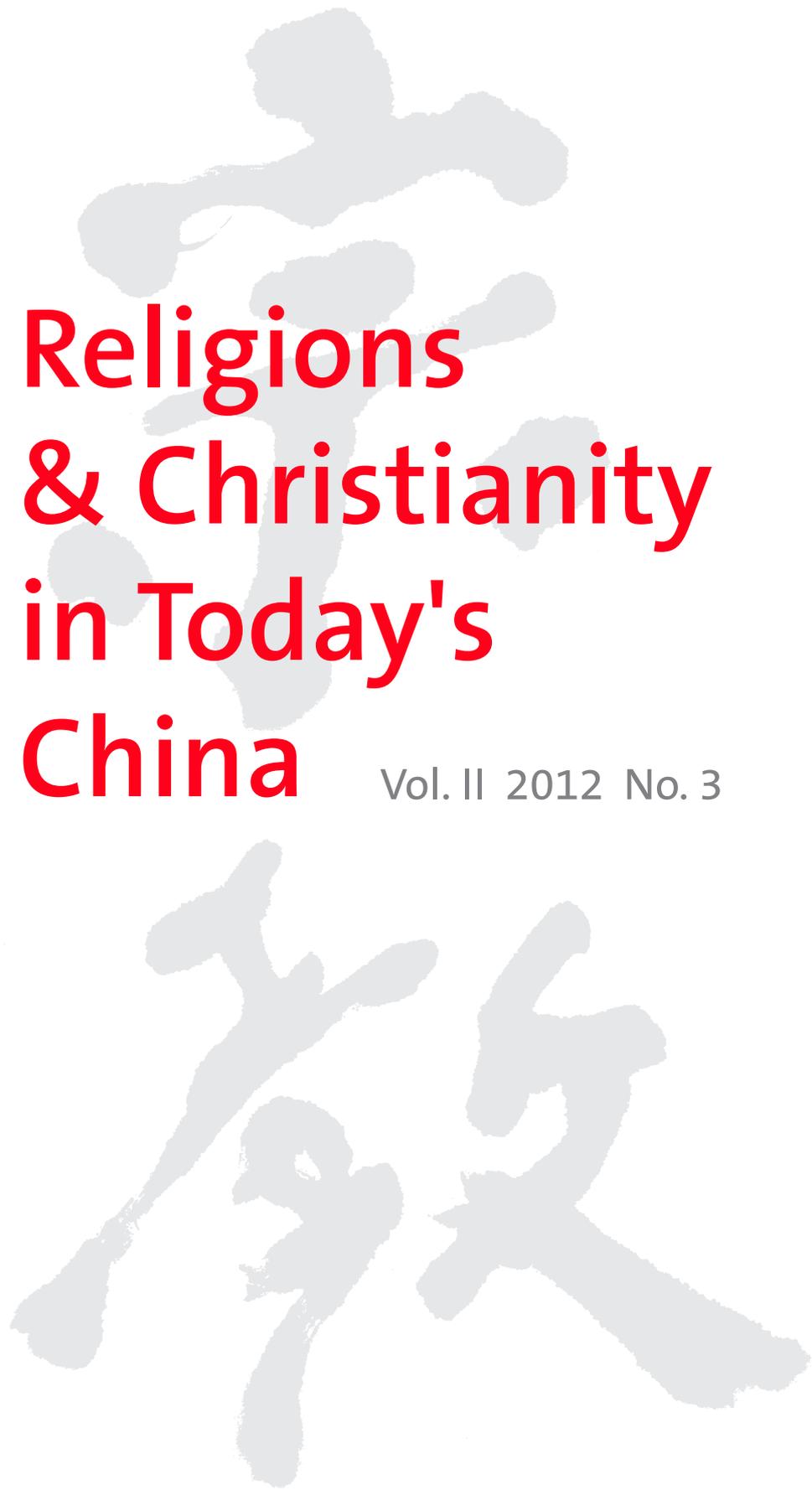


Religions
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in Today's
China

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中國宗教評論



Contents

Editorial | 2

News Update on Religion and Church in China

March 22 to June 29, 2012 | 3

Compiled by Katharina Feith, Jan Kwee, Simon Rettig, Martin Welling,
and Katharina Wenzel-Teuber

Interview with His Eminence Cardinal John Tong,

Bishop of Hong Kong, July 17, 2012 | 24

Questions asked by Prof. Hans Waldenfels SJ

People's Republic of China: Religions and Churches

Statistical Overview 2011 | 29

Katharina Wenzel-Teuber

Imprint – Legal Notice | 55

Editorial

Today we can present to our readers the third 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, followed by an interview with Cardinal John Tong from Hong Kong on the situation of the Catholic Church in Mainland China and the mission of the Church in Hong Kong.

The article "People's Republic of China: Religions and Churches. Statistical Overview 2011" by Katharina Wenzel-Teuber with many details and trends describes the various numerically measurable developments in the fields of the religions in China.

Religions & Christianity in Today's China is freely available on the website of the China-Zentrum, www.china-zentrum.de. Additionally, readers who subscribe to *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* will regularly receive e-mail updates providing web links to the contents of each newly published issue.

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, August 2012

The Editors

News Update on Religion and Church in China March 22 to June 29, 2012

*Compiled by Katharina Feith, Jan Kwee, Simon Rettig, 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. 2, pp. 3-19) covered the period December 2011 – March 2012.

March 22, 2012:

Bureau of Religious Affairs meets on new government document regulating the social welfare activities of the religions

Under the chairmanship of Wang Zuó'an, Director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), representatives of the national organizations of the five great religions studied the document “Views on Encouraging Religious Groups to Carry Out Charitable Activities and the Regulation of the Same,” released jointly on Feb. 16, 2012 by the SARA together with the United Front Department of the Communist Party of China and various state ministries.

Liu Yuanlong, Vice Chairman of the Patriotic Association of the Chinese Catholic Church, declared at the meeting that the Commission on Philanthropy of the Patriotic Association, and the [official] Episcopal Conference should develop their role as a “platform” for the common efforts of local Catholic social service organizations. Furthermore, the SARA called for the preparation of the “Social Welfare Week of the Religions” planned for this year (www.catholicchurchinchina.org – March 29; for the German translation of the “Views” see *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 98-102).

March 22, 2012:

Vatican Secretary of State Bertone on relations between the Vatican and China

In an interview with the Italian newspaper *La Stampa*, Vatican Secretary of State Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone commented as follows on the future of the Vatican’s relationships with Beijing: “To start with, contacts with China exist, and dialogue has not been broken off, although at times it is difficult and has

its 'ups and downs.' The Catholic community in China lives, prays, and loves the Pope and the Church, and is intimately connected to the universal Church. Many ecclesiastical or Catholic institutions have relations of a high cultural value with the Chinese institutions. All this can only be of benefit to the relations with Beijing. Looking at the progress already made, one cannot rule out, but rather can foresee, and must encourage, a positive encounter between the Catholic Church, in its peaceful and humanizing mission, and the great Chinese people" (*La Stampa*, March 22).

March 25, 2012:

Elections in Hong Kong: The churches demand universal suffrage

In the run-up to the election of the new Chief Executive of Hong Kong on March 25, Christian churches raised their voices in support of the introduction of universal suffrage in the election of the Chief Executive as well as of the entire Legislative Council. Under the current system, entrepreneur Leung Chun-ying was elected with 689 out of 1,200 votes of the men and women electors, who are drawn mostly from the business world and from pro-Beijing groups. Leung has the support of the central government in Beijing. On March 23, the Hong Kong Christian Council held a prayer meeting in protest against the undemocratic elections. Cardinal John Tong Hon also called on people to pray on March 25 for direct elections before 2017, the year in which the citizens of Hong Kong are scheduled to be allowed to elect the Chief Executive in a direct vote. The newly elected Chief Executive is supposed to initiate this process. The Catholic weekly magazine, the *Sunday Examiner*, came out sharply in support of greater democracy and of direct elections: "Under this system, whoever is elected will lack legitimacy in the eyes of the public." 2,000 protesters – including Christians – had spent the night outside the election venue. Pandemonium broke out when they attempted to storm the center (*AsiaNews* March 26; *ENI* March 23; *Sunday Examiner* March 24; April 7; www.faz.net March 25; see also *RCTC* 2012, No. 2, p. 15).

March 25, 2012:

New Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong installed

In the presence of 22 Anglican bishops from Asia, Europe, and North America, Andrew Chan Auming of Western Kowloon Diocese was installed as the new Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong on March 25 in St. John's Cathedral. With him, there are now three active bishops in the Anglican Church of Hong Kong. Chan was ordained a priest in 1992 and completed his M.A. in Pastoral Theology at the University of London in 2004. The following year he was appointed the first Chinese pastor of St. John's Cathedral (*UCAN* March 27).

March 26, 2012:

Controversies over priestly ordinations in Yunnan Province

Despite warnings and criticism both inside and outside China, Bishop Joseph Ma Yinglin of Kunming (not recognized by Rome), who is also the chairman of the official Chinese Bishops' Conference, ordained six young men priests in the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Dali. Among the 16 concelebrants there were also an American Maryknoll priest studying in Dali as well as two Korean Benedictines, whose order is supporting the minor seminary of Dali. Their participation caused much criticism. The newly ordained belong to the Dioceses of Dali and Kunming as well as to the Apostolic Prefecture of Zhao-

tong, all three of which are located in Yunnan Province. The ordination was the first to take place since the erection of the Diocese of Dali in 1946. One of the three new priests of the diocese is of Tibetan origin, and the others belong to the Miao and to the Jingpo ethnic groups respectively. Until now, there were only three priests and three religious sisters in the Diocese of Dali to serve the 80,000 Catholics, most of whom belong to seven tribal groups living in remote mountain areas. According to a source in Dali, each priest must cover almost 60,000 km annually in order to visit all of the faithful (*UCAN* March 13 and 28).

April 4, 2012:

Qingming Festival: More and more Chinese are visiting the cemeteries

The three national holidays for the Qingming Festival in honor of the dead are inducing more and more Chinese to visit cemeteries and memorial sites. According to estimates, more than 520 million Chinese commemorated their deceased relatives in this way from April 2 to 5. One year ago the number of those participating in the rites had been estimated at about 60 million fewer. As the state news agency Xinhua reports, the railroads reported more than 20 million passengers during the first three days of April and they expect that there will be a further 7 million on the last memorial day. Despite the high number of travelers, there were no reports of major traffic jams or of accidents (*Xinhua* April 4; see also *China heute* 2008, No. 1-2, p. 15 [in German]; No. 3, pp. 76-77 [in German]; *RCTC* 2011, No. 1, p. 13).

April 8, 2012:

Two underground bishops released

On Easter Sunday Coadjutor Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin of Wenzhou (Zhejiang Province) and Bishop Peter Jin Lugang of Nanyang (Henan Province) were both set free.

On March 19, the 49 year old Bishop Shao, together with his Chancellor, Fr. Paul Jiang Sunian, had been taken away by government officials in order to take part in “learning classes.” In the process, among other things, he was escorted by government officials to the Diocese of Leshan (Sichuan Province) where he met up with Paul Lei Shiyin, who had received Episcopal ordination without Papal approval in June 2011 and who had been subsequently excommunicated by the Holy See. There is conjecture that Bishop Shao’s arrest had to do with last year’s secret consecration of Bishop John Wang Ruowang of Tianshui (Gansu Province), in which he and four other underground bishops had taken part.

Bishop Jin had been taken away on Holy Thursday, April 4, since the authorities wanted to prevent him from celebrating the Chrism Mass as well as the Easter liturgies. He was brought to a guest house and escorted by four officials to various tourist spots before he was finally released (*UCAN* April 16; see also *RCTC* 2012, No. 2, pp. 6-7 and 19).

April 9, 2012:

First joint press conference of the official spokespersons of the “five major religions”

The press conference took place upon invitation from the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) and was conducted by a SARA representative. It was the first joint appearance of the spokes-

persons since the introduction of the “Press Information System” for the official religious communities by the SARA in December of 2011 (cf. *RCTC* 2012, No. 2, p. 7; for a list of the spokespersons see “People’s Republic of China: Religions and Churches. Statistical Overview 2011” in this issue of *RCTC*). The new spokespersons presented the current situation, as well as the working priorities of their respective religious communities. Some of the points mentioned were the Third Buddhist World Forum (see entry of April 26-27), the development of the Daoist and a Chinese-Islamic culture (*Zhongtu yisilan wenhua* 中土伊斯兰文化), the autonomous election and consecration of Catholic bishops, the development of Protestant theological thinking, as well as the social welfare activities of the YMCA and the YWCA. The Buddhist spokesperson, Master Puzheng, was asked about an affair that had come to light on the Chinese internet in which apparently “false” monks had deposited 100,000 Yuan in a bank and had checked into a hotel together with women. His response was to call for the intervention of the authorities (*Xinhua* April 9; www.sara.gov.cn April 9).

April 15–16, 2012:

First National Assembly since 1949 of the Chinese National Associations of the YMCA and YWCA (Young Men’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations)

180 delegates and special guests from all over China attended the congress in a Beijing hotel. The events of the conference corresponded to those of the national assemblies of the other official religious organizations: first, a speech by SARA Director Wang Zuo’an, then a work report, adaptation of the statutes, the election of chairpersons, and, finally, reception by the Director of the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party, Du Qinglin. A report on the website of the SARA spoke of the great importance of this first assembly of delegates in the “New China” and declared that they had reflected on the positioning of the Chinese National Associations of the YMCA and YWCA in the light of the “new situation” and had clarified the “direction of its future development.” For the YMCA, Pastor Xu Xiaohong was elected President, Chen Xin Vice-President, and Tu Hanqiao was installed as Director. For the YWCA, Mrs. Jin Wei was chosen as President, Pastor Mrs. Gao Ying as Vice-President, and Mrs. Yang Mingming as Director.

The report on the SARA website described the YMCA and the YWCA as “social service organizations with a Christian character” and more than 100 years’ presence in China, where they now have a presence in 10 Chinese cities. Since November 2009 the National Associations of YMCA and YWCA have come within the jurisdiction of the SARA – which explains why YMCA and YWCA have been mentioned more often in connection with Chinese religious policies in recent times (www.sara.gov.cn April 14, 15, and 16).

April 16, 2012:

Reform of China’s numerous public institutions planned

China’s extensive public institutions, which until now have been financed by the national budget and do not have earnings, are to undergo a fundamental reform. To reduce the financial burden on the government, of the existing institutions those with administrative roles will be turned or merged into government departments, while those which execute business operations are to be gradually transformed into enterprises. Those other institutions which provide social services will retain their current status as public institutions, but in the process their public welfare nature needs to be strengthened. It is planned that an efficient, clearly defined and regulated mechanism for public institutions will be established by

2020, whereby efforts will be particularly focused on improving the social welfare system as a whole and on equalizing social services between rural and urban areas and among different regions (*Xinhua* April 16 and 17, 2012).

