, hotel, or at an institution run by foreigners in China.

In different local Church communities, many Chinese priests who have studied abroad and returned to China now work full-time or part-time with an expatriate priest to care for Catholic expatriates. Besides some Korean priests in full-time service to Korean Catholics in China, other diocesan and religious priests of various language groups – French, German, Korean, Indonesian, Italian, Polish, Spanish, and English – are taking care of their own faithful in China.¹³ Most priests who preside at Sunday Mass and offer pastoral services in English are Chinese. This reflects the fact that the overseas education and formation of Chinese priests during the past two decades have born good fruits. This is comforting not only for the overseas Church communities who have been offering help to the Church in China, but also for the Church in China itself.

Due to heavy work and study commitments, and the great distance from one's residence to Mass venues, attending Mass in one's native language is quite infrequent for many Catholic expatriates. But whenever the Church celebrates major feasts, many of these Catholics make an effort to attend Mass in their own mother tongue. On an ordinary Sunday, the Polish Mass in Beijing may draw only 40 people and only 100 or so people in Shanghai and about 80 in Beijing would attend a German Mass, but the numbers double for important feasts. For Easter 2011, 150 Polish Catholics in Beijing attended the Polish Mass, and 300 and 160 German Catholics in Shanghai and Beijing respectively attended Mass in their own language. The most recent Christmas Mass in Shanghai and Beijing drew 500 and 300 German Catholics respectively.

Catholic expatriates who attend Sunday Mass in their own language account for only one-third. Another one-half to two-thirds – between 20,000 and 30,000 – either cannot (or choose not to) participate in Sunday Mass in their own or another language. This shows that the pastoral care of Catholic expatriates has to be strengthened, and the local Church should provide more convenient conditions, including time and location for Sunday Mass, to help these Catholics gather for worship.

Catholic expatriates can usually attend Mass in Chinese with a much larger community, warm atmosphere, and more convenient timing, but it is hard for many of them to follow the Chinese Mass and to develop a sense of belonging with the Chinese Catholics. Chinese clergy must understand it is not enough just to celebrate Mass and give homilies in foreign languages since this is only part of the whole pastoral service that Catholic expatriates require. Other pastoral activities would help, such as mutual sharing, communication, and caring in one's native language, and joining pastoral activities according to one's national traditions and customs. Thus, the cooperation between Chinese and foreign clergy to provide pastoral services for the Catholic expatriates is becoming ever more vital and necessary.

Many dioceses or parishes have reached agreements with expatriate Catholic communities to lend church facilities for Mass celebrations that are as convenient as possible for the Mass-goers as regards time and venue. In general, Catholic expatriates have to pay the parishes certain expenses and to cover the salary, accommodation, and transportation

13 The religious communities include: Society of the Divine Word, Vincentians, Paris Foreign Mission Society, Missionary Society of St. Columban, Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions/PIME, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Claretians, etc. Some diocesan priests from abroad are also involved.



German children and youth around the altar in Sheshan Basilica near Shanghai on April 17, 2011 during the community excursion of the German Community Shanghai.
Photo: Martin Plewa.

cost of the spiritual director, as well the daily administrative expenses of the community itself.¹⁴

A model of collaboration is gradually developing between foreign and Chinese clergy to serve such Catholics in the Mainland but besides religious policy, challenges of cooperation are gradually emerging between foreign and Chinese churches and between clergy and faithful concerned with service to Catholic expatriates. As with external policies, mutual understanding, acceptance, and cooperation within Church communities are equally important factors that cannot be ignored. The external environment, regulations, and policies certainly affect pastoral services for Catholic expatriates in China. However, there also is a need to develop mutual understanding, acceptance, and cooperation within the Church itself. Otherwise, pastoral service for foreign nationals will be seriously limited. Pastoral cooperation gradually should become part of the daily agenda of the Chinese and overseas Churches alike because this important issue requires greater attention and sharper focus.

Just like the Chinese migrant Catholics, the Catholic expatriates in China also need the attention, care, and spiritual nourishment of Church communities (both at home and in China).

With the peaceful, stable, and continuous development of China, the foreign Catholics in China will turn into parishes of various language-speaking expatriates. Ignoring their existence and needs will eventually lead them to conduct activities outside of the registered churches. Instead, by providing them open venues for religious services, it will be beneficial not only for promoting China's image of internationality and cultural exchange, but also for establishing a stable and harmonious society, and moving economic development ahead as well.

14 Every month, French Catholics in Beijing donate 3,000 RMB from their Sunday Mass collections to West Church and the Korean community contributes 1,300 RMB to Dongjiaominxiang Parish in Beijing, while the foreign Catholic community in Tianjin gives Xikai Church 3,000 RMB to help pay for water, heating, and electricity. All collections from foreign language Masses elsewhere in Beijing diocese go to the local diocese, as do all collections from foreign language Masses in Shanghai. Due to some factors, some other expatriate Catholic communities have concluded other kinds of agreement with Shanghai Diocese.

V. Opportunities of Pastoral Care and Evangelization for Overseas Chinese

At present, about 50 million Chinese live abroad. China has experienced three big waves of migration since the 1970s. The first was a labor force-dominated migration in the 1980s, the second was the technology-orientated migration of the 1990s, and the third wave, still underway, has been triggered by the emigration of social elite and the investment of the rich. No matter what may occasion migration, those who go overseas need to overcome language barriers and cultural differences, and enter the mainstream of their newly adopted land. Even short-term international students, job-seekers, and academic researchers face various challenges regarding life, studies, and work. In any case, the overseas Chinese involved in short-term or long-term migration constitute a new field for evangelization.

