



Upon the Map of China
Rests the Shrine and
Our Lady of She Shan
Through Whom We Pray
"There may be one fold
and one shepherd"

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

His Eminence
Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin-Mei
Honorary Chairman

Most Rev. Walter W. Curtis
*Founding Chairman
(Deceased)*

Joseph M.C. Kung
President

Max L.P. Mak
Treasurer

Brother Paul Ambrose, FMS
Rev. Monsignor Eugene V. Clark, Ph.D.
Father Raymond V. Dunn, S.J., J.D.
Rev. Monsignor Nicholas V. Grieco
Agnes Y.H. Kung

LEGAL COUNSEL

Brian T. O'Connor

ADVISORS

DIocese of Bridgeport

Most Rev. Edward M. Egan
Bishop of Bridgeport

U.S.A.

Father Paul Chan
Rev. Monsignor Andrew T. Cusack
Father Charles Jan DiMascola
Father Robert J. Fox
Rev. Monsignor William A. Genuario
William A. Marra, Ph.D.
Sister Daniel Marie McCabe, CSJ
Father John P. McGuire, O.P.
Eleanor Schlafly
Father Jerome Vereb, C.P.

TAIWAN

Most Rev. Stanislaus Lo Kuang
Mark T.Y. Nieh

THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 8086, Ridgeway Center
Stamford, CT 06905, U.S.A.

Tel 203-329-9712 Fax 203-329-8415 E-Mail JMKUNG@AOL.Com
WebPage: <http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org>

Easter 1999

Dear Friends:

May the Risen Savior Bless You and Fill Your Home With His Loving Presence

January 31, 1999 - This Foundation reported the arrests of two priests on January 25, 1999 together with some faithful, possibly also priests and seminarians in Hebei Province.

January 30, 1999 - This Foundation reported the arrests of two priests, and savage beatings of other Catholics during Pentecost Sunday, 1988 and the week after.

January 29, 1999 - UCA news reported the Chinese government's violence and harassment, including brutal beatings, detentions, heavy fines, against underground Catholic peasants in Baoding Diocese in Hebei around Christmas 1998.

January 5, 1999 - The Vatican's FIDES news agency released news that underground Roman Catholic priests were subjected to sexual blackmail during detention. Such sexual blackmail was also reported by this Foundation last year on February 20, 1998.

October 13, 1998 - This Foundation reported how the Chinese government stopped underground Roman Catholic religious celebrations on August 15, 1998, the Feast of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by levying heavy fines, and arresting priests, nuns and laymen.

Please visit our web-site at the address shown on this letterhead for further details of these events.

The Chinese government has apparently adopted a **terrorist policy** to prevent religious celebrations on any major feast day which underground Catholics observe. This terrorist policy includes, but is not limited to, savage beatings, heavy fines, detentions, suspension from schools for children, confiscation of farmland, and suspension of water and power supply to homes. Any five families found praying together in the underground church are now liable to be charged with illegal gathering. Any three families found gathering together are liable to be fined or to have their water and power supply cut off.

China insists that it has religious freedom. Yet, the fact that underground Catholics are treated as criminals by Chinese government officials for practicing their faith strongly suggests otherwise. **If the Chinese government truly advocates religious freedom, then it should demonstrate this intent by investigating the aforementioned brutal incidents and punishing those responsible by law. Otherwise, one must reasonably conclude that these horrific acts against religious activities are state-sponsored or tolerated terrorism, and that the Chinese government is duplicitous by merely paying lip service to religious freedom and human rights.** The communist government does not understand, but history has shown, that persecution has never stopped religious worship. The faithful is always "*judged worthy of ill-treatment for the sake of Christ*" (Acts 5:41). Truly, "*Blest are those persecuted for holiness' sake, the reign of God is theirs*" (Mt 5:10).

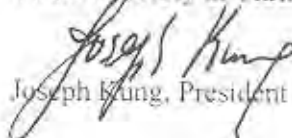
In the meantime, *Catholic New York*, a diocesan newspaper of the Archdiocese of New York, published an article "God Still Present" on December 3, 1998. This article completely ignored the ongoing vicious persecution of the underground Roman Catholic Church, and grossly misled the public about the true situation of the Roman Catholic Church in China. *Catholic New York* refused to publish my letter of rebuttal (see pages 3-5).