Between April 19 and June 20, 2012:

Eight Tibetans immolate themselves in protest

As they did so, they demanded freedom for Tibet and the return of the Dalai Lama. With the exception of one 36 year old housewife and mother and one man over 50, most of the eight – of whom six died on the day they set fire to themselves – were young men in their early twenties. Three of the self-immolations occurred in the Ngaba Prefecture of Sichuan Province, three in Qinghai Province, and for the first time there were also two in the Tibetan capital city of Lhasa. According to reports, the self-immolation of two young Tibetans near the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa on May 27 triggered tightened restrictions, with checkpoints around the temple and the stationing of security forces in the other temples of Lhasa. It led to a considerable number of arrests, apparently mainly in an attempt to filter out and expel Tibetans from outside the Tibet Autonomous Region (i.e., from Sichuan, Qinghai, and Gansu) who were present in the area without residence permits. In connection with the self-immolations and other protests, in recent months Tibetans were also arrested in other places or were given prison sentences.

According to one statistic of the International Campaign for Tibet, since February 2009, 41 Tibetans have set themselves on fire (of whom 40 since March 16, 2011). 31 of the 41 are known to have died as a result of their burns. Of the 41, 35 were men. 25 of the 41 were from the Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Autonomous Tibetan and Qiang Prefecture in the north of Sichuan Province, which has thus become the epicenter of the wave of self-immolations. Among the Tibetans who set themselves on fire, 7 were monks and 9 were former monks of the Kirti Monastery in Ngaba.

The Chinese media, which also reported on the self-immolations, repeatedly accused the Dalai Lama and the “Dalai clique” of inciting them. The Tibetan government in exile rejected the accusations and claimed that the self-immolations were in fact the direct result of Beijing’s own policies on Tibet (lists at www.tibetoffice.ch and www.savetibet.org; numerous other reports in the media, see *TibetInfoNet News Digest* for this time period).

April 19, 2012:

At Easter, more than 22,000 baptisms in the Catholic communities of China



A Baptism in China – Easter 2012.
Photo: www.xinde.org.

According to a report of the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies in Shijiazhuang, which annually collects relevant data and publishes it in the newspaper *Xinde (Faith)*, this past Easter 22,104 baptisms were performed in 101 different dioceses. More than 75% of those baptized were adults. Many other baptisms occur as well, however, at different times of the year, and those have not yet been integrated into the statistics. In addition, by the reporting deadline of April 19, a number of communities had not yet submitted their reports. The figures for the individual cities and provinces respectively appear as follows: Beijing 500;

Shanghai 379; Tianjin 116; Chongqing 1,200; Liaoning 726; Heilongjiang 475; Jilin (two parishes) 75; Hebei 4,410; Shanxi 1,819; Inner Mongolia 852; Shaanxi 1,748; Gansu 198; Qinghai 13; Ningxia 87; Xinjiang 20; Henan 1,274; Hubei 376; Hunan 202; Jiangxi 156; Shandong 1,289; Jiangsu 385; Anhui 137; Zhejiang 1,122; Fujian 721; Sichuan 1,534; Guizhou 160; Yunnan 178; Tibet 3; Guangdong 1,427; Guangxi 514; and Hainan 8; making a grand total of 22,104. The number of baptisms in Hong Kong amounted to 3,500. At Easter in the three Chinese communities of New York City a total of 154 persons were baptized and 216 were confirmed (*AsiaNews* April 7; *Fides* April 12 and 20; *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* April 7; *Vatican Information Service* April 24; *Xinde* April 20).

April 19, 2012:

Episcopal ordination in Nanchong, Sichuan Province



Bishop Chen Gong'ao, photographed when he was still a priest. Photo: UCAN.

Forty-seven year old Fr. Joseph Chen Gong'ao had already received approval from the Vatican to be ordained bishop back in 2002 and was elected in the diocese as candidate in 2010, but he postponed the ordination ceremony to ensure that no illegitimate bishop would take part in the consecration. Unfortunately, he didn't succeed. Five legitimate bishops took part in the ordination in Nanchong on April 19 but so, too, did Msgr. Paul Lei Shiyin from Leshan, who had been ordained on June 29, 2011 without papal mandate and who was subsequently excommunicated by the Holy See. The legitimate bishops were Peter Fang Jianping of Tangshan as principal consecrator (following his participation in an illicit episcopal ordination in 2011, he had begged Rome for forgiveness and had been reconciled), Joseph Li Jing of Ningxia, Paul He Zeqing of Wanzhou, Paul Xiao Zejiang of Guiyang, and Peter Luo Xuegang of Yibin. Lei Shiyin's participation in the rite unleashed a storm of criticism in China as well as abroad. Archbishop Savio Hon, Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, commenting on the incident to *AsiaNews* (April 19) said: "He had failed to respect the person of the new bishop and the community. He should have considered the needs of others and certainly not taken part." Bishop Chen is known for his fidelity to the Church and as a good missionary. Since 2005 he functioned as administrator of the diocese and since 2008 he was the Rector of Sichuan Province's major seminary. He states that the major focus for his future work will be the ongoing formation of the clergy and of the laity. In addition, Bishop Chen would like to build a new cathedral since the current one was damaged in the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008. The episcopal see of Nanchong had been vacant since the death of Bishop Huang Woze in 2004 (*AsiaNews* April 18 and 19; *Sunday Examiner* April 28; *UCAN* April 17 and 19; *www.vaticaninsider.com* April 18 and 19).

April 20, 2012:

Dalai Lama appoints American abbot of a Tibetan monastery in India

Nicholas Vreeland, Director of the Tibet Center in New York, will be enthroned on July 7, 2012, as Abbot of Rato Monastery in southern India. A press report of the Tibet Center indicated that this is a historic moment, for it is the first time that a Westerner will be named Abbot of an important Tibetan monastery. In an interview, Vreeland explained that the Dalai Lama wants to bring Western ideas into

the monastic system of Tibetan Buddhism, since he recognizes that new air needs to be brought into these institutions. Vreeland, son of a U.S. diplomat and himself a photographer, became a monk in 1985 and underwent his monastic formation in the Rato Monastery. In 1998 he was awarded a Geshe degree. The original Rato Monastery was founded near Lhasa in the 14th century. In 1983 it was re-founded in exile in India (www.huffingtonpost.com June 27; www.nicholasvreeland.com; www.pbs.org June 15; www.thetibetcenter.org May 10).

April 24, 2012:

450th birthday of Xu Guangqi, Chinese scholar, statesman, and convert (1562–1633)

This important man was remembered in his home town of Shanghai by politicians, scientists, and Church representatives (see also *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 75-76 and 111-118 [in German]).

April 24, 2012:

Indian state government drops criminal conspiracy charges against Karmapa

According to an official of the Home Office of the northern Indian State of Himachal Pradesh in a conversation with *AFP*, the police and state district attorney had no material evidence to pursue the indictment. On May 21 the court approved the decision of the government to remove his name from the charge sheet. The trial against nine others accused in the case will continue.

On December 7, 2011, the State of Himachal Pradesh brought charges of criminal conspiracy against Ogyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th Karmapa Lama. The background to the accusations was the discovery during a raid on January 28, 2011, of cash in various currencies (among them Chinese RMB) valued at more than 1 million \$US in the Gyuto Monastery in Dharamsala, residence in exile of the 26 year old Karmapa. Following this event, the Indian media circulated the suspicion that the Karmapa, who had fled from the PR China to India in 1999, was a Chinese spy (cf. *RCTC* 2011, No. 1, p. 6-7). He himself denied this and his office explained that the monies found were in reality the free-will offerings given by the faithful (including offerings from Tibetans from the People's Republic of China). In January of 2011 Xu Zhitao of the United Front Department of the Communist Party of China had also rejected the accusation of espionage.

The Karmapa is the leader of the Karma Kagyu school and, as such, is one of the highest ranking leaders of Tibetan Buddhism (*AFP* April 24; *Global Times* April 25; *IANS* April 24; May 21; *Phayul* April 24).

April 25, 2012:

New Bishop for Hunan ordained

Fr. Methodius Qu Ailin was ordained bishop on April 25 in the Cathedral of Changsha, the province capital. The 51 year-old bishop is recognized by both Rome and by the Chinese government. Bishop Joseph Li Shan of Beijing was the principal consecrator. Other bishops concelebrating were John Lu Peisen of Yanzhou (Shandong), John Baptist Li Suguang of Nanchang (Jiangxi), Paul Liang Jiansen of Jiangmen (Guangdong), and John Baptist Tan Yanquan of Nanning (Guangxi), all of whom are rec-

ognized by Rome. As had occurred at the ordination in Nanchong (see entry above for April 19), this time, too, an illegitimate bishop took part in the ceremony, Joseph Liu Xinhong of Wuhu (Anhui), who had been ordained bishop without the approval of the Holy See in 2006.

Bishop Qu Ailin was named administrator of the Diocese of Hunan in 1999. The see had been vacant since the death of Bishop Simon Qu Tianxi of Changsha in 2000. From the Vatican's perspective, the Province of Hunan has four dioceses and five apostolic prefectures. In 1991 the official Church authorities carried out a restructuring into six dioceses, and in 1999 merged them into Hunan Diocese. Since Rome did not recognize these administrative changes, Bishop Qu is considered to be Bishop of Changsha and administrator of all the other Church territories in the province. Only 200 faithful attended the consecration ceremony (*UCAN* April 23 and 25).

April 26, 2012:

China reveals plan to multiply the number of social workers

China plans to increase the number of social workers to 1.45 million by the year 2020. That is an extraordinarily ambitious goal considering that the country only has slightly more than 200,000 social workers at present. Furthermore, it would clearly seem to outstrip the capabilities of the existing educational establishments, which confer only 20,000 master degrees in social work annually. Li Liguo, Minister of Civil Affairs, told the state news agency *Xinhua* that “the range of colleges and universities training social workers will be expanded.” In order to obtain qualified social workers, Li promised higher wages as well as preferential treatment for well-trained professionals. According to him, this way the number of social workers will increase to half a million by 2015, before being almost tripled in the ensuing five years. This goal was confirmed on April 26 when party and government officials published their “Long-term plan (2011–2020) for developing a national social work system” (*Xinhua* May 9).

April 26, 2012:

Communiqué of Vatican's China Commission released

The fifth plenary meeting of the Commission for the Catholic Church in China established by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 was held at the Vatican from April 23–25, 2012. The aim of the commission is to study questions of importance concerning the life of the Catholic Church in China. Among the approximately 30 participants were leaders of the Roman dicasteries, Chinese bishops from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, as well as representatives of religious orders. At the end of the gathering the commission released a communiqué entitled “May the Face of the Church Shine Forth with Clarity in the Midst of the Noble Chinese People.” The principal theme of the meeting were the tasks and formation of the lay faithful in China, in view also of the upcoming “Year of Faith.” In addition, they discussed, among other things, problems associated with the illicit consecration of bishops as well as the ongoing formation of priests, seminarians, and religious sisters (*UCAN* May 10; *Vatican Information Service VIS* April 21 and 26; *Vatican Insider* May 1; for the text of the communiqué, see www.vatican.va).

April 26–27, 2012:

Third World Buddhist Forum meets in Hong Kong

Approximately 1,000 Buddhist monks, nuns, lay people, and scholars from 50 countries met to discuss in lectures and 7 sub-forums the main theme “Common Aspirations and Actions toward a Harmoni-

ous World”. The organizers were the Chinese Buddhist Association, the Hong Kong Buddhist Association, and the Chinese Association for Religious and Cultural Exchange with its Director Wang Zuo’an, who is at the same time Director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA).

At the opening of the Forum, the 22 year old official Panchen Lama, appointed by the Chinese government (but not recognized by the Dalai Lama), held his first public discourse outside Mainland China, something which observers interpreted as an attempt on the part of China to create international recognition for him.

In conjunction with the Forum, a relic of the Buddha, a skull fragment excavated in 2010 at the Qixia Temple in Nanjing, was exposed in the Hong Kong Coliseum for the veneration of the faithful. According to Master Xuecheng, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Buddhist Association, the relic should bring good luck and blessings to the citizens of Hong Kong on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of their return to China. The Forum also adopted a – very general – final declaration.

The First World Buddhist Forum took place in Hangzhou and Putuoshan in 2006 (cf. *China heute* 2006, No. 3, pp. 66 and 81 [in German]). The Second World Buddhist Forum was in Wuxi and Taipei in 2009 (*ibid.* 2009, No. 2, pp. 78 and 95-96 [in German]) (*South China Morning Post* April 27; *Xinhua* April 26 and 27; www.longquanzs.org March 27; www.sara.gov.cn/ztzz/dsjsbjlt2012/ [= sub-page on the Forum at the website of the SARA. The text of the final declaration can also be found there]).

May 2012:

Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples speaks out on China

In an interview with the Catholic periodical *30 Giorni* (2012, No. 5) Cardinal Fernando Filoni, who in May of 2011 became the leader of the Vatican Congregation which is also responsible for the Chinese Church, spoke out on a number of topics, among which was the question of episcopal consecrations in China. People need to stop seeing bishops as officials, he said, or else everything will remain conditioned by a political vision. For bishops, other selection criteria are needed than for party or government officials; this must be respected, the Cardinal said. Naturally, as citizens bishops need to be loyal to their homeland, “giving to Caesar what is Caesar’s, but not at the expense of giving to God what is God’s. As successors of the apostles, it is required of them to be faithful in all things to the Church’s doctrine. This is not an ‘order’ of the Pope. The faithful want it first of all. It is the faithful who actually then judge the suitability and dignity of their own bishops,” Filoni explained. According to him, the people of God in China has “an extraordinary *sensus fidei*, purified by years of suffering” (*Vatican Insider* June 20; text of the interview can be found at www.30giorni.it/articoli_id_78430_11.htm).

May 2012:

Catholic Church in Hong Kong prays for Chen Guangcheng

After four years in prison, followed by house arrest, on April 22 the dissident Chen Guangcheng succeeded in escaping. Protection in the U.S. Embassy in Beijing was given to Chen, who fights against forced abortions and sterilization. On May 2 he was transferred to a hospital in the company of a diplomat. On May 19 Chen was to be allowed to leave for the United States with his wife and two children. The Catholic Church in Hong Kong called on local priests to include Chen in their prayers during all Masses from April 28 to May 6. They also supported his claims that the officers who had tortured him physically during his detention should be punished, that his family should be ensured safety, and that corruption among officials should be stopped. The Justice and Peace Commission of Hong Kong Dio-

cese also condemned the abuse suffered by Chen and urged the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association to pray for him. The commission expected from Bishop Fang Xingyao, bishop in Chen's hometown of Linyi, not to stay silent in the face of government pressure, but to support Chen: The Chinese Church should fight not only for religious freedom, but also for the personal rights of the people. Zhang Mingxuan, a prominent Protestant house church pastor in Henan Province, pointed out: Chen is not a Christian, but we Chinese Christians pray for all those in pursuit of the truth" (*ENI* May 1; *Hong Kong Sunday Examiner* May 12; *South China Morning Post* May 10; *Taipei Times* May 20; *The Wall Street Journal* May 5).

May 7, 2012:

Bishops' Conference of Taiwan met in spring for the promotion of permanent, married deacons

During their spring gathering, the regional Bishops' Conference of Taiwan decided to promote the office of permanent, married deacons in order to help meet the problems of the generally advanced age of the clergy and the overall lack of priests. Since Taiwan, unlike Hong Kong and Macau, has no experience with married deacons, the Archdiocese of Taipei will start up an appropriate pilot project. In future, these permanent deacons will be assigned above all in the more than 600 communities of the island which are currently without priests. Furthermore, on completion of philosophy and theology, they should also be encouraged to go on for another degree, so that they can be useful in specific areas of the Church for which priests are not necessarily suitable, such as financial management, information technology, construction, etc. (*Fides* May 7).