The Church in China still cannot satisfy the pastoral needs of overseas Chinese Catholics. The Churches in some countries where Chinese Catholics find themselves still need to strengthen their pastoral services for Chinese people within their borders. For example, there are only two Chinese Catholic communities in Germany. One of them, the “Community of Chinese Catholics in the Rhine Area,” is under the umbrella of the International Groups Pastoral Care Committee of the Cologne Diocese and is cared for by the Society of the Divine Word.¹⁵ The other, the “Chinese Catholic Community of Munich,” is under the umbrella of the Aliens’ Pastoral Care Committee of the Munich Archdiocese and in the last few years has been cared for by three religious communities: Society of the Divine Word, Missionary Benedictines from St. Ottilien, and Capuchins (OFM Cap) from Munich.¹⁶ About 150 Chinese Catholics take part in the group activities at Sankt Augustin or Aachen in the Rhine area, and about 30 (at ordinary times) up to 130 (maximum) participate in the Munich community.¹⁷ However, they are far fewer than the more than 60 groups of Chinese Protestant Christian Communities who gather for Bible sharing and fellowship.¹⁸ Such a big gap is not caused by problems of Church–State relations or religious freedom. Rather, it is due to the failure of Chinese and German Church communities to give proper attention and emphasis to pastoral care and evangelization concerns. The pastoral care of Chinese people in Germany surely needs to be enhanced, but the Church communities in

15 The Community of Chinese Catholics in the Rhine Area (Tianzhujiao Laiyin qu Huaren tuanti 天主教莱茵区华人团体) was established by the Chinese Divine Word Bishop Vitus Zhang in exile (originally Bishop of Xinyang Diocese in Henan from 1941–1949) in the 1960s in Cologne. Divine Word Father Martin Welling currently is their spiritual director. See <http://www.gckr.de> and www.chinesische-gemeinde-koeln.de.

16 The predecessor of the Chinese Catholic Community of Munich (Munihei tianzhujiao Huaren tuanti 慕尼黑天主教华人团体), the Chinese Catholic Students’ Association in Munich, was established by Divine Word Father Peter Gerhards (1912–2000) in 1980. In 2001, this Association was approved by Munich Archdiocese and became a community solely dedicated to serving Chinese Catholics. At present, this community belongs to the Aliens’ Pastoral Care Committee of Munich Archdiocese, and Fr. Othmar Noggler OFM Cap is its spiritual director. See <http://www.kahuaren.de>.

17 These two communities provide a monthly Chinese Mass at Sankt Augustin and in Munich, organize small catechism classes and occasional outing activities. Apart from these two possibilities, Chinese Catholics elsewhere in Germany can only attend German-language Masses or catechism classes in local parishes.

18 At present, there are about 200,000 Chinese in Germany. The Protestant churches have more than 60 gathering places, Bible study classes, and fellowship groups in various cities (see, e.g., the website of the Protestant Chinese Community Stuttgart <http://stuttgartjiaohui.de>). Regarding information on the German-Chinese Protestant groups, I am grateful to Fr. Wei Jie with his thesis and sharing.

China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau also need to pay more attention to the needs of the Chinese Catholics in Germany. According to some sources, except for Chinese priests studying in Germany and some individual visiting Chinese clergy who offer limited part-time services, the Church in the mainland, Hong Kong, Macau, or Taiwan can send hardly anyone to Germany to serve the Chinese Catholics and organize evangelization activities for the Chinese migrants.

The predecessors of the two Chinese Catholic communities in Germany had served Chinese students in the past. They continued the Chinese Church tradition of rendering due attention to the pastoral care of intellectuals. But the Church in China and many missionary congregations need to change their perspective and gear up to new realities.

Since the sixteenth century, many missionaries such as Matteo Ricci have left their homeland and gone to the distant land of China to preach the Gospel, witness the faith, and establish and develop the Church. Countless individuals gave their lives to the Church in China and many more shed their blood in this foreign land for the conversion of the Chinese people to Jesus Christ!

At the moment, due to the restricted religious policy of running the Church independently, foreign missionaries are disallowed by Chinese law from conducting missionary activities in China. For this reason, many international religious communities have been complaining that they cannot enter China legally and openly, to say nothing about obtaining a legally recognized missionary identity.

Nevertheless, since 1977, many Chinese elite have gone overseas for studies, work, or permanent residency. Have the missionary congregations and local Churches abroad paid attention to overseas Chinese in their midst and sowed the seeds of the Gospel in their hearts? It is understandable that, once these elite become Christians, whether or not they return home to China or continue living abroad, or visit their homeland for even just a short time, their contributions to the betterment of Chinese society and the spread of the Gospel message will be doubly effective. They can even turn the aspirations of veteran missionaries like Matteo Ricci for a cultural evangelization into reality.

With all that in mind, it goes without saying that preaching the Gospel and carrying out pastoral services in schools, universities, and residential areas of Chinese people overseas represent a shared responsibility for Catholic churches and missionary religious orders abroad, as well as the Church in China. At the same time, while local Church communities in Mainland China pay attention to and carry out the responsibilities of overseas evangelization, they should also care for those baptized who, having studied or worked abroad, are now back to China. This requires selfless cooperation between the Church in China and the Universal Church community.

Conclusion

With continuing economic development in China, the number of migrants and other people on the move will certainly rise. The rural population shrinks as the urban population grows. The rural and urban populations in China are now almost equal. All through Chinese history, the rural population always outnumbered urban dwellers, but the future trend will be the opposite.