When you attend Easter Mass on April 4, please remember our suffering underground Roman Catholic Church in China. Not only will there be no public Mass legally available for the underground Church, but underground Catholics will also likely be subjected to pre-emptive strikes.

from the government authorities to prevent them from gathering together to worship during the Holy week. Please pray to St. Joseph, patron saint of China, to continue to give the underground church the wisdom to articulate the truth, the grace to defend the faith, and the courage to withstand the onslaught of betrayal from some of their own church officials overseas - "never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection or implored thy help was left unaided". May our brothers and sisters who chose to be separated from our Lord return to the one fold and one Shepherd.

Happy Easter.

Yours sincerely in Christ,


Joseph Kung, President

Holy See's suggestion for a Nunciature in Beijing triggers mixed feelings **Rome (Fides) – February 17, 1999**

A suggestion voiced by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Holy See Secretary of State, on February 11th, about opening a Nunciature in Beijing (or rather "moving it back to Beijing, where it was before), is provoking waves of discussion and supposition in the Chinese world. There is discussion above all in the ecclesiastical world of mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Because of the beginning of the Lunar Year on February 16th (of the Rabbit), Chinese government offices are closed and no official reactions have been noted for at least a week.

Cardinal Paul Shan, Archbishop of Kaohsiung (Taiwan) spoke to Fides about the news: "Taiwan newspapers were very critical of the statement made by Cardinal Sodano, but I defended him. The Holy See has neither political nor ideological interests. Cardinal Sodano's proposal stems only from pastoral concern and love for the Christians of mainland China. It is a question of religious matters and religious freedom, and not of economic, military or financial problems. Unfortunately because religious freedom is not guaranteed I doubt whether the Holy See will be able to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing. Today not even a minimum of religious freedom is guaranteed in China"

Bishop Andrew Tsien, of Hualian, who has many connections with the Christian communities in mainland China, says sadly "the Chinese authorities see the Vatican as a political State, rather than a moral organization. This explains why they put so many conditions to establishing diplomatic relations. Beijing is bound to reject Cardinal Sodano's latest proposal"

Fides also spoke to Bishop Xu Zhixuan Auxiliary of Wanxian (Sichuan). With Bishop Matthew Duan Yinmin, he was invited to Rome for the Asian Synod, but the Chinese government refused to give them permits to leave the country. Bishop Xu had this to say: "Deep in my heart, I hope the day (when a Nunciature is opened in Beijing), will soon come. This is something for which we have always prayed. But taking an objective look at the situation I have to say it will not be easy. The first problem is the faculty to appoint bishops, which the Vatican cannot discuss and on which there can be no compromise. On the other hand I doubt that the Chinese government will be willing to give in on this point. Whereas I do not see relations with Taiwan presenting a problem. However we will of course continue to pray that the day may come soon. Much has been said recently on the subject. Some people, with every good intention, are pushing for diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Beijing, but the question is still complex. All things considered many obstacle remain along the way. In my opinion Cuba's relation could be a model for us. Of course there are political, ideological and development problems which are difficult to overcome, but I would be prudent about a concrete possibility. We will continue to pray to the Holy Spirit, as we have always done, that He will guide us on the path towards this goal. Chinese Catholics have always recognized the Pope as their Shepherd. I would like to ask the Pope to continue to pray for the people and the Church in China."

A priest in Beijing, who asked not to be named, had this to say: "Chinese political rulers have yet to recognize that religions have a role in the development of society and in supporting the ethical aspects of co-existence. It will be difficult to make them understand the importance of diplomatic relations between the Holy see and Beijing. For the Chinese government the main challenges today are economic recovery and reduction of unemployment. I fear it will be difficult to make any headway solely at the diplomatic level. Rome and the Church have always had a friendly attitude towards the country and this has been encouraging for Chinese Christians, strengthening their faith. The government feels the pressure of the Catholics' presence and the aspirations."

From Hong Kong there have been no reactions from the local Church, at least so far. Because of the new Lunar Year festivities, newspapers, media and offices are running at a minimum. One observer from China commented: "Even silence on the part of the authorities is a good sign. At times a hasty response may seem more like a slogan. Perhaps we can expect an answer from President Jiang Zemin when he visits Italy next month."