May 9, 2012:

Vatican communiqué triggers backlash from China's official Church

In response to the communiqué issued following the plenary meeting of the Vatican's China Commission (see entry of April 26), on May 9 a commentary by a lay person under the pen name Xiaoyang (meaning "lamb") appeared on the joint website of the Patriotic Association and the official Bishops' Conference. It said, among other things, that the communiqué from Rome hurt the solidarity of Catholics in China and was of no benefit for the Church's pastoral and evangelical work. Some members of the Commission were accused of misunderstanding the situation of the Church in China and genuine needs of clergy and faithful. Xiaoyang cited the 100,000 persons baptized annually across the country, as well as other achievements in the pastoral and social fields, as evidence for the success of the Chinese Church and justified the Episcopal consecrations carried out independently of Rome. The commentary went on to say that the Vatican's China Commission "arrogantly places itself above the Chinese clergy, finds fault with our bishops, and destroys the unity and communion within the China Church." Alluding to the communiqué's call for prayer for the Church in China on May 24, the article also ended with a prayer to the Mother of God, so that "those people who do not understand the China Church do no more things that hurt charity and communion." One day later, Fr. Joseph Yang Yu, spokesperson of both the Patriotic Association and the Bishops' Conference, came out in support of the commentary and declared that it represented the thoughts of many Chinese Catholics. Yang defended the Chinese bishops and asserted that their consecration and the sacraments they confer are all valid and licit (*UCAN* May 11; www.catholicchurchinchina.org).

May 10–12, 2012:

International conference on religion and social service meets in Nanjing

Under the title of “Religion and Social Services: Building a Harmonious Society,” the conference brought together 55 scholars and social service practitioners from China and abroad to exchange views on the development work and social work of religious communities and faith-based organizations. Among the organizers were the Protestant Amity Foundation and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Behavioral Research at Nanjing University (see also: *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 83-88 [in German]).

May 13, 2012:

First Matteo Ricci museum opens

In Zhaoqing, Guangdong Province, the first Chinese museum has opened that is completely dedicated to the Jesuit missionary Fr. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). The museum was realized as a cooperative effort between the Catholic Church and the civil authorities. The “Museum of Cultural Exchange between China and the West” is located near the ruins of the first church which Ricci and his confrère Michele Ruggieri were allowed to build after their arrival in China. The exhibits include writings, items of clothing, and scientific instruments that illustrate Ricci’s life and his contribution to the exchange between cultures. Since the museum is located in a popular tourist spot, Fr. Gabriele Li Jiafang, parish priest of a nearby parish, is hoping that “more and more people will come to know the Catholic faith and the life and works of this great missionary” (*Fides* May 16; *UCAN* May 15).

May 14, 2012:

National People’s Congress adopts revised Criminal Procedure Law

With the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Law, the National People’s Congress of China has for the first time included a provision with regard to the respect for and the protection of human rights in another law besides the Constitution. There were also other important amendments to this law (see also *China heute* 2012, No. 2, p. 72 [in German]).

May 18, 2012:

UCAN: Hong Kong’s sole M.A. program in Catholic studies at Hong Kong universities to close

According to a *UCAN* report of May 18, Hong Kong’s first and only master’s degree program in Catholic studies, which had been inaugurated at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2005, will be closing down this September. Fr. Patrick Taveirne, the director of the university’s Centre for Catholic Studies, admitted that it had been difficult to operate such a course at a secular university. For one thing, they had not been able to obtain a full-time professor with a specialization in Catholic studies, he continued; the center had been established with the financial support of the Diocese of Hong Kong in cooperation with the university’s Department of Cultural and Religious Studies. Although the program had been quite popular at the outset, the number of M.A. candidates enrolled in the faculty slowly declined, ac-

According to Professor John Lai Tsz-pang, coordinator of the M.A. program for Religious Studies. During this recent academic year there were only five M.A. candidates specializing in Catholicism, he said, for the specialties in Daoism and Buddhism, the number of candidates was even smaller, and those programs will also be terminated in September. Only the M.A. program in Protestantism will survive into the next academic year; it is run by Chung Chi College's Divinity School (*Sunday Examiner* June 2; *UCAN* May 18).

May 20, 2012:

22nd national day for helping the disabled

As part of the 22nd national day for helping the disabled, Chinese Vice-Premier Hui Liangyu urged greater efforts to secure the basic cultural rights of people with disabilities. According to official statistics, there are more than 85 million persons in China living with a disability. Since the beginning of this current school year, more than 80,000 disabled school-age children were not able to go to school, partly because of poverty, but 56% could not do so because of their disability. The problem is especially acute in rural areas. Often the training offered is not tailored to the needs of the disabled. Local authorities are being encouraged to make home tutors available and to provide educational training for parents, as well as financial support for families who have children with disabilities. In addition, the government is increasing its efforts to create jobs for the disabled. The internet, in particular, seems to have an important role to play: more than 30,000 disabled people are currently managing online stores at the site Taobao.com (*Xinhua* May 20 and 31).

May 22, 2012:

***Phayul*: Geshema degree becomes a reality for Tibetan nuns**

The decision that women may now officially obtain a Geshe degree, the highest academic degree of Tibetan Buddhism, was taken in May of this year at a meeting organized by the Department for Religion and Culture of the Tibetan government in exile in Dharamsala, at which, among others, the teachers of six women's monasteries and representatives of the Institute for Buddhist Dialectic Studies took part. A spokesperson for the ministry explained that for years the Dalai Lama has been a strong supporter of the Geshema degree. On August 21, 2011, the nun Kelsang Wangmo, originally from Germany, was the first woman to earn the Geshe title (*Phayul* May 22).

May 24, 2012:

The Day of Prayer for the Church in China

instituted by Pope Benedict XVI was celebrated for the 5th time (see also *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 76-77 [in German]).

May 24, 2012:

Underground Bishop Li Yi of Changzhi dies

On the World Day of Prayer for the Church in China, 88 year old Msgr. Ermenegildus Li Yi OFM, Bishop of Changzhi (Lu'an) in Shanxi Province, died. Bishop Li was born on November 13, 1923 in

the City of Changzhi and entered the Order of Friars Minor in 1943. He completed his studies of philosophy and theology at the major seminaries of Jinan and Hankou, where he was ordained a priest on February 6, 1949. After his ordination Fr. Li taught at a Catholic middle school in Macau and was also active in a parish there, where he took a particular interest in helping refugees from the North of China. From 1951 to 1955 he studied history at the University of Tianjin. From 1958 he worked as a parish priest in his home diocese of Changzhi. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 he was arrested and until his release in 1985 spent almost 20 years in prison. Afterwards, he was once again able to resume his pastoral activities in the churches of Anyang and Machang. On January 28, 1998, he was secretly ordained bishop of the Diocese of Changzhi, although the government refused to recognize him as bishop. Approximately 55,000 Catholics belong to the Diocese of Changzhi (*Fides* May 31; *UCAN* May 30).

May/June 2012:

Falungong reports mass petitions in Hebei and Heilongjiang

According to the Falun Dafa Information Center (FDIC) – the press office of Falungong in New York – the readiness of the populace in China to intervene in protest against the abduction or torture of Falungong adherents is growing. In a petition dated May 31, 2012, according to a FDIC report, within two weeks 15,000 Chinese in Northeast China had signed and sealed with their thumbprint a demand that the death of the Falungong adherent Qin Yueming be investigated. Qin is believed to have died on February 26, 2011, in the Jiamusi Prison (Heilongjiang Province) as a result of torture to which he had been subjected.

Furthermore, according to the FDIC, 300 villagers of Zhouguantun (Botou, Cangzhou City, Hebei Province) had signed a petition on behalf of the Falungong adherent Wang Xiaodong, who had been arrested on February 25, 2012, although they later withdrew the petition following intimidation by the authorities. This case was also taken up by Amnesty International and, according to a Falungong source, it was discussed in the highest political circles. A further example of neighborly support is said to have occurred on June 9, 2012 in Tangshan (Hebei).

The Beijing lawyer Dong Qianhong was quoted by the Falungong-friendly newspaper *Epoch Times* as having said that the situation is improving and that meanwhile many judges and police officers are no longer treating Falungong adherents like common criminals and it seems that in recent times, at least to some extent, less severe sentences are being handed down (Amnesty International UA-152/2012, May 31; *Epoch Times* April 15; Falun Dafa Information Center May 28 and 31; June 22 and 30; cf. *RCTC* 2012, No. 1, pp. 13-14).

May 29 to June 1, 2012:

“A Workshop on Vatican II Documents” in Shijiazhuang

After many years' delay in getting to know the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), for the celebrations of the jubilee [50 years since the start of the Council] the Catholic Church in China has finally caught up with the universal Church – declared a representative of the organizers of the workshop, the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies in Shijiazhuang. The participants occupied themselves with the study of the various Council documents. They had come from 30 dioceses of Mainland China, and among them were 10 bishops, auxiliary bishops, bishop candidates, and diocesan administrators. There were also 50 priests as well as 33 representatives of 29 men's (!) and women's religious congregations. Among the lecturers coming from outside China there were, among others, Fr. Fang Zhirong



Three Popes and St. Peter's Basilica adorn the poster of the workshop.

SJ (Fu Jen University, Taiwan), Fr. Jeroom Heyndrickx CICM (Verbiest Institute KULeuven), as well as Vicar-General Dominic Chan and Liturgy Commission Chairman Thomas Law of the Diocese of Hong Kong.

On the occasion of the Council's jubilee, the Shijiazhuang based Catholic newspaper *Xinde (Faith)* has declared the Council to be its principal theme for 2012 and has urged its readers to send in articles (*Xinde* June 14; *UCAN* June 12).

May 30, 2012:

Father Ma Daqin elected as candidate for bishop in Shanghai

With 160 votes in favor, representatives of the Diocese of Shanghai, including diocesan priests, religious sisters, and lay persons, have elected Fr. Thaddeus Ma Daqin as candidate to be the new Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Shanghai. Among the votes in the government-required way of "democratic" election, two voters rejected and 28 abstained from voting. A further 15 representatives declined to appear for the election. Fr. Ma, born in Shanghai and the Dean in Pudong, was the only candidate for the position. He had recently received approval from the Vatican. Ninety-five year old Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian SJ presided over the election and also cast his vote. The ordination will take place on July 7 in Shanghai, and is to be carried out by Bishop Jin, who had appointed Fr. Ma to be his Vicar General last December. Fr. Ma Daqin was ordained priest on December 18, 1994, upon completion of his studies at Sheshan Seminary. For a couple of years he had worked as editor at the diocesan Guangqi Press. With its 150,000 Catholics, Shanghai counts among the largest and most prominent dioceses of China. The diocese also has an underground bishop, 94 year old Bishop Joseph Fan Zhongliang SJ, who has been ailing for many years and who is currently under house arrest (*UCAN* May 30; see also *RCTC* 2012, No. 2, p. 18).



Vicar General Fr. Ma Daqin in May of 2012. Photo: Martin Welling.

June 3, 2012:

Sisters' convent in Beijing to host "Open Door" day

After last year's positive experiences, the St. Joseph's Sisters of the Diocese of Beijing have once again decided to open their doors, inviting anyone who might be interested in learning about the history, life, and activities of the sisters to drop in for a visit. The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph was founded in 1872 by Bishop Louis-Gabriel Delaplace CM, then Apostolic Vicar of Beijing, as one of the first diocesan congregations of sisters in China. The convent was reopened in 1986 and today counts 50 sisters, most of whom are involved mainly in parish activities (*Fides* June 15).

June 4, 2012:

Memorial services in Hong Kong and Taipei commemorate Tiananmen massacre

On the evening of June 4, in Victoria Park, a record number of Hong Kong citizens participated in a gathering to commemorate the victims of the 1989 massacre at Beijing's Tiananmen Square. The organizers spoke of 180,000 participants, but the police gave the number of 85,000. Among the participants there were many young families, school children, high school and university students, as well as many persons coming from Mainland China. According to the *South China Morning Post*, the event took place against the backdrop of growing public fears that freedom in Hong Kong will be eroded when Leung Chun-ying takes power as the new Chief Executive on July 1, 2012. Before the actual beginning of the demonstration, more than 1,000 Catholics gathered to pray together in Victoria Park. Hundreds of people in Taiwan also commemorated the victims of the massacre. 300 people took part in a prayer vigil and concert in Taipei (*AsiaNews* June 5; *Sunday Examiner* June 9; *South China Morning Post* June 5; *Taiwanese Central News Agency* June 4).

June 4–5, 2012:

Call to action against "religious fraud" at 1st Exchange of Experiences on the Management of Religious Sites

Two hundred representatives of the official national organizations of the five major religions, as well as representatives of the provincial religious affairs authorities throughout China took part in this Exchange of Experiences organized by the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA) in Shanghai. At an accompanying press conference, a SARA representative announced that the SARA wants to curb "a growing trend of religious fraud," such as false Buddhist monks and Daoist priests, fake temples which are actually commercial enterprises, abuses such as arbitrarily collected fees, etc. Since – according to the SARA representative – these abuses occur mainly at non-registered sites, the SARA wants to make public a list of all registered sites for religious activities and of all religious personnel filed for the record with the government. A database of this information is being built up so that the faithful will be able to identify religious fraudsters and imposters. Master Xuecheng, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Buddhist Association, declared on the same occasion that monks who peddle amulets and offer fortune-telling and divination for a fee on the street are mostly fakes.

The Exchange of Experiences apparently did not deal with the problem of the generally non-registered, and therefore illegal, places of worship and religious performers of traditional Chinese popular religion. While there are suggestions for religious policies dealing with these groups (cf. *China heute* 2011,

No. 2, pp. 87-89, and 103-106 [in German]), it seems that the Exchange of Experiences in Shanghai means a step backwards (*China Daily* online June 6; *Xinhua* June 6; www.sara.gov.cn June 4 and 5).

June 5, 2012:

State Administration for Religious Affairs releases new measures for the record filing of Catholic bishops

The “Measures for Reporting Bishops of the Chinese Catholic Church for the Record (Trial Implementation)” (*Zhongguo tianzhujiao zhujiao beian banfa [shixing]* 中国天主教主教备案办法 [试行]) assign to the Patriotic Association and to the official Bishops’ Conference the leading role in the mandatory filing of applications for reporting Catholic bishops for the record with the state authorities. For details, see *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 72-73 (in German). Chinese text of the document at www.sara.gov.cn/zcfg/15179.htm. A German translation will be published in *China heute* 2012, No. 3.

June 8, 2012:

UCAN: Priest convicted of murder

Fr. Joseph Shang Kanfa of Hailun, Heilongjiang Province, was sentenced to 15 years in prison for having beaten to death the ex-husband of a parishioner in a brawl last year. The man had shown up at the construction site of the new Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ Church in Hailun City, looking for his ex-wife and armed with a screwdriver. When the priest tried to intervene, a fight broke out, in which the man was struck on the head. He later died in hospital. Fr. Shang is to serve his prison sentence in Bei’an City. He had worked for 18 years in his parish following his ordination to the priesthood in 1993 (*UCAN* June 8).