Facing the growing number of people on the move, and the rapidly changing composition of rural and urban residents, both the Church in China and the overseas Church communities are also actively responding to the subsequent issues through caring support, visitations, and establishment of Catholic communities and thus actively facing the problems of migrants and the pastoral challenges involved. Some Church-run social service organizations also try to aid many kinds of migrants. These efforts, while certainly commendable, are inadequate and need further action. In the future, the construction of new churches must take into consideration the spread of Catholics in rural and urban areas, so that those middle-sized and small churches are convenient for the residents to participate in the community.

The interviews, investigation, and reports conducted by *Faith Newspaper (Xinde)* within the Catholic Church in China have raised the awareness of the local Church concerning migrants, and have also encouraged some Church communities to start taking concrete actions to address the issues instead of just complaining that their communities are constantly losing Catholic faithful. They now need to cooperate with other Church communities to care for those who left their home towns by providing essential pastoral services for them. For the Chinese Catholic Church mainly in rural areas, the impact of the fast migration flow out of rural areas during the last 20 – 30 years has been huge. The Church in China is still in the process of adaptation and adjustment. Many clergy and Catholic faithful sincerely hope to learn from the overseas Church communities with regard to the pastoral care of immigrants.

No matter if it is Yongnian CBC in Shanghai, the German-speaking Community of St. Joseph Freinademetz, the English-speaking Community of our Lady of China, or parishes of South Korean Catholics in China, their vitality and successful models should be studied and promoted. Of course, they need the mutual understanding, acceptance and cooperation of both their respective home town and residential Church communities. At the same time, only through participation, support, and sacrifice can these communities become lively and enthusiastic. An open and stable social environment and reasonable religious regulation are of great importance and greatly impact the migrant Catholics, both domestic and overseas. For their pastoral works as well, mutual understanding and close cooperation between the Church communities within and outside China are equally crucial, as past experience has shown and future developments demand.

At present, except for the “Pastoral Care Group for the Immigrant Catholics” established by the Shanghai Diocese, all other local Churches seldom pay attention to or establish special institutes specifically dedicated to the care of immigrant Catholics. Therefore, the Church in China should pay attention to immigrant-related issues by setting up a “Committee for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and Overseas Chinese Catholics.” This could encourage overseas Church communities to pay greater attention to the pastoral needs of the Chinese Catholics who live abroad.

The Church in China still cannot send large groups of personnel to serve Chinese people overseas, but it should seriously consider this need. Individual dioceses and the Church in China as a whole should eventually form their own missionary congregations to provide priests according to the needs not only of various parts of China, but also of overseas

communities. The Church in China should not remain just a receiving local Church, but should also be a giving one (as regards providing missionaries for the Universal Church). In this way, the Church in China will gradually develop into a mature local Church that can help supply the missionary task force that the Church requires.

The Kingdom and Power: Elements of Growth in Chinese Christianity Some Personal Insights

Sigurd Kaiser

1. Introduction

In Mk 9:1 Jesus is telling his disciples and others: “I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.” (NIV, New International Version). The connection made in this saying between the kingdom of God and power has disturbed many exegetes. For this reason, some think that the power, δύναμις, here only refers to Jesus’ own miracles and exorcisms which many just did not see or understand at the time.¹ But there is nothing indicating that seeing here has a figurative meaning. Others assume that the power of the kingdom refers to Jesus’ second coming in glory to judge the world.² However, neither the context nor the timeframe of the listeners’ life span allow for this interpretation. F. F. Bruce argues that the coming of the kingdom with power during the audience’s lifetime can only refer to the powerful coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. From this time on the church grew rapidly with thousands joining on a single day. This means Mk 9:1 should neither be seen in the context of a realized nor an apocalyptic eschatology, but rather in connection with a prophetic eschatology.³ The rapid growth of Christianity in contemporary China may serve as an example to confirm the connection made by F. F. Bruce between the kingdom of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

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- 1 Cf. Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20* (WBC [World Biblical Commentary] 34b), Nashville: Nelson 2001, pp. 28f. Accordingly, the NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) translates: “Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.” The TNIV (Today’s New International Version) follows this interpretation. However, the object clause “that the kingdom ...” suggests the presence of a ὅτι-clause in the Greek text which is also not the case.
- 2 Cf. Eduard Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (NTD 1), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1989, p. 96. Similarly Thomas R. Hatina, “Who Will See ‘The Kingdom of God Coming with Power’ in Mark 9,1 – Protagonists or Antagonists?,” in: *Biblica* 86 (2005), pp. 20-34. The verse in his opinion refers to the final judgment of the ungodly which is coming in a powerful way.
- 3 The KJV (King James Version), the NASB (New American Standard Bible), the ESV (English Standard Version), the GNB (Good News Bible), and the German Luther and Elberfelder Bibles translate the saying in this sense.

In the year 2007, when I was preaching in a new church in the southern part of Nanjing which originally was a meeting point, there were about 150 people attending the worship service. The church was about $\frac{1}{4}$ filled. Many of the worshippers were beaming at me, because they probably for the first time heard and saw a foreigner preaching the gospel. Two years later, when I preached there again, the church had grown substantially. The sanctuary was filled to the last row and the last seat. I was amazed, I would have never expected such an increase.

In 2009, I participated, as I often do, in the English worship service of St. Paul's Church in Nanjing. Usually about 250 people, mostly students, are meeting there. The overall church attendance is about 2,000. On that day 11 young people from the English congregation were baptized. Altogether there were 56 baptisms in the church on that Sunday morning. Since there are two baptism services a year this means that there are more than 100 people baptized annually just in this congregation. I was impressed. I was not used to such numbers from the western churches I attended before. Unfortunately, most Chinese churches do not have enough church workers to provide the young believers with adequate training and opportunity for fellowship.

These two experiences must be seen in a larger context. In contrast to past centuries, currently Christianity in China is growing at an enormous rate. In the following article I am going to survey the growth of the Chinese church since the 1980s, trying to answer two questions: First, what prompted this extraordinary development which reminds us of the beginnings of the Christian movement as described in the Acts of the Apostles and which in later church history may be unprecedented? Second, which are the human factors discernible in the spreading of the gospel among the Chinese people that should be considered by the church in other places? Or in short: Why does the Christian movement in China exhibit such an extraordinary power and energy which Christianity in the west often is lacking?

2. Some Numbers

After 150 years of Protestant mission history only moderate growth of Christianity in China could be observed. At the time of the so called liberation, the takeover by the Communists in 1949, there were about 700,000 Protestant Chinese Christians in the country. Between 1950 and 1952 the expulsion of the missionaries followed. After the persecution during the Cultural Revolution from 1966–1976 Protestants in China surprisingly numbered 1.5 million, in 1982 3 million, in 1986 6.7 million, in 1992 9.4 million, and in 1998 16.7 million.⁴ Since the opening of China in 1978 and the implementation of a limited religious freedom in 1982 the Chinese church is growing at an exponential rate.

Today (2010) China has a population of about 1.33 billion people of which 20 million belong to the Protestant church according to the numbers of the official TSPM (Three Self Patriotic Movement). However, Yu Jianrong, professor at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, rather estimates the number of Christians in the official Protestant

4 Cf. Zhuo Xinping, "Christentum und Christentumsforschung in China – aktuelle Tendenzen," in: *Aktuelle China-Nachrichten* 2008, No. 95, p. 2.

church between 18 and 30 million and those belonging to the so called house churches between 45 and 60 million.⁵ The World Christian Database assumes 50-70 million believers in about 300 unofficial house church networks. The numbers given for Catholic Christians in China range from the official 5.7 million to an estimated 12 to 14 million. A researcher from Renmin University in Beijing publicly gave the number of almost 90 million Christians in China including the house church members. These numbers agree quite well with those of western observers who assume the total numbers of Christians in China to be between 80 and 100 million,⁶ with some estimates going up to 130 million or 10% of the population. In other words, Christianity in China has experienced an exponential growth since 1949 with a 100fold increase among Protestants during the last 60 years, while most of this growth occurred during the last 30 years.

It is noteworthy that the majority of the Chinese Christians lives in rural areas and has very little education as well as Christian training. In recent years, however, many intellectuals and university students have become Christians in the cities. Yet, the majority are still older people, primarily women with a low level of education. The distinction between the official church and the house churches in the statistics is difficult. Except for leadership structures, there are relatively few theological and sociological differences between the members of the house churches and those worshipping in the official church.⁷ The majority of the unregistered or house churches in the countryside is not opposed to affiliating with the official church and for this reason they should not be called underground churches. However, in the urban areas some house churches are opposed to and others are affiliated with the official church.⁸ In the following I am trying to discern which may be the major reasons for the extraordinary growth of the church in China.

3. A Praying Community

I am always very impressed when I hear that quite a number of my students at Nanjing Seminary are getting up at 5:30h in the morning for prayer. Every morning they are praying together for their families, their teachers, their school, and their studies. When I mention even the smallest problem they tell me: "We will pray for you." When they come to me to confer about thesis topics some tell me: "We will pray about it and tell you after the summer break." And I am very moved when some of my students ask me, either in passing or after longer conversations: "Please pray for me and my family." This is not only so with the students, sometimes even church leaders ask me to pray for them. Not only private, but also public prayer is strong. It is energetic and full of expectation. From some churches

5 The numbers presented here are taken from Roman Malek, "Volksrepublik China: Kirche und Religionen in Zahlen, Statistiken 2009/2010," in: *China heute* 2010, No. 1, pp. 22-33, here pp. 22 and 30.

6 Cf. for example David Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*, Washington, D.C.: Regnery 2006, pp. 7f.

7 For an impression of a contemporary Chinese house church see Gotthard Oblau, "Gotteslob zwischen Laken und Linoleum. Zu Besuch in einer christlichen Migrantengemeinde in Peking," www.doam.org/archiv/textea/china/china_gotthardoblau_Migrantengemeinden2000.pdf (accessed on July 22, 2010).

8 See on this Don Snow, "Understanding the Christian Community in China," from September 18, 2003, http://www.christianityinchina.org/Common/Admin/showNews_auto.jsp?Nid=450&Charset=big5 (accessed on June 12, 2008); originally published in *China News Update*.

I hear that they have long prayer meetings, especially among the leaders and before important decisions. They know that they need God's guidance when they take responsibility for thousands of people. Besides, prayer is the greatest source of unity within the church.

Prayer has been the source of strength and perseverance and the means of unity among the Christians during the hard times of persecution. For more than 10 years, during the Cultural Revolution and beyond, the primary action the believers could take was prayer, ministry was hardly possible anymore. And God answered their prayers and blessed the church with continuous growth.⁹ Many books have been written about Chinese believers under persecution. In regard to prayer they have much in common with the experience of George Müller from Bristol who recorded in his diary every prayer for his orphanages together with God's answer. With his whole life and ministry Müller only wanted to show that God answered each one of his prayers during almost 70 years of a very successful ministry. If it is possible to learn how to pray (cf. Lk 11:1), then the Chinese Christians have learnt to pray.