June 9–16, 2012:

First meeting of a World Council of Churches commission in China

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has met in Nanjing and Shanghai. The host organizations were the Chinese Christian Council (a member of the WCC) and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Church in China. The program included a seminar on the theme of “Understanding China” at which Pastor Gao Feng, President of the Chinese Christian Council, described the Protestant church in China as autonomous, post-denominational, rapidly growing, and facing many challenges, among which are the lack of ordained pastors in many communities and a general lack of theological formation among lay leaders. At the seminar a representative of the State Administration for Religious Affairs also reported on the role of the religions in the building up of a harmonious society. WCC General Secretary Olav Fykse Tveit spoke on several occasions, including one session with students and professors of the Nanjing Theological Seminary. An entry visa to China had been denied to former Norwegian Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, a Lutheran pastor, who had been invited to be one of the moderators of the conference. In an interview with the *International Ecumenical News*, Bondevik speculated that the denial might possibly have been connected to the awarding by the Norwegian Nobel Prize Committee of the peace prize in 2010 to the dissident Liu Xiaobo (*ENI* June 15.; *UCAN* June 14; www.oikoumene.org May 30; June 15).

June 10, 2012:

Mass protests in Hong Kong following the death of civil rights activist Li Wangyang



Demonstrators in Hong Kong with photos of Li Wangyang, who died under unclear circumstances.
Photo: UCAN.

According to estimates of the organizers, at least 25,000 people marched in protest to the liaison office of the People's Republic of China to demand an investigation into the alleged suicide of Li Wangyang in Hunan Province. Official police estimates put the number of protesters at 5,400. The 62 year old Li, who had been an advocate of workers' rights and who had spent more than 20 years in prison following the Tian'anmen massacre, was reported to have hanged himself on June 6. His relatives doubt this. Li had lost most of his sight and hearing as a result of torture while he was in prison. At the beginning of June, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Tian'anmen massacre, Li had given an interview to a Hong Kong journalist in which he described the torture he had endured and spoke out on behalf of a democratic China and an end to the one-party rule. On June 6 he was found dead in his hospital room and his body was cremated on June 10.

More than 30 organizations, including both Catholic and Protestant groups, co-organized the protest march. The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, one of the sponsors, organized a prayer vigil before the march began. Approximately 100 Catholic demonstrators offered prayers for Li and for his family as well as for all of the dissidents in China (*AsiaNews* June 11; *ENI* June 11; *Kyodo News Service* June 10; *Der Standard* June 11).

June 11, 2012:

State Council publishes “National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2012–2015)”

This second human rights action plan of the Chinese government also contains a section on the freedom of religious belief. Apart from the general principles anchored in the Chinese constitution, several

points were mentioned which belong to the agenda of Chinese policy on religion: improvement of management measures for Muslim pilgrimages [to Mecca], the encouragement for religious believers to get involved in charity activities, and the implementing of regulations regarding social security for religious personnel (an English version of the document can be found at news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-06/11/c_131645029.htm).

June 12, 2012:

Chinese delegation walks out of general conference of World Fellowship of Buddhists in Yeosu (Korea) to protest against the participation of Tibetans in exile

At first, according to media reports, the secretary general of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB), under pressure from the delegation of the Chinese Buddhist Association, had forced three Tibetan delegates to leave the assembly. Later on, however, at the opening ceremonies on June 12, when the Tibetans refused to leave, the 17 member Chinese delegation walked out of the conference and returned to China the following day. According to the *Taipei Times*, Chinese delegations have attended other WFB gatherings where Tibetan delegations were present, but this time the composition of the Tibetan delegation seems to have been a stumbling block, including as it did the former Prime Minister Samdhong Rinpoche and one further minister of the Tibetan government in exile.

In a statement on June 14, the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, the organizer of the conference, accused the Chinese delegation of disrespect towards a religious event and pointed out that the Tibetans are officially members of the WFB. The Jogye Order also said it would have to seriously reconsider its relationship with the Chinese Buddhists. The next day a spokesman for the Chinese Buddhist Association accused the Jogye Order of breaking its word and of interfering in China's internal affairs. The World Fellowship of Buddhists was founded in Sri Lanka in 1950 and is headquartered in Bangkok. Its general conference takes place every second year, and had been planned this year at Yeosu from June 11–16 (*AFP* June 15; *Taipei Times* June 16; *Xinhua* June 16; *Yonhap* June 14).

June 15, 2012:

Archbishop Savio Hon on the question of a possible illegitimate episcopal consecration in Harbin

In response to questions from *AsiaNews* about rumors of an episcopal consecration being planned without Papal mandate in Harbin in Heilongjiang Province (see entry of June 29), Archbishop Hon, Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, which is also responsible for the Chinese Church, stated that should such an unlawful episcopal ordination occur, “it would be very, very serious” and would hurt the whole Church and especially the Church in China. He had heard that the faithful in Harbin were praying and fasting that such an ordination would not take place, Hon said. He also believed that the candidate, Fr. Joseph Yue Fusheng, would not want to become bishop without the Papal mandate and prayed that he [“this brother”] would decide to choose loyalty to the Pope. Hon stated that the “mingling of bishops” [i.e. legitimate bishops being obliged to attend illegitimate ordinations and the contrary, illegitimate bishops attending ordinations of bishops with Papal mandate] is part of a strategy intended “to confuse the difference between legitimate and illegitimate” (*AsiaNews* June 15).

June 18, 2012:

Beijing authorities publish textbook on ethos of government officials in ancient and modern China – conscience as the principal criterion

The four-volume collection, the publication of which had been reported in the newspaper *Beijing ribao* (*Beijing Daily*), contains examples from both ancient and modern times on the theme of moral conduct of officials. It also contains proverbs as well as Confucian and Daoist maxims. It is titled *Zhongguo gu jin guande yanjiu* 中国古今官德研究 (Studies on Virtue for Officials in Ancient and Modern China) and is intended to be used as educational material for the prevention of bribery and corruption among party cadres in Beijing. It was compiled by the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences and the Beijing Communist Party's Disciplinary Committee. According to *Beijing ribao*, the textbook says in its preface that the decisive criterion for good or bad officials is the conscience, and declares: "He who exercises his office based on his conscience is a good civil servant and whoever suppresses his conscience when exercising his office is a bad civil servant" (凭着良心为官, 好官也; 昧着良心为官, 坏官也).

According to the *South China Morning Post* the news of the publication was received with skepticism. In order to be successful in the fight against corruption, Beijing must implement the rule of law and allow public criticism of the government, the paper said, citing the economist Hu Xingdou of the Beijing Institute of Technology (*AsiaNews* June 19.; *Beijing ribao* June 18 [bjrb.bjd.com.cn/html/2012-06/18/content_100510.htm]; *South China Morning Post* June 19; *Xinhua* June 18).

June 18–24, 2012:

Head of Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations visits China

Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfejew) of Wolokolamsk, among other activities, took part in the second consultation of the Russian-Chinese Group for Contacts and Cooperation in Religious Affairs. The visit was in response to an invitation by the Chinese State Administration for Religious Affairs (see also *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 73-75 [in German]).

June 25, 2012:

Radio Free Asia: Muslims convicted following clash with police

According to a report from Radio Free Asia, 14 Hui Muslims were condemned to up to 6 years imprisonment, after they had tried to prevent the demolition of a mosque by the police (see also *RCTC* 2012, No. 2, p. 7). The violent clash occurred on December 30 in the village of Taoshan, in Tongxin County of the Ningxia Autonomous Region of the Hui people in the Northwest of China. The mosque, however, was finally razed to the ground. According to the testimony of village residents, at least two people were killed in the clash and another 50 were said to have been wounded. In a rare reaction, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation consisting of 57 nations condemned the violence and the "heavy-handed" response of local authorities and called on China to respect the rights of Muslims to construct and maintain their places of worship and to freely attend religious services (*Radio Free Asia* June 25).

June 27, 2012:

International Catholic Migration Commission expects a larger number of immigrants to arrive in Asia

According to Johan Ketelers, Secretary-General of the Geneva-based International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), “Asia should prepare for a dramatic change in international migration trends due to the worsening debt crisis in Europe.” High tech talent may in future also look for job opportunities in Asian countries such as China and India, thus Keteler. His remarks came at the third meeting of the Asia Working Group formed by the Office for Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences and the ICMC, which concluded on June 27 in Hsinchu (Xinzhu, Taiwan). Keteler also mentioned that in China today, European experts may have fewer job opportunities than in previous years due to the fact that many Chinese graduates who studied abroad are now returning home to work, due to difficulties getting a job where they had studied. Bishops, priests, and laity from India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam took part in the four-day long meeting (*UCAN* June 27).

June 27–28, 2012:

Patriotic Association and official Bishops’ Conference host conference on Second Vatican Council – Vatican II claimed as the basis for an independent Church in China



The church of the National Seminary in Beijing is at the center of the conference poster. It was built in the style of Beijing’s Temple of Heaven.

The spirit of Vatican II is serving as an ideological foundation for the principle of an independent, self-governed Chinese Church, said Zhou Yongzhi, Vice-Secretary General of the Patriotic Association (PA) of the Chinese Catholic Church, in his lecture at the conference. His words were reported by *UCAN*. Another Vice-Secretary General of the PA, Wang Huaimao, declared at the conference that China, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, was a decade ahead of its times in introducing the reforms of the 1950s [i.e., the creation of the Patriotic Association in 1957 and the first episcopal consecration without Papal mandate in 1958] all of which served as a practical demonstration and as stepping stones for the progressive spirit of the Council. Bishop Ma Yinglin, Chairman of the official Chinese Bishops' Conference, opened the meeting, which took place at the National Seminary in Beijing. According to information released by the organizers, 60 specialists took part, including Protestant theologians. *UCAN* reported that of the 10 bishops present, four (including Ma Yinglin) were not recognized by Rome (*UCAN* June 28; www.catholicchurchinchina June 26 and 27, the conference poster can also be found there).

June 29, 2012:

Excommunicated Bishop Lei Shiyin ordains four priests – two episcopal consecrations postponed

On the symbolic day of Saints Peter and Paul, Lei Shiyin ordained four deacons as priests. He had been consecrated Bishop of Leshan exactly one year before in defiance of the directives from Rome. A fifth deacon refused to allow himself to be ordained by the excommunicated bishop, reported *UCAN* (relying on local sources). The other four are said to have been convinced to agree after the diocese allegedly promised them automobiles and a sum of money.

Archbishop Savio Hon of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples declared on June 30, in a statement made to *Vatican Insider*, that Lei Shiyin had committed a “sacrilege.” Since he is currently under penalty of excommunication, he is not permitted to either receive or administer any sacrament, Hon said.

Originally there were also two episcopal consecrations in Harbin and in Shanghai scheduled for June 29. They were postponed and re-scheduled for July 6 and 7 respectively. Referring to these two consecrations, Savio Hon said in the same interview that it is “absolutely forbidden” for a priest to be ordained bishop without Papal mandate, and added that whoever does so incurs automatic excommunication. Hon further pointed out that it is also forbidden and a serious violation of Church law for an illegitimate bishop to take part in an Episcopal consecration that has the Pope's approval.

In Harbin, Fr. Yue Fusheng is scheduled to be consecrated Bishop of Heilongjiang without Papal mandate. Fr. Ma Daqin in Shanghai does have the required Papal mandate, but there will be an illegitimate bishop taking part in the rite (*UCAN* June 29; *Vatican Insider* June 30).

All sources cited in this “News Update” refer to the year 2012, unless otherwise indicated. This “News Update” was first published in German in *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 89-97.

Interview with His Eminence Cardinal John Tong, Bishop of Hong Kong, July 17, 2012

Questions asked by Prof. Hans Waldenfels SJ



Fifteen years ago, on July 1, 1997, Hong Kong again became part of the People's Republic of China – under the principle of “One country, two systems.” The Church is relatively free and exercises a rather strong influence by its well-established educational system built up from Kindergarten through Primary and High Schools to the University level, and through her Caritas organization, a social service arm of the diocese, and social activities. How do you see the influence of the Hong Kong Church on the Church in Mainland China?

Over the past 15 years, the political and social environments of Hong Kong have changed. However, the mission and the commitment of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong to education, social welfare, and other services in society remain strong, for which the quality of the services has to improve, as the society has changed after 1997 when the sovereignty of Hong Kong reverted from British to Chinese rule.

Today, there are 250 primary, secondary, and higher education schools run by the diocese, religious congregations, and other Catholic organizations in Hong Kong. The Caritas-Hong Kong runs social centers for youth, family, ethnic minorities, vocational training, elderly and medical services, etc. for the general public. Such services are visible testimony of the Catholic faith among the public.

This interview was conducted in Hong Kong by Prof. Dr. Dr. Hans Waldenfels SJ, Essen/Germany, formerly professor for fundamental theology at Bonn University, who had stayed there as a lecturer in a course for seminary teachers from Mainland China on the significance of old and new philosophies for theological formation (June 27 to July 4). Cardinal John Tong has been appointed as one of the three president delegates to the upcoming Synod of Bishops scheduled to take place in the Vatican from October 7 to 28. A German translation of the interview has first been published in *Ruhrwort*, August 4, 2012.

In 2011, the diocese lost a lawsuit against a new policy in education, introduced after 1997, that the governing body of each school has to be represented by a sponsoring body, made up of teachers, parents, and other representatives. The diocese will comply with the court ruling and adapt to the new system to continue to provide quality education to all students of the Catholic schools.

On the question of influencing the Mainland Church, actually, when contacts are possible, this influence takes place and it is mutual. The Hong Kong Diocese has a history of more than 150 years. Compared with many dioceses in Mainland China, which began centuries ago, Hong Kong is relatively “young” and there is a great deal to learn from the Mainland Church.

Such influence can be observed in three aspects:

- (i) Although schools in Mainland China cannot be operated by religions, including the Catholic Church, the dedication and quality teaching in education is shared with visitors from educational institutes from China. Students and teachers of Catholic schools in Hong Kong occasionally visit schools in the Mainland and exchange knowledge and teaching methods with them.
- (ii) Regarding social and medical services, they are visited by Mainland Church individuals working in such fields. Church workers or social workers from Mainland Church-run centers or clinics come to Hong Kong on exchange or to take refresher courses. Many have visited social centers of Caritas-Hong Kong, Church hospitals, hospice care, marriage and pre-marital counseling, family and youth activities.
- (iii) This kind of exchange reaffirms the role of the Hong Kong Church as a bridge Church, where it serves as a connection between the Church in the Mainland and the Universal Church.

Obviously the Church in China is gaining more free ground. An extension of free opinion is unavoidable due to the growing development of communication media. The unofficial Church is no longer a hidden Church. How can the relations inside the Church be strengthened in the future?

The Church in China has gained “more free ground” in the expression of faith, when compared to the times in the early reopening period since 1980. However, both the open Church and the underground Church communities are living their faith with restrictions, such as the freedom to exercise religious practices and freedom of movement of Church personnel.