4. A Strong Witness

A while ago we had some visitors from abroad who came to our house nearby the old campus of Nanjing Seminary. In town they asked an older lady for the way to the seminary. She said: "Yes, the seminary is nearby, you need to go in this direction. Do you already know Jesus?" Our visitors were quite surprised, because this was the first contact they had on their trip to China which happened to be in Nanjing. And the first person they met asked them whether they knew Jesus. Most ironically, they were a group of university teachers teaching intercultural theology. They wanted to find out what Chinese Christianity was like. At least one important aspect they found out.

The personal witness plays a central role in Chinese Christianity. Due to their biblical faith people think of it as a personal responsibility of every Christian to share the gospel with the people around them. Besides the worship service in the church this is the primary approach to evangelism, since Christian events outside their premises are not permitted. Their witness is simple, clear, and very personal. For this reason they are able to communicate the gospel well. The personal experience with Jesus in their everyday life plays a central role in Chinese Christianity. Almost every sermon contains reports about Christian experiences. For this reason many worship services include personal testimonies. This makes the Christian message personal and practical and in this way convincing and attractive. When I asked my students what they would like to see most in a church magazine, they unanimously answered: "testimonies." When I am preaching in the churches of Nanjing, I also try to include fitting personal examples. After the service typically many listeners talk to me and pick up on these little stories. The Chinese Christians love per-

9 For some reports on contemporary community prayer in China, see Gotthard Oblau, "Pentecostal by Default? Reflections on Contemporary Christianity in China," paper presented at the Birmingham conference "Pentecostalism in Asia," September 2001, in: A. Anderson – E. Tang (eds.), *Asian and Pentecostal*, London: Regnum 2005, www.doam.org/archiv/textea/china/china_gotthardoblau_pentecostalbydefault2001.pdf (accessed on July 22, 2010), here pp. 17f.

sonal testimonies, because they know about the power of the personal witness and they love to strengthen each other's faith through testimonies.

Most of the Chinese sermons are quite evangelistic, Christ centered, well presented, and well articulated. They are simple and clear with many personal testimonies. They stress the soteriological aspect of the Christian faith and the personal relationship of the believer with Christ. The preachers emphasize Christ's love for the people and his help in everyday life situations, as well as the Christian calling. Social, economic, ecological, ethical, and scientific topics are not too often covered.¹⁰ Instead, many sermons exhibit a strong heaven and hell dualism which is intended evangelistically. Here contextualization is happening only to a limited degree, but the academic publications of the official church show an increasing sensitivity during recent years.¹¹ The western observer will also miss a historical exegesis. Instead proof-texting and allegorical interpretation of Scripture are widespread. Obviously, most preachers had very little formal training and their audience has a low level of education. So Chinese preaching only offers an incomplete representation of the gospel just as others do, but it clearly explains and enthusiastically communicates the central elements of the Christian faith. In this way Chinese preaching effectively meets the existential needs of the people, but it usually does not yet address the pressing issues of society.

5. Itinerant Preachers and Physical Healing

According to various estimates more than 50% of the Chinese Christians, primarily in the impoverished rural areas where the majority of Christians live, have come to believe through physical healing.¹² One of my students at the seminary stemming from the city of Hangzhou tells me that his parents and grandparents regularly prayed for healing, because in the rural area where he grew up there were no medical services available, and his family frequently received healing. Caroline Fielder in her article on Christianity in rural China reports: "Many rural Chinese feel trapped both spiritually and financially in a spiral of

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- 10 See on this Richard J. Mouw, "Christianity and Culture: A Challenge for the New China," address at Fuller Theological Seminary on January 3, 2007, http://www.christianityinchina.org/Common/Admin/showNews_auto.jsp?Nid=429&Charset=big5 (accessed on December 6, 2008).
- 11 Philip L. Wickeri, *Reconstructing Christianity in China. K.H. Ting and the Chinese Church*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis 2007, pp. 359f., recognizes new and positive approaches on contextualization among younger teachers of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS) and other leaders in the church: "These young scholars vary a great deal in their emphasis and approach. Some are deeply committed to evangelical theology, while others are more liberal and experimental. Their published work taken as a whole reflects a theological interpretation that seeks to relate Christianity to Chinese society and culture. What remains to be seen is whether they will be able to develop a more comprehensive approach to contextual theology that can provide a solid theological grounding for the churches in the future," p. 360.
- 12 See on this Caroline Fielder, "The Growth of the Protestant Church in Rural China," in: *Concilium* 44 (2008) 2, pp. 174-184; published online at China Online Study Centre (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland), here pp. 7f. with the report of an exorcism initiating a family conversion on p. 8, [caroline_fielder_growth_of_the_rural_protestant_church.pdf](http://www.chinaonlinecentre.org) at www.chinaonlinecentre.org (accessed on August 12, 2010); Yip Ching-Wah, "Protestantisches Christentum und Volksreligion in China: Ein Fall von Synkretismus?," in: M. Gänßbauer (ed.), *Christentum chinesisch in Theorie und Praxis*, Hamburg: EMW – China InfoStelle 2003, pp. 27-60, especially pp. 31-34 and 43-55; Claudia Währisch-Oblau, "The Healing Power of Faith," in: *Amity News Service*, April 1996; and Claudia Währisch-Oblau, "Church Growth in Anhui," in: *China Study Journal*, August 1994, pt. 2, p. 39.

dependency on the ritual imposed by certain local folk religion practices, many of which are intricately linked into village life. In areas where folk religion exercises a profound influence demon possession is considered a reality and several cases of possession and subsequent exorcism were shared with me. Christianity is increasingly seen as a means of escape and can be perceived as a progressive force in traditional rural communities.”¹³ Obviously, the supernatural element is an essential part of the biblical and practically oriented faith of most rural Chinese Christians.