Apparently, as China’s info-technology has developed fast and allowed a free use of Internet, mobile phones, and other communication means within China, the Catholics living in this environment also enjoy what is provided in the society. However, the content is closely monitored by Internet police. For example, most of the web reports on Mainland Catholic websites about the ordination of Auxiliary Bishop Ma Daqin of Shanghai on July 7, 2012 were ordered by the government to be removed soon after Ma’s ordination was declared to be under investigation. Also, the construction of highways and hi-speed trains has improved communications and strengthened contacts and dialogue.

More contacts between the two Catholic communities in the recent decade have been observed. This is possible not really because of the advancement of communications, but due to the release of the Papal Letter of 2007 that calls for reconciliation and communion in the Church. Also, the more frequent recognition and legitimization of bishops by the Holy Father helps improve the relationship between the two sides. Such bishops were ordained without the approval of the Holy Father, under the so-called “self-election and self-ordination” system introduced by the Chinese government and Patriotic Association since 1958.

There are places where the two communities of the “official” and “unofficial” sides exist in peace, but others still experience disharmony due to historical and various reasons. Actually, the Chinese priests and sisters who studied in Germany and other countries have enjoyed a time and space with Catholics from the other side. They enjoyed the friendship and time together. It is hoped that the two communities may become reconciled in their hearts and also in action someday.

All in all, the “unofficial” Church still lives its faith in a quiet and low-key manner. Many still suffer restrictions and purges from the public security officials. On the other hand, the “official” Church communities are closely monitored as well. Both communities need the Universal Church’s support and prayers to strengthen their relationship and to live in full freedom.

How can a more trustful relationship between the Church and the government be developed so that the State does not see in the Church a threat anymore, but gives the religious communities the freedom they request on behalf of their self-understanding?

Trust is essential in relationships. The Chinese say: “A harmonious family makes everything rise.” Both the Chinese government and the Church in China hope to make the people live in happiness. It takes time for the two to come to a trustful relationship. Actually, in certain dioceses or places the Church and the local government have maintained cordial relationships.

Inevitably the destructions, pain, and suffering of the Church in the 1950s and during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) still cast shadows in the minds of Catholics. Today, these wounds are healing. Deeper understanding and trust is called for to improve the relationship.

However, the way the Communist authorities rule the country is to control and interfere in all aspects of life, including the Church. The interference in religious activities can be wide-ranging from monitoring mobile phone messages, organizing Christmas activities up to content in websites and publications, sitting in the seminary affairs’ meetings, screening seminarians, priestly ordinations, and certainly bishops’ appointments. Government officials are highly educated. For themselves, they need promotions and have to implement government policies from above. Even though they understand that the religious policies are outdated and unreasonably restrictive, they still have to carry out the orders from above.

The Catholics' freedom is like a bird in a cage. Unless the policy of religion is changed, the situation cannot be improved. Again, dialogue between the Church and State, as well as between the Holy See and Beijing, is essential and imminent.

What kind of reasons does the government have for thinking it has to decide about the ordination of bishops against the will of the Universal Church and her regulations?

Whether the Chinese government purposely chooses some bishops to go "against the will" of the Holy See is hard to determine or recognize. Instead, it seems more obvious for the government to select some bishops whom they "trust" and who can carry out their goals and more importantly, to control the Church and prevent the Church from linking to the Universal Church. It is hard to contact bishops in China or to invite bishops to go abroad without government interference. It is also observed that the Church leaders in China are pushed to implement "an independent and self-managed Church" without the direction of the Holy See. In the long run, there is a danger that the Church will be separated from the Universal Church.

Why does the government not recognize that a Church in freedom could be of great help in harmonizing the country and that she could assist the people on their way to realizing the good goals for the future?

Harmony is the big word today in China. But the present disharmony develops out of the Chinese authorities' obsolete and outmoded religious policy of the Communist Party, adopted since the 1950s. Even though the country is catching up with the world in terms of economy and international events, its policy toward religion remains unchanged.

For instance, on the issue of illicit ordination of bishops, the government's news release still refers to the time of 1958, where the first illicit ordinations took place in China, or to imperialist invasions into China in the 18th and 19th century, or even the "Dark Ages" of the Church in Medieval times. Their perception of the Catholic Church seems to say that the Church is stagnant. Certainly, if we compare the freedom and tolerance the Chinese government allows the Catholic Church to enjoy today with the time in 1980, when it first reopened its doors to the world, it is much improved. But it still lags behind all kinds of reforms. The Chinese authorities still maintain the thinking that the Catholic Church is led by a foreign power, undermining her contributions to morality, understanding of human dignity and human relationships that affect the building of community relationships.

In our times many call for peace, freedom, and justice. Is it not necessary that "all people of good will," as the Popes repeatedly have requested, contribute to the welfare of all whatever they are able to do? How is the Church in Mainland China approaching the ordinary people? How does she get in contact with them?

Given the development of the Church in China in the past decades, the social awareness in many Catholic leaders there seems less sensitive. The Church has been struggling for her survival, such as the reclaiming and restoration of churches and church properties in the 1980s and 1990s, and made an intense effort in building church communities and

bishop's successions in the 2000s. Evangelization has been active in the recent decade, and thus more attention is given to social justice issues like migrants in the cities. In other words, Catholics in the Mainland pay less attention to the Catholic social teaching or social awareness.

During Christmas and major Church festivals, curious young people or residents may come to the Church. They are now welcome to see and listen to what a Catholic Church is. Catholics organize themselves to visit poor and single elderly persons in villages and urban areas during the weekends or Christmas time. Church people are more conscious of environmental protection. Processions in certain parishes were organized to arouse awareness among local residents. Sometimes during holidays, Catholic youths and students have organized themselves to visit children or elderly in the remote areas.

However, big demonstrations are rarely seen. Big protests defending the Church's own property rights, human rights, and religious freedom were observed. For instance, the protest against the beating of sisters in Xi'an Diocese who defended the Church properties from invasions by property companies in 2005; seminarians in Hebei started a three-week student strike in November 2010 to protest the government's appointment of a religious official as their vice rector.

Church participation in nationwide campaigns on human rights and peace issues is rarely seen, with the exception of government-organized peace activities of the five officially-recognized religions – Buddhists, Catholics, Daoists, Muslims, and Protestants.

The great number of people in Hong Kong who are interested in the Church, but also on Mainland China proves that they see the Church as a power which insists on the fundamental rights of human persons and the welfare of humankind. Are there no ways that also the members of the Chinese governments, central and local, come to this understanding so that they finally support the true representatives of the Christian message, or at least that they do not hinder them any longer?

The Chinese government understands that Catholics are serving the needy, but at the same time they are suspicious of the Church, fearing it will introduce ideas of foreign domination into their services. In certain areas, the local government appreciates the services the Church is offering for their people. For example, the Home of the Dawn in Ningjin County, Hebei Province, accommodates orphans and handicapped children. The sisters' effort is publicly appreciated.

As mentioned, many of the Chinese officials do understand the importance of fundamental human rights and efforts made by the Church people, but they have to implement their work according to the policies stated in the Constitution and various regulations. Unless those stipulations are changed, they cannot do much to change the scenario.

People's Republic of China: Religions and Churches Statistical Overview 2011

Katharina Wenzel-Teuber

Translated by David Streit

Numerically measurable developments in the field of the religions of China were once again the subject of estimates, research, and discussions in 2011. They were reflected in media reports and academic publications both inside and outside the People's Republic. Some of these are presented below.¹

Religions and Adherents

How many people in the People's Republic of China (excluding Hong Kong and Macau) believe in a religion is still an open question, which is keeping religious affairs authorities and scholars busy. Wang Zuo'an, Director of the State Administration [Bureau] for Religious Affairs, said on March 9, 2011 on the website people.com.cn, that the often quoted figure of 100 million religious adherents in China is in part based on estimates only. Since reliable statistics on the number of religious adherents are essential for the religious work of the Party and the government, plans have been made, in cooperation with research facilities, to conduct large-scale, sample surveys in order to determine more accurately the number of followers of Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, and Catholicism, as has already been done in 2008/2009 with the in-house questionnaire survey on Protestantism – Wang said. Furthermore, according to Wang, the Chinese government has never claimed to recognize only five religions; those five were just the most influential ones.²

In January 2012, Wang said that China was building up a database of information concerning religious work which would contain systematic statistics updated on a regular basis. The State Administration for Religious Affairs has already done the groundwork for this database, he added.³ New statistics thus can be expected to be forthcoming from this source.

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- 1 Since 2001, Roman Malek has compiled the statistical overview of churches and religions in the People's Republic of China which appears annually in *China heute*. His latest version was in 2011 (see Malek 2011).
- 2 "Wang Zuo'an juzhang zuoke renminwang qiangguo luntan qiangdiao jiaqiang guanli cujin zongjiao hexie," p. 5. More on the in-house questionnaire survey on Protestantism (= CASS 2010) mentioned by Wang see below.
- 3 "Wo guo jiang jianli zongjiao gongzuo shuju tongji zhidu he dingqi gengxin jizhi" 我国将建立宗教工作数据统计制度和定期更新机制 (China will Build Up a Data and Statistics System for the Religious Work as well as a Mechanism for its Regular Up-Dating), *Xinhua* Jan. 9, 2012, according to sara.gov.cn/xwzx/xwjj/12035.htm.

Already back in 2007, a survey on the religious situation in China carried out by the East China Normal University in Shanghai indicated that there was a much higher number of religious believers than 100 million – namely 31.4% of the population over 16 years of age.⁴ This result was even “surpassed” in July 2010 when Yang Fenggang of Purdue University’s Center on Religion and Chinese Society in West Lafayette, Indiana (USA) presented the outcome of the Chinese Spiritual Life Survey (CSLS) in Beijing.⁵ The CSLS study concludes that “the proportion of real atheists in China is no more than 15 percent of the population; 85 percent of the Chinese either hold some religious beliefs or practice some kind of religion.”

According to the CSLS report, between May and July 2007, a “nationally representative sample” of 7,021 cases of respondents between the ages of 16 and 75 was conducted in 56 selected locations of different sizes. The survey was conducted by the Chinese market research firm Horizon Research Consultancy Group. Initially, the report said, “58 percent of the respondents [...] claimed to believe in no religion or in any spiritual beings” (gods, etc.). Further enquiries demonstrated, however, that of the 58%, 44 percent [...] had “engaged in some type of religious practices in the previous 12 months, practices such as attending church, praying, burning incense, [...] wearing a charm, consulting a Fengshui master, or seeking divination. Moreover, 49 percent of these self-claimed non-believers held some religious beliefs, such as believing in soul reincarnation, heaven, hell, or supernatural forces.” Thus “the ‘pure atheists’ make up only about 15 percent of the sample.” Of those members of the Chinese Communist Party and the Communist Youth League who were questioned, “17 percent self-identified with at least one religion, 65 percent indicated that they had engaged in some religious practices in the past 12 months, and 65 percent said that they held some religious beliefs. Only 16 percent are ‘pure atheists.’”

Growth of Buddhism and the assumption that a “critical point” has been reached in the growth of Christianity. One result of the CSLS was the finding that Buddhism has “grown extraordinarily”⁶ and “remains the largest religion in China today,” with which 18 percent of people self-identify, “which means about 185 million people in the adult population” over 16 years of age. According to CSLS, the number of people who identify themselves as Christians lies at not more than 33 million of the adult population, of which 30 million are Protestants and 3 million Catholics.⁷

The Blue Book of Religions 2011 (henceforth BB)⁸ of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) – which is under the State Council and advises the Chinese government, among others, in religious matters – has adopted the figures of the CSLS. Huang Haibo,

4 Compare Malek 2007, p. 2; Sun Yiwei 2007. The survey was based on a sampling of 4,500 persons over 16 years of age. Some commentators (e.g. Duan Qi 2011) considered this an inadequate sampling. And yet, the number of those questioned in similar surveys in this field is often not substantially higher.

5 *China heute* thanks Prof. Yang Fenggang for mailing his presentation of the survey.

6 The survey of the East China Normal University of 2007 on the other hand had indicated Protestant Christianity as the religion with the strongest growth during the past 20 years in China; see Sun Yiwei 2007.

7 More on this low figure for the Catholics see below under “Catholic Church.”

8 In the series *Zongjiao lanpishu* 宗教藍皮書 Blue Book of Religions, each year since 2008 a volume has been edited by Jin Ze and Qiu Yonghui (both from the Institute for World Religions of the CASS) with reports on the religions in China, usually written by colleagues of the CASS.

author of the report on Protestantism in the BB, compared them with the results of the above-mentioned in-house questionnaire survey on Protestantism in China. This was carried out in 2008/2009 by the CASS itself and the results were published in the BB of the previous year. It arrived at a figure of 23.05 million persons who consider themselves Protestant Christians.⁹ Based on these two surveys (which he claims are the two most scientifically reliable) and admitting an upward margin of error, Huang Haibo comes to the conclusion that the number of Protestant Christians in China must lie somewhere between 23.05 and 40 million¹⁰ and therefore does not exceed 3% of the population. This means – he writes – that Protestant Christianity has grown relatively quickly since the 1980s, but not as quickly as has sometimes been presumed. It continues to hold a marginal position in Chinese society and has not “already entered the mainstream of Chinese society” as optimists had once supposed, Huang concludes.

Huang surmises that due to the particular structure of society, cultural traditions, and religious priorities there may possibly exist a natural “critical point” (*linjiedian* 临界点) for the growth of Christianity in China. One can assume with some certainty, he argues, that the number of Christians in China over the long run will not go beyond a not-yet-identifiable but relatively low percentage of the population. So there is, as he says, no need to worry about the number of Protestants; instead, efforts can be concentrated on further protecting their fundamental rights and interests and on developing their harmonious relationship with Chinese society.¹¹ On the other hand, as Wang Zhiyuan observed in his article on Buddhism in the BB, of all religions of China – the five major religions and popular religion included – Buddhism no doubt exercises the most far-reaching influence on society, so that its mission with regard to the transformation of society towards modernity is also the greatest.¹²

Notes on the limits of validity of religious surveys in China. Gao Shining, a sociologist of religion at the Institute for World Religions of the CASS, is of the opinion that, as shown by the figures arrived at in the CASS and CSLS surveys, religious “self-identity” (*ziwo rentong* 自我认同) among the Chinese population has made enormous progress. She points out, however, that even in today’s China, the religious identity of Christians is “not completely void of burden,” and recalls “religious incidents” of recent years, in which Protestant Christians (e.g. members of the Shouwang Church in Beijing) had once again been subjected to pressure. According to her experience, therefore, one can never be sure in any survey on religious belief “that all Christians will admit to being Christian.” She

9 Compare CASS 2010. The survey was presented in, among others, Malek 2011, pp. 32 and 51-53. A total of 211,750 individuals in 54,360 households were surveyed throughout all of China. This means that the control sample was comparatively large.

10 Here Huang draws on the information provided in Duan Qi 2011, esp. p. 24. Duan Qi took part in conducting the CASS in-house questionnaire survey. In her article, she points to some of the possible sources of errors in the survey, and taking those into account, comes to her own personal estimate of 23.05 to 40 million Protestants in China. On the whole, however, she believes the study to be generally reliable.