In contrast to rural China, among the city Christians many do not believe in divine healing and not many healings are reported. When I share my own testimonies of healing, some are eager to receive prayer while many others are very reluctant. Like in the west urban Christians are strongly influenced by the modern rationalist worldview, but also by their former Marxist teaching. They can only accept what reason and science can prove. However, since with the dawning of the post-modern era physical healing and other supernatural phenomena have become more acceptable in the west, healing may become more common in urban China as well. The rapid growth of the Pentecostal and charismatic churches in the west as well as in South America and Africa may point in this direction. Whether and in which way Christianity in urban China will embrace the new mindset the future will show.

Like in early Christianity, today many itinerant preachers are passing through the rural areas of China proclaiming the gospel from village to village.¹⁴ Due to the lack of medical services in these areas the preachers also pray for healing which the people in turn frequently experience.¹⁵ If a sick person is healed, commonly the other members of the family start believing in the gospel too and often enough the whole village becomes Christian. If a whole family or a village accepts Jesus, this usually is quite noticeable to the surrounding people. The Christian circles grow and house meetings are started followed by house church networks and the founding of bigger churches. This dynamic together with visions, dreams, and the private reading of Scripture¹⁶ largely covers the rapid growth of Christianity in the rural areas. Frequently, only a few years after the first conversion occurred, we find churches spread over a whole area like a county with hundreds and even thousands of members.¹⁷ However, since the many new converts have almost nobody who is experienced enough to instruct them, often strange teachings, heresies, or cults occur. This is the downside of the rapid growth in rural Chinese Christianity.

Some of the Christian sects in China do not only practice “sheep stealing”, the proselytizing of orthodox or mainline Christians, but they also apply illegal and criminal practices like kidnapping. Tony Lambert states: “The most dangerous (cult) is currently Eastern Lightning, which preaches a Chinese, female Messiah and uses gangster methods to win

13 Fielder, “The Growth of the Protestant Church in Rural China,” p. 8.

14 For an example see Oblau, “Pentecostal by Default?,” p. 14.

15 For some healing reports from China see Oblau, “Pentecostal by Default?,” pp. 3f., 8, and 11-13; and Oblau, “Gotteslob,” p. 2.

16 See on this Fielder, “The Growth of the Protestant Church in Rural China,” pp. 8-10.

17 The story told by Oblau, “Pentecostal by Default?,” pp. 3f., illustrates this pattern very well.

and keep converts.”¹⁸ Eastern Lightning today is rapidly spreading also in the cities. A young pastor from a city church in Suzhou in southern China tells me that this is their major concern right now. At the same time western Christian sects like the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses are also making a great missionary effort in China. For example, in many of the big cities there are Mormon communities by now.

6. A Lay Movement

After the so called liberation, when the missionaries had to leave China and the church institutions like the Christian universities and hospitals were taken over by the government, most of the Chinese seminaries were closed. On the Protestant side only the three biggest schools were permitted to continue. In 1952, they were integrated into Nanjing Union Theological Seminary (NJUTS). For this reason only very few clergy could be trained anymore before the period of 1966–1976 during which theological education was discontinued. In the 1980s, the Chinese seminaries eventually reopened with Nanjing Seminary as the first, but they all were short of academically qualified teachers. Today, as of spring 2012, there are 21 seminaries and Bible schools in the country which is less than one per province, and additional training centers for lay workers in most of the larger cities. Yet, these cannot provide sufficient training to supply this rapidly growing church with enough ministers and church workers. For instance, the newest Bible school in the 8 million metropolis of Chongqing in Sichuan Province from the fall term 2010 onward has only three fulltime professors who are recent graduates from Nanjing Seminary. In consequence, the Chinese seminaries only produce a few hundred seminary graduates each year, less than one for every big city. Accordingly, very few trained ministers are serving in the rural areas, and most of the larger cities with a population of several million usually only have 4 or 5 ordained clergy. This means, the Chinese church is basically run by lay workers.

For the rural context Caroline Fielder concludes: “The simple form and structure of Protestantism means that even if there is no minister or church building, it is still possible to engage in religious life. This structure fosters an environment which encourages the development of lay workers, with little church bureaucracy to block the vision of individual workers.”¹⁹

Due to the lack of academic training, the originally mostly clerical Chinese church has largely become a lay movement. This kind of structure requires quite a number of untrained believers to take on responsibility in the church. Since the time when the missionaries left, the amount of Christian multipliers, mature and experienced believers with official tasks in the church, has grown steadily. With the opening of China in the 1980s and increasing religious freedom, this situation has not really changed. Like in the early church, most congregations are still run by elders, evangelists, and deacons whose ministry is largely based on their faith experience.²⁰ Without the many lay preachers it would

18 Tony Lambert, *China’s Christian Millions*, revised and updated, London: Monarch Books 2006, p. 18.

19 Fielder, “The Growth of the Protestant Church in Rural China,” p. 4.

20 See on this Robert Banks, Art. “Church Order and Government,” in: G.F. Hawthorne – R.P. Martin – D.G. Reid (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Downers Grove, Ill. – Leicester: InterVarsity Press 1993, pp. 131-137, here p. 134.

not be possible to offer several worship services in most of the churches. The same is true for the many baptismal and Sunday school classes which every church offers. In this way more lay people receive training on the job than any array of seminaries could provide. Since the lay people feel appreciated and needed, there are more lay people in active ministry than in most western churches. Naturally, such a large lay movement can be much more efficient than a church ministry which depends primarily on paid staff. This means, not the lack of sophistication, but the empowerment of the laity has become an important element of growth in Chinese Christianity. And the same can be argued for concerning the issue of women in ministry.