11 Huang Haibo 2011, pp. 128-130.

12 Wang Zhiyuan 2011, p. 21.

comes to the conclusion that the numbers found out in such surveys “can only be taken as a point of reference.”¹³

In a discussion of the statistics of the 2010 Blue Book, Anthony Lam of the Holy Spirit Study Centre in Hong Kong pointed out that it “obviously [...] deals with different religions in different ways,” and saw in this a common reason: “to meet the political need.”¹⁴ When studying the figures which the researchers of the CASS publish, it is necessary therefore to keep in mind that they, even though making every effort to conform to scientific standards, must nevertheless also factor current government policy into the equation.

Religions in Beijing

According to statements of the Beijing Bureau for Religious Affairs and *Xinhua* respectively,¹⁵ there are in Beijing:

- 250,000 Muslims with 70 places of worship
- 200,000 Buddhists with 21 places of worship
- 70,000 Protestants with 21 churches and other places of worship, and an average of 5,000 baptisms per year
- 50,000 Catholics with 22 places of worship
- 10,000 Daoists with 11 places of worship

The religious attitudes of university students in Beijing were the subject of a study by a research group led by two professors at Beijing and Renmin Universities respectively. They surveyed a selection of 2,000 students enrolled at 13 universities. Of these, 7% identified themselves as Buddhists, 4% as Confucians, 3.9% as (Protestant or Catholic) Christians, 2.7% as Daoists and 2.1% as Muslims. 17.9% declared that they were interested in Christianity. 4.5% stated that they seldom or never reflected on the meaning of life, while 95% said that they did so sometimes or often.¹⁶

New Official “System of Spokespersons” for the Religions

At the end of December 2011, a new “news release system” (*xinwen fabu zhidu* 新闻发布制度) was introduced for six (!) official national umbrella organizations of the religions in the People’s Republic of China. According to a report in *Xinhua*, in future the 9 press spokespersons (*xinwen fayanren* 新闻发言人), using press conferences, exchanges of information, giving interviews, writing news articles, on-line exchanges, and other methods, are to make available to the media and to the public “authoritative” news as well as documents – also in the event of “sudden large-scale incidents in the religious realm.” They will be specially trained for this task by the State Administration for Religious Affairs. In

13 Gao Shining 2011, pp. 126 and 130.

14 Lam 2010, p. 61. In his article, he maintains, among other things, that the researchers of the 2010 Blue Book estimated the number of Catholics rather “progressively” at 6–12 million, and that they estimated the number of Protestants rather “conservatively” at 23.05 million.

15 “Christianity in Beijing – Past and Present”, *Xinhua* July 27, 2011.

16 Sun Shangyang – Li Ding 2011, quoted here from *xdo* Jan. 14, 2012.

addition to the usual organizations or pairs of organizations of the five religions, the Protestant YMCA/YWCA has also appointed a spokesperson to this position. The new “news release system” demonstrates clearly that the state religious authorities, when dealing with the Catholic Church, regard the Patriotic Association and the Bishops’ Conference as one single organization. The same is true on the Protestant side for the Three-Self-Movement and the Chinese Christian Council. – The spokespersons for each organization are:

Chinese Buddhist Association: Master Puzheng 普正, Director of the International Division, and Master Mingjie 明杰, Director of the Research Division

Chinese Daoist Association: Meng Zhiling 孟至岭, Daoist priest and Vice Secretary General, and Yin Zhihua 尹志华, Vice-Director of the Research Division

Chinese Islamic Association: Ma Zhongping 马中平 and Jin Rubin 金汝彬, both Vice Secretaries General

Chinese Catholic “One Association and One Conference” 中国天主教一会一团 [i.e. Patriotic Association and Bishops’ Conference]: Fr. Yang Yu 杨宇, Vice Secretary General [of the Bishop’s Conference]

Chinese Protestant “Two Committees” 中国基督教两会 [i.e. Three-Self-Movement and Chinese Christian Council]: Pastor Kan Baoping 阚保平, Director

Chinese YMCA/YWCA: Wang Chengsi 王承思, Executive Secretary for the Department for Projects and Training¹⁷

Buddhism

185 million consider themselves Buddhist, i.e. 18% of the adult population (CSLS, adopted in the BB).

17.3 million have taken the “triple refuge” (in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha), i.e., have formalized their conversion or adherence to Buddhism through ritual. They make up 1.7% of the adult population (CSLS); the BB speaks of a maximum of 20 million.

Of those who did not identify as Buddhist in the CSLS, “31 percent reported having at least one of Buddhist beliefs or participating in at least one of Buddhist practices.”

According to the CSLS, more than 12 percent of Chinese Communist Party members identify themselves as Buddhists.

Three kinds of Buddhists are identified by Wang Zhiyuan in the BB:

1. An elite group of intellectuals from Buddhist circles, science, culture, art, and education. In all, they number some 100,000. Wang describes their faith as “rational.” They are close to the traditional culture and see Buddhism as a value both for their own spiritual life and for the service of society.
2. Several million large and small “bosses” (*laozong* 老总) from business circles. Through their generosity they contribute much to the building up of the Buddhist

17 See the Dec. 22 *Xinhua* report (“Zhongguo quanguoxing zongjiao tuanti jianli xinwen fabu zhidu” 中国全国性宗教团体建立新闻发布制度) with photos and biographies of the spokespersons on the website of the State Administration for Religious Affairs at sara.gov.cn/xwzx/xwj/11900.htm.

- “hardware,” but they occasionally have also brought down upon Buddhism the charge of being corrupted by money. Wang sees their faith as being in transition from “emotional” to “rational.”
3. The “grass roots” of over 100 million ordinary city dwellers and farmers who have an “emotional” faith, praying for good fortune and to avoid misfortune. The average age of this group is growing steadily younger.¹⁸

Wang devotes an entire chapter in the BB to looking at the **numerical disparity between Buddhist temples and Buddhist believers**. Since the 1990s, the authorities have tried to prevent the construction of temples that do not have official state recognition, Wang writes; in 2010 the State Administration for Religious Affairs and the United Front Department of the Communist Party finally published a “Notice on further curbing the uncontrolled erection of temples and outdoor statues.” Wang argues that the prohibition and tearing down of so called “illegal” temples serves no purpose whatever as long as the number of authorized temples is so far removed from the actual needs. He cites the city of Beijing as one example: in 1958 there were 2,666 temples. Today only 200 of those temples have survived or been rebuilt, and of those 200 only 20 are currently recognized by the government as legal places of worship (the others are mainly devoted to tourism). Even if only 220,000 of the 22 million inhabitants of Beijing (migrants included) were Buddhists, Wang calculates that this would amount to 11,000 faithful for each legal temple.¹⁹

Daoism and Popular Religion

- 12 million of the adult population clearly identify with Daoism (CSLS).
 173 million “had some kind of Daoist practices, but they are difficult to differentiate from popular religion” (CSLS).

The BB gives no statistical information whatsoever on Daoism. Part II of the BB dedicates a separate chapter “On Folk Religions” (*minjian xinyang* 民间信仰) in its “Reports on Major Religions”²⁰ – the same with Confucianism by the way. However, it contains no statistics. The CSLS questioned people on popular religious beliefs and practices as well, and came to the following estimates (excluding those who identified themselves with an institutional religion):

- 215 million believe in the existence of ancestral spirits, 754 million practice some form of ancestor worship (such as attending and maintaining ancestral temples, venerating ancestor tablets, etc.).
 145 million “have observed *fengshui* restrictions or consulted a *fengshui* master in the last 12 months.”

18 Wang Zhiyuan 2011, p. 21.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 50-53. His numerical estimate for Beijing thus is close to the above-mentioned figures published by the local Bureau for Religious Affairs. The Chinese title of the document mentioned by Wang is: “Guanyu jinyibu zhizhi luanjian simiao he lutian zongjiao zaoxiang de tongzhi” 关于进一步制止乱建寺庙和露天宗教造像的通知.

20 For the article on popular religion in the 2010 Blue Book, see Hetmanczyk 2011.

- 141 million believe in the existence of the god of wealth (*caishen* 财神), and 119 million have a picture or statue of the god of wealth at home or in their workplace.
- 362 million in the previous 12 months “practiced divination one way or the other, including fortune-telling, face-reading, etc.”

Islam

The BB more or less repeats the statistics furnished by official Islamic sources (here the Chairman of the Chinese Islamic Association [CIA]):²¹

Muslims	23 million (CIA, BB)
Mosques	45,000 (CIA) 35,000 (BB)
Imams/Ahongs	50,000 (CIA) 40,000 (BB)
Qur’anic Institutes	10 (CIA, BB)

Protestant Christians

The results of the surveys mentioned at the beginning of this article are reassumed here:

- 23.05 million consider themselves Protestant Christians, of whom 67.5% have been baptized (CASS 2010).
- 30 million consider themselves Protestant Christians, of whom 38% have been baptized. An additional 40 million people “believe in the existence of Jesus Christ or have participated in Christian activities, even though they do not self-identify as Christian” (CSLS).
- 23.05–40 million Protestant Christians is the number given in the BB, among others on the basis of these surveys, including an upward margin of error. The much higher estimates of up to 130 million are rejected as speculative.

Thus, the statistics seem to level out at a maximum of 40 million Protestant Christians, since the 2007 survey conducted by the East China Normal University arrived at the same figure. A survey by the Protestant organization China Partner, present with offices in a number of Western countries, also arrived at a figure of 38–40 million Protestants in China from both registered and unregistered churches. The survey takers randomly interviewed 6,523 persons over 16 years of age in all of the provinces, autonomous regions (except Tibet), and municipalities of China, speaking directly to people of all walks of life on the street, in parks, on public transport, etc. The survey, which does not claim scientific accuracy, found the highest percentage of (Protestant) Christians in Fujian, Anhui, Zhejiang,

21 “Chen Guangyuan dangxuan xin yijie Zhongguo yisilanjiao xiehui huizhang” 陈广元当选新一届中国伊斯兰教协会会长 (Chen Guangyuan Elected Chairman of the Chinese Islamic Association for the New Term), *Xinhua* Sept. 15; Ma Jing – Min Junqing 2011, p. 96.

Henan, Shaanxi, Jiangsu, and Guangdong. The great majority of all those questioned were nevertheless Buddhists or without any religious affiliation.²²

Catholic Church

For the following statistics on the Catholic Church in Mainland China two sources, in particular, were compared: estimates of the Holy Spirit Study Centre (HSSC) of the Diocese of Hong Kong for the year 2011, which took into account both the state recognized official Church as well as the unofficial Church in the “underground,” and figures from the work report of the official Chinese Patriotic Association and the Chinese Bishops’ Conference (PA-BiCo) delivered at the 8th National Assembly of Catholic Representatives.²³ The BB and CSLS were also used for purposes of comparison. Another important source are the reports of the Catholic newspaper *Xinde* 信德 (Faith) (*xdb*) located in Shijiazhuang and its website www.xinde.org (*xdo*), whose information is sometimes picked up by the Vatican news agency *Fides* (*fi*) and the Catholic news agency *UCAN* (Hong Kong/Bangkok).

Catholics

unofficial estimate	12 million (HSSC)
official	6 million (PA-BiCo)

In a table in the BB, Wang Meixiu initially gives the number of 6 million reported by the official Catholic bodies, remarking in a footnote that it is a “long accepted reality” that the Catholic Church in the country “is split into two parts, one official and one unofficial.” The figure given in the table – she says – is simply that published by the official Church and is very incomplete. She then gives 12 million as the number determined by the HSSC, noting that the HSSC has been publishing this number since 2000 and thus apparently is assuming a very slow growth of the Catholic Church.²⁴ Anthony Lam of the HSSC says that the second reason for the difference in numbers is the “problem of illegal residents.” In many remote Catholic villages, he explains, there is a discrepancy between the number of registered and actual population.²⁵

The CSLS survey’s spectacularly low result of 3 million of the Chinese population over 16 years of age who identify themselves as Catholics was not repeated by the BB. Yang Fenggang gives two possible reasons for this number in his CSLS report: either the survey’s sampling process left out areas of Catholic concentration by chance or “the Catholic population has declined since the 1990s” due to shrinking family size and lack of new [adult] converts from non-Catholics. – In addition, Church statistics include the number of baptized children under 16 years of age and thus arrive at a higher number.

22 Bürklin 2008. *China heute* thanks Dr. Bürklin of China Partner for sending in his manuscript.

23 It was presented on December 7, 2010 by Bishop Ma Yinglin; for the statistical data, see: PA-BiCo, p. 6.

24 Wang Meixiu 2011, p. 119.

25 Lam 2010, p. 57.

Dioceses

HSSC	138 (116 active, 22 inactive)
official	97 (PA-BiCo)

Bishops

official	69 (HSSC)
underground	38 (HSSC)

Priests

Here, strangely enough, the number of priests given by the official Catholic bodies (PA-BiCo) is significantly higher than the figures of the HSSC for the priests in the official church.

Total	3,200 (HSSC), of whom
official	1,900 (HSSC)
underground	1,300 (HSSC)
[official?]	2,700 young and middle aged (PA-BiCo)

Seminaries [major and minor seminaries]

official	20 (HSSC)
underground	approximately 16 (HSSC)

Seminarians

official	560 in major seminaries (HSSC)
	550 in minor seminaries (HSSC)
underground	approximately 350 (HSSC)

The PA-BiCo reports a total number of 1,300 seminarians in both major and minor seminaries.

Sisters

Here, too, the number of sisters reported by the official Catholic bodies (PA-BiCo) is higher than the number of sisters in the official Church reported by the HSSC.

Total	5,000 (HSSC), of whom
official	3,400 (HSSC)
underground	1,600 (HSSC)
[official?]	5,000 in 106 convents/congregations (PA-BiCo)

Novitiates for Sisters

official	40 (HSSC)
underground	20 (HSSC)

Churches

6,300 (PA-BiCo)

In the Province of Hebei, the Catholic Church, as measured by the number of government registered organizations/places of worship, is the largest religion (CSLS).²⁶

Formation of the Laity

Here for the first time the PA-BiCo gives statistical data for the period 2005–2010. According to their figures, in 93 dioceses [in the area of the official Church] 4,700 persons took part in spiritual courses, 1,800 in courses for catechists, 20,000 in catechism classes, 2,200 in summer camps of various kinds, 5,000 in training courses for community leaders and 10,000 in liturgy classes. There were also 616 courses for those seeking baptism.

Social Institutions

According to the PA-BiCo the [official] Church operates 9 orphanages, 7 homes for mentally handicapped children, 52 old people’s homes, 136 clinics, 8 hospitals, 43 kindergartens, 1 vocational school and has supported the construction of 173 “Hope” Primary Schools. The PA-BiCo reports that 11 dioceses are involved in the care of AIDS patients and 21 dioceses in the care of lepers. – In 2009 the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (Xinde wenhua yanjiusuo 信德文化研究所) compiled a detailed, though incomplete, list of social institutions in the various dioceses.²⁷ The underground Church offers social services as well.



26 In this part of his presentation Yang Fenggang does not refer to his survey, but to the figures of the 2004 China Economic Census by the National Bureau of Statistics regarding the number of religious organizations registered with the government in China. There were 72,848 in total, including Christian churches, Muslim mosques, and Buddhist and Daoist temples (*ibid.*).

27 See Malek 2010, pp. 22-24.

Baptisms

The official leadership bodies of the Catholic Church in China continue to speak of 100,000 baptisms annually (PA-BiCo). In 2011, for the fourth year in a row, *Xinde* and the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies published statistics on baptisms at Easter, the most important date for baptisms. On that occasion, questionnaires were sent by e-mail and fax to those responsible in 101 dioceses, and the results were then confirmed by telephone. This process led to the figure of 21,287 Easter baptisms in the whole of China.²⁸ This figure, however, must be considered incomplete, writes *Xinde*, since some dioceses or parishes have not answered, did not register the number of baptisms exactly, or they had “many communities.” It is most likely that those baptized in underground communities are at most partially included in the *Xinde* statistics.

Xinde reported that of those baptized at Easter more than 80% were adults [i.e., not children of Catholic families, but first generation new Christians]. This demonstrates – thus *Xinde* – the growing importance being placed on evangelization by both clergy and laity – and this despite the fact that in the previous year they had “encountered very many challenges and difficulties.” *Xinde* has noted that efforts at evangelization are developing very unevenly from one region to the next. It calls on the parishes to register all baptisms since this information is also material which is historically important for the Chinese Church.

While baptisms in Mainland China, despite high numbers in some places, probably “just” match the number of deaths,²⁹ in Hong Kong the Church is growing steadily: since 2008 the diocese has registered more than 5,000 baptisms annually, a tendency which is on the increase. During the year 2010/2011 there were a total of 6,249 baptisms, of which approximately 3,500 took place at Easter of 2011 (for details, see below in the statistics for the Diocese of Hong Kong).

The following list, compiled by *Xinde*, shows the **number of Easter baptisms in 2011 for the individual dioceses** of Mainland China (the first number in each entry). In some cases the number of baptisms at other dates in 2011 are also indicated (in this case, the occasion is indicated after the number in parentheses; Pent. = Pentecost, Christ. = Christmas); these numbers generally refer to individual parishes, and not to the entire diocese.³⁰

Anhui: 67	Changzhi (SX): 151
Ankang (SN): 5	Chengde (Heb): 57
Anyang (Hen): 613, 56 (Christ.)	Chengdu (SC): 320
Bameng (NM): 140	Chibi (?) (HB): 200
Baoding (Heb): 33	Chifeng (NM): 245
Baotou (NM): 57	Chongqing: 500
Beijing: 440, 115 (Aug. 14)	Dali (YN): 20
Cangzhou (Heb): 400, 38 (Christ.)	Datong (SX): 33

28 “2011 nian fuhuojie: guonei jiaohui xinzeng jiaoyou 2 wan ren” 2011年复活节: 国内教会新增教友2万人 (Easter 2011: The Church in China Grows by 20,000 Faithful), *xdb* June 10.

29 See Malek 2011, p. 45.

30 Easter baptisms according to: “Gedi jiaohui 2011 nian fuhuojie lingxi renshu tongjibiao” 各地教会2011年复活节领洗人数统计表 (Statistics of Baptisms at Easter 2011 Listed by Locality), *xdb* June 10. The figures for baptisms on other occasions were taken from individual reports on *xdo*.

Fengxiang (SN): 160	Qinghai: 16
Fenyang (SX): 213	Sanyuan (SN): 330
Fuzhou (FJ): 500	Shanghai: 87*
Guangxi: 385	Shangqiu (Hen): 137
Guangzhou (GD): 113	Shantou (GD): 25
Guizhou: 144	Shenzhen (GD): 98
Haimen (JS): 42	Shijiazhuang (Heb): 61
Hainan: 11	Shuozhou (SX): 233
Handan (Heb): 960	Suzhou (JS): 32
Hangzhou (ZJ): 300	Taiyuan (SX): 559, 45 (Dec. 30)
Hanzhong (SN): 90	Taizhou (ZJ): 40
Heilongjiang: 230*	Tangshan (Heb): 378
Hengshui (Heb): 400, 14 (May 6)	Tianjin: 338*, 243 (May 28), 270 (Dec. 17)
Heze (SD): 106	Tianshui (GS): 107
Hohhot (NM): 149	Tibet: 11
Hunan: 60	Wanzhou (CQ): 500, 80 (Christ.)
Jiangmen (GD): 45	Weifang (SD): 39
Jiangxi: 187	Weinan (SN): 118
Jilin: 81*	Wenzhou (ZJ): 859
Jinan (SD): 256, 12 (Pent.)	Wuhan (HB): 150
Jingzhou (HB): 15	Xi'an (SN): 233
Jining (NM): 120	Xiamen (FJ): 110
Jinzhong (SX): 50	Xiangfan (HB): 24
Kaifeng (Hen): 184	Xichang (SC): 106, 15 (Christ.)
Kunming (YN): 140	Xingtai (Heb): 1,472
Lanzhou (GS): 71	Xinjiang [Urumqi]: 35
Leshan (SC): 316	Xinxiang (Hen): 68
Liaocheng (SD): 93	Xinyang (Hen): 94
Liaoning: 902	Xuzhou (JS): 210, 16 (Pent.)
Linfen (SX): 122	Yan'an (SN): 411
Linyi (SD): 996	Yantai (SD): 7
Luoyang (Hen): 86	Yanzhou (SD): 207
Meizhou (GD): 165*	Yibin (SC): 40, 97 (Christ.)
Minbei (FJ): 37	Yichang (HB): 40
Mindong (FJ): 26	Yuncheng (SX): 157
Nanchong (SC): 500	Zhangjiakou (Heb): 34
Nanjing (JS): 75	Zhanjiang (GD): 100
Nanyang (Hen): 602	Zhaotong (YN): 20
Ningbo (ZJ): 392	Zhengzhou (Hen): 60
Ningxia: 32	Zhoucun (SD): 264
Pingliang (GS): 35	Zhouzhi (SN): 470
Puyang (Hen): 130	Zhumadian (Hen): 120
Qingdao (SD): 83	

* Statistics available for only some parishes of the diocese.

Bishops Who Died During the Year 2011

1. Hao Jinli 郝进礼, Andrew (1916–2011), Xiwanzi (Heb)
2. Hu Daguo 胡大国, Augustine (1922–2011), Shiqian (GZ)
3. Li Hongye 李宏业, Peter (1920–2011), Luoyang (Hen)
4. Lü Shouwang 吕守旺, Francis (1966–2011), Yichang (HB)
5. Zong Changfeng 宗长风, Anthony (1932–2011), Kaifeng (Hen)

Bishops Consecrated During the Year 2011

1. Liang Jiansen 梁建森, Paul (born 1964), Jiangmen (GD), March 30, 2011
2. Lü Peisen 吕培森, John (born 1966), Yanzhou (SD), May 20, 2011
3. Sun Jigen 孙继根, Joseph (born 1967), Handan (Heb), June 21, 2011
4. Lei Shiyin 雷世银, Paul (born 1963), Leshan (SC), June 29, 2011*
5. Huang Bingzhang 黄炳章, Joseph (born 1967), Shantou (GD), July 14, 2011*
6. Luo Xuegang 罗雪刚, Peter (born 1964), Yibin (SC), November 30, 2011
7. Wang Ruowang 王若望, John (approx. 50 years of age), Tianshui (GS), 2011 (date unknown)³¹

* Consecrated without appointment by the Holy See, which then announced his excommunication.

Installation of “Underground Bishops” as Government Recognized Bishops in the Year 2011

Zhu Baoyu 朱宝玉, Joseph, installed as official bishop of Nanyang (Hen). In 2010 Pope Benedict had accepted the resignation of Bishop Zhu who is 90 years old.

Overview of Episcopal Ordinations Since the End of the Cultural Revolution

Number of Bishops consecrated between 1979 and 2010 according to the Patriotic Association of the Chinese Catholic Church and the official Bishops’ Conference. Wang Meixiu presented these figures in the BB. They concern the number of episcopal consecrations which took place officially and with the approval of the Chinese government [i.e., irrespective of whether or not they also had a Papal mandate either prior to or following the ordination].³²

1979:	1
1980–1986:	22
1987–1992:	30+
1993–1998:	18
1999–2004:	23
2005–2010:	[25] 27

In *Tripod* (No. 163, Fall 2011) Giancarlo Politi presents the **list of names of 75 “underground” bishops consecrated without official government permission between**

31 There is no report on this episcopal ordination, though *UCAN* does allude to it in a report of Jan. 11, 2012.

32 Wang Meixiu 2011, p. 119, Table 2. For the period 2005–2010 she has added to the 25 bishops’ ordinations listed in PA-BiCo two [former underground] bishops who were officially installed during this period of time.

1981 and 2002. According to Politi, one knows of a total of 82 bishops who were consecrated in this way. Since this data is not readily available elsewhere, we reproduce below his list with the year, the number of those consecrated that year, together with their names and their dioceses. On Politi's list, an asterisk (*) after the name identifies 6 out of the 75 bishops who later received official recognition by the government.

- 1981: 7 – Wang Milu, Tianshui (GS); Jia Zhiguo, Zhengding (Heb); Zhang Chenguo, Siping (JL); Zhou Fangji, Yixian (Heb); Zhang Huaixin, Anyang (Heb); Yu Chengti, Hanzhong (SN); Yang Libo, Lanzhou (GS).
- 1982: 15 – Min Xilian, Zhaoxian (Heb); Fan Yufei, Zhouzhi (SN); Sun Yuanmo*, Hongdong (SX); Song Weili, Langfang (Heb); Chen Jianzhang, Baoding (Heb); Han Jingtao, Siping (JL); Liu Shuhe, Yixian (Heb); Li Side, Tianjin; Shi Hongzhen, Tianjin; Shi Enxiang, Yixian (Heb); Liu Guandong, Yixian (Heb); Shi Hongchen*, Tianjin; Li Weidao*, Changzhi (SX); Zheng Shouduo*, Yuncheng (SX); Xiao Liren, Xingtai (Heb).
- 1983: 5 – Lu Zhensheng, Tianshui (GS); Li Xinzheng, Tianshui (GS); Li Zhenrong, Xianxian (Heb); Wang Chonglin, Zhaoxian (Heb); Ma Zhongmu, Otoqe Qianqi (NM).
- 1984: 8 – Liu Hede, Hankou (HB); Xie Shiguang, Mindong (FJ); Yang Xiaohuai, Hankou (HB); Meng Ziwen, Nanning (GX); Ye Ershi, Fuzhou (FJ); Hao Zhenli, Chongli (Heb); Zhu Yousan, Baoding (Heb); Li Congzhe, Hohhot (NM).
- 1985: 2 – Huang Shoucheng, Funing (FJ); Fan Zhongliang, Shanghai.
- 1986: 1 – Zhang Boren, Hanyang (HB).
- 1987: 5 – Yang Shudao, Fuzhou (FJ); Shi Chunjie, Baoding (Heb); Zong Huaide*, Sanyuan (SN); Li Hongye, Luoyang (Hen); Hu Daguo, Shiqian (GZ).
- 1989: 13 – Guo Wenzhi, Qiqihar (HL); Pei Shangde, Beijing; Jiang Liren, Hohhot (NM); Li Bingyao, Heze (SD); Yuan Wenzai, Haimen (JS); An Shi'en, Daming (Heb); Liang Xisheng, Kaifeng (Hen); Liu Difen, Anguo (Heb); Zhang Jingmu, Xuanhua (Heb); Zhao Zhendong, Xuanhua (Heb); Han Dingxiang, Handan [Yongnian] (Heb); Yu Chengxin, Hanzhong (SN); Gao Yuchen, Jingxian (Heb).
- 1990: 1 – Zeng Jingmu, Yujiang (JX).
- 1991: 3 – Gu Zheng, Xining (QH); Zhang Weizhu, Xinxiang (Hen); Xie Tingzhe, Urumqi (XJ).
- 1992: 2 – Zhang Qingtian, Yixian (Heb); Lin Xili, Wenzhou (ZJ).
- 1993: 4 – Jin Dechen, Nanyang (Hen); Su Zhemin, Baoding (Heb); An Shuxin*, Baoding (Heb); Gao Kexian, Yantai (SD).
- 1994: 1 – Li Zhiyuan, Shenyang (LN).
- 1995: 2 – Zhu Baoyu, Nanyang (Hen); Wei Jingyi, Qiqihar (HL).
- 1996: 1 – Zhang Zhiyong, Fengxiang (SN).
- 1997: 2 – Chen Cangbao, Yixian (Heb); Lin Jiashan, Fuzhou (FJ).
- 2000: 2 – Jiang Mingyuan, Zhaoxian (Heb); Lan Shi, Sanyuan (SN).
- 2002: 1 – Yao Liyang, Xiwanzi (Heb).
- since 2003: „only a few.“³³

33 Politi 2011, pp. 11-16.

In the same issue of *Tripod*, Anthony Lam indicates that some of the bishops consecrated under Pope Pius XII (1949–1955), and who were active in the official Church, also performed episcopal consecrations in secret. Bishop Han Tingbi of Hongdong (SX), e.g., who belonged to the official Church, secretly consecrated four bishops, who some years later – between the middle of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s – were officially installed in their dioceses. According to Lam, observers have estimated that there were more than 80 secret episcopal consecrations between 1980 and 1993 (N.B. These figures deviate from those given by Politi, which goes to show just how difficult it is to obtain reliable statistics in this area).³⁴

Ordinations to the Priesthood

According to the official statistics (PA-BiCo) between 2005–2010 a total of 300 priests were ordained. The following figures for the year 2011 are incomplete (statistics from the underground are lacking, among other things). The numbers are lower than those of the previous year.³⁵



Ordination to the priesthood in Handan on March 25, 2011.
Photo: *xdo*.

- Bameng (NM): 2
- Haimen (JS): 2
- Handan (Heb): 6
- Hengshui (Heb): 2
- Jinzhong (SX): 5
- Linyi (SD): 2
- Minbei (FJ): 1 (by Bishop Cai Bingrui of Xiamen)
- Ningbo (ZJ): 1
- Qingdao (SD): 1
- Shantou (GD): 3 (by Bishop Shen Bin of Haimen)
- Taizhou (ZJ): 3
- Yan'an (SN): 3
- Yanzhou (SD): 1

³⁴ See Lam 2011, pp. 27-28 and 23.

³⁵ Figures according to reports in *xdb*, *xdo*, *fi*, and *UCAN*.

Religious Sisters: Profession of Vows

Here, too, the statistics (all taken from *xdo*) are only partial.

Baoding (Heb): 2 perpetual vows

Cangzhou (Heb): 2 perpetual vows



Professed sisters wearing their crowns of flowers in Cangzhou (Xianxian). Photo: *xdo*.

Haimen (JS): 1 perpetual vows

Hunan, Laohekou: 2 perpetual vows

Lanzhou (GS): 5 perpetual vows (Servants of the Holy Spirit)

Liaoning: 9 perpetual vows (of whom 5 for the Sacred Heart of Jesus Sisters in Fushun and 4 for the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Shenyang)

Nanchong (SC): 4 perpetual vows

Qingdao (SD): 2 first vows

Suzhou (JS): 15 temporal vows

Taiyuan (SX): 4 perpetual vows

Wenzhou (ZJ): 4 perpetual vows

Xi'an (SN): 1 first, 5 perpetual vows

Yuncheng (SX): 5 perpetual vows



Profession of vows in Xi'an on October 21, 2011. Photo: *xdo*.