Besides the simplicity of Chinese Christian life, community, and ministry, it is noteworthy that the majority of people in the Chinese churches consists of women, often making up 2/3 or 3/4 of a congregation. With a lower social status and less pay than their male neighbors or colleagues they find a new identity and a new home in the church. Caroline Fielder summarizes: “The church offers a place where they do have a voice, a sense of community, a new family, and for many women membership offers them a social standing higher than they enjoy outside of the Christian community.”²¹ But this is not the only reason for these disproportionate numbers. Being attractive to the women, church membership is a problem for many men. As the head of the household providing for the major part of the family income, many men are afraid of disadvantages in their public or government careers or even the loss of their jobs if they join a church. So they either do not become Christians or they remain secret believers, like the religion professor in Shaanxi Province who is not baptized and who only rarely goes to church for “academic purposes,” but who always prays at the lunch table. For these reasons the Chinese church is a community of many highly active lay people among whom the women as the majority can share and promote the gospel most freely, reaching primarily other women.

7. The Religious Vacuum

When I was taken home from a church visit together with one of my Chinese colleagues, the driver of the car asked my colleague: “I see that you are Christians. Please tell me something about Christianity. How can my life continue even after death?” During the next 30 minutes, until we reached our destination, my colleague explained to the driver the basics of the Christian faith. I was very surprised by this question, because I was not used to such an interest in Christianity from western countries. Later, however, I noticed that people regularly would come to me and ask me about my Christian faith. Why are the Chinese people so interested in Christianity today?

With the devastating results of the Cultural Revolution, Marxist idealism and state doctrine have been stripped of their appeal to the Chinese masses. Instead, consumerism has been advocated which is supposed to fill the needs of the Chinese people. On the material level this has led to a selfish elbow society which has largely lost its morals and sense of

²¹ Fielder, “The Growth of the Protestant Church in Rural China,” p. 6.

justice.²² Selfishness, hypocrisy, favoritism, partisanship, corruption, and fraud are common notions. Even in kindergarten and school extra payments are necessary for good grades and good treatment, like for a four year old to receive the honor of participating in the flag raising.

According to Wang Zuo'an, the director of the Beijing State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), for the State the rapid growth of Christianity in China is not a problem as long as the church follows the religious regulations.²³ This shows that state policy has changed during recent years. Wang points out that in 2007 the Chinese church has been requested to start charity, welfare, and development programs in order to counteract the moral decay of society. In the past the church was not allowed to become active outside its church walls except through the setting up of nursing homes. Today the church is expected to contribute to the "building of a harmonious society," the ever present government program. With this the church has received an additional opportunity to help the disadvantaged part of society and reach people with the gospel.

On the religious level a noticeable vacuum has occurred which cannot be filled anymore by the traditional Chinese teachings of Laozi, Confucius, and others.²⁴ Only about 1% of the Chinese people profess to be followers of Daoism, while 31.4% of the population claim to be adherents of a religious belief.²⁵ Today Daoism and the more philosophical Confucianism are seen by many only as a cultural heritage which is not able to meet the challenges of a free market economy and a rapidly changing society. For this reason these two are growing the least among contemporary Chinese traditions and religions.

In contrast, Chinese Buddhism is reawakening. Between 11 and 16% of the Chinese claim to be Buddhists. This popularity, however, often rests on a utilitarian understanding. Almost every restaurant and many homes and businesses have their own Buddhist shrine, just like countless dashboards are sporting little Buddha figurines. Obviously, people expect protection and material blessing from this practice. The Buddhist temples where people go to offer incense and money serve the same purpose. Yet, there are no Buddhist communities for the common people like the church offers for the Chinese believers.

On the spiritual level the Chinese religions primarily require self-cultivation in order to achieve a divine state of being, but they do not know a relationship with a living God who is creator and sustainer of all. Due to past disappointments and hurts many Chinese are longing for such a relationship, for forgiveness, reconciliation, and an everlasting life in the presence of the creator. So the need for fellowship, spiritual direction, and ethical instruction for the Chinese people today seems to be met best by the Christian faith and community. Probably for this reason Christianity is the fastest growing religion in China.

22 See on this Gao Feng, "Die christliche Botschaft und das Wirtschaftswachstum Chinas" (translated from the Chinese by M. Gänßbauer), in: *Aktuelle China-Nachrichten* 2007, No. 87, pp. 1-6. Rev. Gao is the current president of the China Christian Council and Nanjing Union Theological Seminary.

23 The interview with Wang Zuo'an of January 5, 2010 is available at *Amity News Service*, www.amitynewsservice.org (accessed on July 20, 2010).

24 See on this Xu Jilin, "Spiritual Crisis and Renaissance of Religions in Contemporary China," in: *Concilium* 44 (2008) 2, pp. 38-46.