Major Seminaries: Graduates and New Students

Xinde published the numbers of graduates of the 10 official major seminaries at the end of the 2010/2011 academic year and the number of new students for the fall of 2011.³⁶ The

36 "Hebei shenzhexueyuan juxing biye dianli. Jin xia guonei qi suo da xiu-yuan gongyou biye daxiusheng 110 wei" 河北神哲学院举行毕业典礼. 今夏国内七所大修院共有毕业大修生110位 (Graduation Ceremonies at the Philosophical-Theological Seminary of Hebei. This Summer 110 Seminarians Graduated from 7 Major Seminar-

figures show that the total number of candidates for priesthood has declined once again. However, it must be pointed out that many seminaries only begin new classes every second year.

Seminary	Graduates 2011	New Students 2011
Beijing (Diocesan seminary)	4	9
Beijing (National seminary)	none	9
Jilin (Diocesan seminary)	none	none
Pixian (Regional Seminary Sichuan / Southwest China)	24	8
Shanghai Sheshan (Regional seminary)	14	9
Shenyang Seminary	9	none
Shijiazhuang (Hebei Regional Seminary)	26	31
Taiyuan (Shanxi Regional Seminary)	none	none
Wuhan (Regional Seminary Central and South China)	19	13
Xi'an (Shaanxi Regional Seminary)	14	none
Total	110	79

New and Renovated Churches

The dimensions of new church buildings run the gamut from modest to gigantic. Larger churches are often multi-story constructions and contain, in addition to the actual worship space, additional rooms for parish activities, offices, and living rooms for priests. Most new churches tend to be built in the Gothic style as in the past. Churches built with traditional Chinese architectural features and style continue to remain the exception. There are still many church buildings seized or destroyed during the Cultural Revolution which have not yet been returned, or are only now being given back, as can be seen from the following examples from *Xinde*.

Baoding (Heb), Xushui County, Suicheng Village: The church, built in 1901, was expropriated during the Cultural Revolution and only returned in 2011. It had to be razed to the ground due to its ruinous condition. Within two months, the parish built a new church by its own hands. The photo (below) shows the blessing (*xdo* Sept. 1).



ies in China), *xdb* June 22; “Quanguo: liuzuo daxiuyuan gong zhaosheng 79 ren” 全国: 六座大修院共招生79人 (For All of China: 6 Major Seminaries Accepted a Total of 79 New Students), *xdb* Sept. 8.

Baotou (NM), Ershisiqingdi Parish: Blessing of a marble statue of Mary in traditional Mongolian women's dress in "Mary's Square" (8.42 m high – including base). According to *Xinde*, the indigenous local faithful have baptized the statue "Our Lady of Mongolia." With a space of 7,488 m², green plots, fountain, and color illumination the site, which has only recently been returned to the Church, is the "largest Catholic square in Inner Mongolia." The government has declared the church, built in 1904, together with the Bishop's Chapel and the attached buildings, to be a provincial level cultural monument and has invested 3 million Yuan in its expansion as a religious-cultural tourist area. They began in 2009 with measures for the salvage and renovation of the old buildings. The parish priest collected historical photos, Mass vestments, prayer books, etc. for an exhibition on the history of the parish – the first of its kind in Inner Mongolia. Ershisiqingdi is the cradle of the Church in the Diocese of Baotou (*xdb* Aug. 20).

Chengdu (SC), City of Jiangyou, Zhongba: Blessing of Sacred Heart Church, which was rebuilt after the 2008 earthquake. Throughout the diocese 18 churches have to be rebuilt following the 2008 earthquake (*xdb* May 20).

Hanzhong (SX), Xixiang Parish: The original church, dating from 1870, was destroyed in the earthquake of 2008. It was rebuilt in a mixed Chinese/Western style (*fi* June 9).



Stylistically an exception – the rebuilt Church of Xixiang.
Photo: *xdo*.

Hengshui (Heb), Ping'andian: Blessing of a new church together with the baptism of 14 catechumens (*fi* May 11).

Jinan (SD), Tai'an, Xintai City, Ningjiagou Village: St. Mary's Church. In this village a very high percentage of the population is Catholic (*fi* June 5).

Lanzhou (GS), Longxi: Dedication of the new St. Paul's Church (*xdb* Dec. 8).

Linfen (SX), Zhaocheng Parish, Nanyidian outstation: Erection of the cross on the new church under the patronage of Mary Help of Christians on May 24. After the solemn pon-



tifical high Mass, presided over by Bishop Huo Cheng of Fenyang, all those present joined in praying the prayer of Pope Benedict XVI to Our Lady of Sheshan. The parish community numbers 210 Catholics, who up to this point had no choice but to meet for worship in their private homes (*fi* May 31).

Erection of the cross in Nanyidian.
Photo: *xdo*.

Meizhou (GD), Zijin County, Lashi Village: Renovation of the church built in 1916 and dedicated to Mary Help of Christians (*xdb* June 10).

Ningxia, Zhongwei City: New four-story church. The first church from 1924, together with its hospital and school, was confiscated during the 1950s. A small chapel, built after the policy of reform and opening, had to give way to city planning. The very day that this new church was dedicated the first session of a course of ongoing formation for 70 catechists was held there (*fi* June 5).

Taiyuan (SX), Guchengying: Dedication of the new Church of Christ the King (*fi* June 5).

Tangshan (Heb), Qian'an City, Panying Village: This is a reconstruction. The original church from the year 1905 was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (*xdo* Oct. 5).

Wenzhou (ZJ), Yueqing City, Wengyang Town: According to reports, the church is currently the largest church of South Zhejiang. It has 4 floors together with additional rooms, among which is a basement in which up to 1,500 people can sit down to eat at the same time. It cost 20 million Yuan (*xdo* Oct. 1).



Immense size:
The new four-story
church in Wengyang.
Photo: *xdo*.



Zhoucun (SD), County/Parish of Boxing, Futian: Blessing of the new village church dedicated to Jesus the Good Shepherd (*fi* June 5; Photo: *xdo*).

Zhouzhi (SN), Liujiazhuang: Erection of the cross on the newly built Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, which replaces a church built in 1984 that had become dilapidated and was also too small for the growing congregation (*xdo* Nov. 13).



Zhouzhi (SN), Meixian, Calvary Mount (Shizishan): Blessing of a 4 m high bronze statue of Christ carrying his cross on the newly laid out pilgrimage square. The pilgrimage originated with Fr. Charles Liu, who had studied at the Collegio della Sacra Famiglia (Holy Family College) in Naples, Italy, and who, before returning to China in 1717, petitioned Pope Pius VI to create a sanctuary for the Chinese people. The pilgrimage has been carried out ever since the completion of the sanctuary

complex in 1777. In 1932 the Calvary Mount Sanctuary was entrusted to the Diocese of Zhouzhi. In 1984 the complex, which had been heavily damaged during the Cultural Revolution, was given back to the Church. Tens of thousands pilgrims from all over China come to take part in the twice yearly pilgrimages in May (Finding of the Holy Cross) and in September (Exaltation of the Holy Cross) (*fi* Sept. 15; *xdb* May 1; Photo: *xdo*).



Zhumadian (Hen), Zhumadian City: Dedication of a new church which includes rooms for parish activities, living rooms, and offices. The construction cost 2 million Yuan (*xdb* July 10; Photo: *xdo*).

Statistical Data for Individual Dioceses

These figures come from media reports on Church affairs during the past year. They give an idea of the proportional sizes of the dioceses of Mainland China. Only a few dioceses have more than 100,000 Catholics. There is also a very wide variation in the ratios of faithful to priests and religious sisters.

Fengxiang (SN): 20,000 Catholics in 4 deaneries and 30 parishes, [1 bishop,] 38 priests (of whom 18 are religious order priests) as well as 60 religious sisters belonging to 3 different congregations (Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Sacred Heart Sisters and the Little Sisters of St. Thérèse). The diocese has two Marian shrines and provides various social services such as clinics and an orphanage (*fi* Sept. 19).

Handan (Heb): 130,000 Catholics, [2 bishops,] 75 priests, 130 Sisters of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, 110 Sisters of the Mother of Our Lord (*xdb* April 10).

Hanzhong (SN): 21,000 Catholics, 2 bishops, 33 priests, 7 seminarians, 20 parishes, 22 chapels, 3 clinics (*fi* June 9).

Jiangmen (GD): almost 20,000 Catholics, 7 priests, 26 sisters, since 2011 there is a bishop, Bishop Liang Jiansen (*xdb* April 10).

Jinzhong (Yuci) (SX): 20,000 Catholics, [1 bishop,] 30 priests, 29 seminarians, approximately 30 sisters, one clinic offering both traditional Chinese as well as Western medicine (*fi* Aug. 30).

Kangding (SC): 13,000 Catholics, 3 priests, 2 sisters. The see, which is vacant, lies in the Autonomous Tibetan Prefecture of Kardze, and is currently being administered by the Diocese of Leshan (*UCAN* Sept. 6).

Liaoning: The Diocese of Liaoning was created in 1983 by placing together the 4 Dioceses of Shenyang, Yingkou, Fushun, und Rehe. Over 100,000 Catholics, 1 bishop, 90 priests, 2 sisters' congregations (the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary with more than 100 members and the Sacred Heart of Jesus Sisters with 70 members), 1 major seminary in Shenyang, 5 homes for the aged, 3 clinics run by sisters and 3 diocesan social service centers (*fi* June 27).

Luoyang (Hen): Due to the shortage of priests, finances, and places of worship (there is only one church open in the entire diocese) this is one of the least developed dioceses in all of Mainland China. It has approximately 10,000 Catholics, 18 priests in the underground and one official priest. At present there is no bishop, Bishop Peter Li Hongye who had been active in the underground having died in 2011 (*UCAN* April 26).

Nanyang (Hen): 20,000 Catholics, 2 bishops, 21 priests (*UCAN* June 30).

Taizhou (ZJ): 5,000 Catholics, 1 bishop, 7 priests (*xdb* Jan. 1).

Wuhan (HB): The Dioceses of Hankou, Hanyang, and Wuchang were combined in 2000 to create the Diocese of Wuhan. The diocese has 25 official priests and 40 priests in the underground, who care for a total of 20,000 Catholics. The see is currently vacant (*UCAN* June 1).

Xiamen (FJ): 30,000 Catholics, [1 bishop,] a dozen priests, 15 sisters (*fi* Dec. 5).

Yan'an (Yulin) (SN): 50,000 Catholics in an area of 80,000 km², [2 bishops,] 20 priests, 10 seminarians, 24 sisters in 2 congregations, the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of China and the Missionaries of Mary. There are 20 churches and 20 other meeting places, 3 rural clinics and one Catholic elementary school (*fi* Sept. 1).

Yanzhou (SD): 10,000 Catholics, 7 priests, since 2011 there is a bishop, Bishop Lü Peisen (*AsiaNews* May 20).

Yichang (HB): 30,000 Catholics, 24 priests, 12 sisters. Bishop Lü Shouwang died in 2011 and the see is currently vacant (*fi* July 5).

Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong

Measured by the number of the faithful, Hong Kong is the largest Chinese diocese. The following figures reflect the situation of the diocese as of August 31, 2011. They were taken from the website of the diocese.³⁷

Catholics	363,000 (local residents), to which are added 138,000 foreign Catholics (non-residents of other nationalities living in Hong Kong), of whom 120,000 are Filipino
Parishes	51, of which 21 are under the direction of diocesan priests and 30 under the direction of religious order priests
Places of religious service	40 churches, 31 chapels, 26 halls
Bishops	2
Diocesan Priests	69, of whom 68 are Chinese
Religious Order Priests	239, of whom 63 are Chinese, belonging to 17 congregations
Deacons	17, of whom 15 are permanent deacons
Religious Order Brothers	65, of whom 31 are Chinese, belonging to 9 congregations
Religious Sisters	491, of whom 345 are Chinese, belonging to 28 congregations
Seminarians	27 (11 from the Diocese of Hong Kong, 3 from other dioceses, 13 from religious orders)

³⁷ www.catholic.org.hk/v2/en/cdhk/a08statistics.html, additional information from archives.catholic.org.hk/Statistic/2011-C.htm.

Novices	10 in men's congregations, 18 in women's congregations
Baptisms in one year (Sept. 1, 2010 until Aug. 31, 2011)	6,249, of which 1,121 were up to 1 year of age, 1,972 were from 1–7 years, 3,156 over the age of 7
Marriages	1,332, of which 288 between Catholics, 1,033 having one non-Catholic partner
Catechists	1,547, of whom 39 are employed as such, and 1,535 are volunteers
Educational Institutions	276 with 189,575 students, of which 33 are kindergartens (with 10,554 children), 110 primary schools (with 70,181 pupils), 87 secondary and middle schools (with 84,713 students), 2 vocational schools (with 530 students), 35 adult education facilities, 7 special schools, 2 post-secondary schools (with 1,445 students)
Social Services	42 Caritas Social & Family Service Centers, 6 hospitals with 2,722 beds, 12 clinics and hospital out-patients departments, 16 nursery & child care centers, 7 homes for girls, 14 homes for the aged with 1,666 places, 20 youth centers, 20 centers for the elderly, 13 home-care services, 28 rehabilitation centers

The number of Hong Kong Catholics has grown steadily in the last ten years, as can be demonstrated by an analysis of the annual statistics of *Hong Kong Catholic Church Directory* from 1954 to 2010 conducted by the diocese: From 2008 until today, more than 5,000 persons have been baptized each year, of whom more than half were adults. On average, about 8,000 persons request baptism each year. At the same time, the number of parishes has decreased from 62 in 1995 to today's 51, but the total number of church buildings has increased, so that fewer school auditoriums need to be borrowed to serve as places of worship. Since there are few vocations, the ratio of faithful per priest is steadily increasing; in 2010 the ratio was 1:1,200. The percentage of Catholic pupils among the Catholic school population has sunk continuously and noticeably, from 33% in 1958 to only 8% in 2010 (UCAN Feb. 1, 2012).

Catholic Church in Taiwan

The figures published by the Bishops' Conference of Taiwan, which are given here to complement the picture, are those from the year 2009.³⁸

Catholics	299,938
Dioceses	7 and 1 apostolic administration
Bishops	15
Parishes	378

38 "Taiwan Catholic Church Statistics in 2009."

Priests	682 (of whom 259 are diocesan and 423 religious order priests; 357 are foreigners)
Brothers	93 (of whom 60 are foreigners)
Sisters	1,053 (of whom 278 are foreigners)
Seminarians	65 (in 2 major seminaries)
Catechists	321
Educational Institutions	5 colleges and universities (44,976 students), 1 catechetical school (8 students), 2 language schools (1,577 students), 4 technical schools (3,321 students), 29 middle schools (61,510 pupils), 2 vocational training centers, 11 primary schools, 167 kindergartens, 41 student hostels
Publications and Media	8 publishing houses, 2 weekly newspapers, 4 audiovisual programs, 2 radio stations
Social Facilities	10 hospitals, 7 clinics, 15 orphanages, 20 homes for the aged, 19 retarded children centers, 4 family and women's service centers for Taiwan's indigenous peoples, 4 facilities offering day care for the aged

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