25 For a comparison of the Chinese religions in numbers see Malek, "Statistiken," p. 22.

Not all of the aspects mentioned above are of equal importance to those who become Christians. Some are looking for meaning in their lives and are attracted by the soteriological aspect, others got to know the living God through the experience of his healing power, and a third group is impressed by the Christian ethical teaching which covers every aspect of human existence rather than just the family ties as the traditional teachings primarily do.

Besides the millions who have become Christians through healing experiences, today there are many high level academics in the cities for whom healing is not an issue. Due to the religious vacuum they are mostly attracted to Christianity by the soteriological or the ethical aspect. Some of these people teach or research about Christianity at the Chinese universities.²⁶ However, they usually do not join a church, either because they are afraid of losing their job or their interest is more of an academic nature. For this reason these new kinds of adherents have been called culture Christians. Through their publications, translations, and public conferences they promote the more academic side of Christianity among the growing class of well educated people.

8. A New Openness and Western Orientation

Since the beginning of Nestorian mission to China in the 7th century, the Chinese society and its leadership for the most part were open to Christianity. Only when they noticed western political influence did they reject Christianity. During the time of the modern mission movement beginning with the 19th century the church grew, but Christianity also experienced a noticeable rejection. This was largely due to the close connection between the missionaries and the colonial powers in China and the strong western leadership within the Chinese church. This state of affairs largely remained until the expulsion of the missionaries by the new Communist government in 1952. After this the many western denominations which were present in China were united by the government into a single Chinese church, except the independent churches which continued in the so called house church movement. Overnight the Chinese church had become an indigenous church. From now on until the end of the Cultural Revolution the church was under suspicion and persecution, because the Christians were denounced as Rightist, imperialist, and counter-revolutionary. Many thought that the church would not survive this time of trial, but after the end of Mao's utopia the church became acceptable to the government and to the Chinese people. Christianity had lost its foreign image and the church began to grow rapidly.

In spring of 2009, Nanjing Seminary moved from the downtown area to the new campus located in one of the university cities on the southern outskirts of Nanjing. At Christmas time of that year we were wondering if any of the students from the surrounding institutes who did not know us would still come to our Christmas celebration. Yet, already

26 As city people, most of their publications treat philosophical, sociological, or theological questions; there is only very little research available on rural Christianity. See on this Leung Kalun, "Cultural Christians and Christianity in China," in: *China Rights Forum* 2003, No. 4, pp. 29-31. For some recent studies on rural Christianity see Fielder, "The Growth of the Protestant Church in Rural China," p. 2, fn. 5; and He Guang-Hu, "Three Generations of Chinese Christianity Researchers: From the 1950s to 2007," in: *Concilium* 44 (2008) 2, pp. 58-70.

one hour before the meeting began the auditorium was packed with visitors, and all of our students made their own seats available. But these 460 seats plus the aisles were not enough. Outside there were still another 200 students standing looking through the windows. Our students were very happy, because so many came, giving them standing ovations. At Christmas 2010 we invited our neighbors again and about two thousand students came to the seminary, in 2011 several thousand were estimated. What makes a Christian event so attractive to these young people?

Today western culture and lifestyle is very popular among young people. Many of them are interested in Christianity exactly because it is an essential part of western culture. With this the charge of Christianity being a foreign or western religion has been completely reversed. And most older people do not mind western orientation anymore either. Even government officials are willing to say that Christianity has contributed substantially to the economic and cultural achievements of the west. Christianity has become a popular religion in China.

9. Conclusion

Taking the various aspects of the Christian life and witness into account, Christianity in China offers an authentic and holistic approach to the Christian faith which is highly relevant to the existential needs of the people. The various elements of church growth in China exhibit a strong biblical orientation. Ever since the faithful witness of the Chinese Christians during the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese believers are encouraged to share the gospel, stressing the need for personal salvation. Their praying attitude keeps them united and focused on winning men and women for Christ. Primarily in the impoverished rural areas many follow the example of the early church and travel through the countryside as itinerant preachers. They share the gospel and heal people in the name of Jesus. Physical healing together with the personal testimony, as well as dreams and visions, represent the largest element of church growth in the rural areas. Due to the lack of theological education and the provision of fulltime staff Christianity in China primarily is a lay movement just like the early church. Many lay people join in providing the essential ministry and service functions of the church. This results in a multitude of Christians who are being trained on the job, functioning as a large and lively pool of Christian multipliers. The religious vacuum which is noticeable in Chinese society since the 1980s enhances the success of the Christian witness. In recent years due to the new western orientation many of the younger generation as well as scholars at the universities also became Christians. In spite of ethical problems in some churches which mirror the serious struggles of contemporary Chinese society, the Chinese Christians largely are seen as people of high moral standing which also attracts the Chinese people to the church. In the countryside people are further attracted to the church by the deep social concern which many congregations show. Due to previous restrictions, the city churches are just starting to engage in charity projects. In this way they are hoping to further reach their nation with the love of Christ.

Looking at the numbers alone it becomes evident that in China the kingdom of God is coming with power. Chinese Christianity is highly effective through the application of

basic biblical principles. One of these principles is the general witness to the love of Jesus, another is tapping into the supernatural power of the Christian faith. Secondary factors such as the public mindset are widely supportive. At the same time there is still much room for improvement in the areas of charity, theological education, and contextualization. With this Chinese Christianity is an impressive, yet not perfect example of a church with a great potential for further growth.

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