--End--

Remembering Dr. William A. Marra

Dr. William A. Marra, an advisor to the Cardinal Kung Foundation, a professor, a lecturer well over a thousand times in defense of the Faith, the radio host of "Where Catholics Meet" for over a 17-year period, a candidate in 1988 for president of the United States in the Democratic Party primary, and a moderator of numerous Catholic organizations, died on December 12th, 1998.

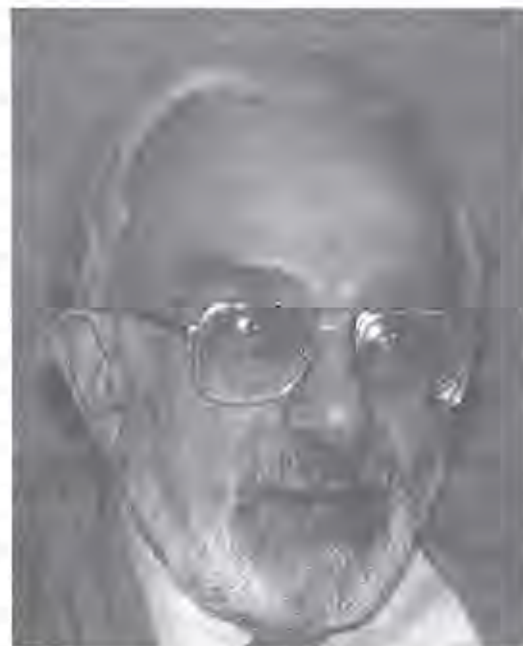
It was September 1994. We had a display on the persecuted Roman Catholic Church in China and were passing out our Autumn 1994 newsletter at the Tarrytown convention of the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation. This newsletter discussed a number of important issues between the underground Church and the Patriotic Association. Dr. Marra came, looked at our displays, picked up a copy of our newsletter, and left like many other people.

An hour later, Dr. Marra came back. He had obviously read our newsletter. He was visibly concerned with the topics discussed in the newsletter and was apparently dumbfounded at those projects that various missionaries in the Free World were providing for the communist sponsored Patriotic Association while ignoring the underground church. We had a lengthy discussion. Dr. Marra concluded: "Joe, you have a very important mission. The world should know what we had just discussed. I

like to invite you as my guest on my radio show *Where Catholics Meet*". That was the first time the Cardinal Kung Foundation had the opportunity to discuss on air the religious persecution in China and the confusion in our own church on the affairs of the Roman Catholic Church in China. Dr. Marra was responsible for opening the door of the media for this Foundation. Since then, the Foundation has benefited much from his counsel and assistance. For this, we are grateful.

His friend, Dr. Alice von Hildebrand called Bill "a man of deep faith, generosity, courage". His friend, Roger A. McCaffrey, editor and publisher of "The Latin Mass" and "Sursum Corda", thought of Bill as charity personified. He also said that Bill "was constitutionally incapable of holding a grudge, but his sense of indignation at the wrongs committed in recent years in the Church - and his outrage over the killing of unborn children - knew no bounds."

May he rest in peace. May our Lady of SheShan look lovingly on him for his love for His Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung and the underground Roman Catholic Church in China. May God have mercy on his soul and reward him for his stout defense of the Faith.



Dr. William A. Marra

A Letter to the Editor of *Catholic New York* A Rebuttal To Its Article "*God Still Present*" by John Burger - December 3, 1998

**By
Joseph Kung**

Editor's Note: As this letter goes to press, the editor of Catholic New York has refused to publish this letter.

January 11, 1999

The Editor
Catholic New York
1011 First Avenue
New York, NY 10022

cc: His Eminence, John Cardinal O'Connor
Very Rev. Msgr. Ferdinando D. Berardi
Mr. John Burger

Dear Editor:

Re: Your article 'God Still Present' by John Burger - December 3, 1998

- 1) The phrase "Catholic Church" customarily refers to the Roman Catholic Church. This should be particularly true when it is used by *Catholic New York*, a Catholic newspaper representing the Roman Catholic archdiocese of New York.

However, the "Catholics" that Msgr. Berardi referred to many times in the captioned article do not belong to the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, they belong to an organization called the "Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association" created by the Chinese Communist government almost 42 years ago in 1957 in order to replace the almost 2000 year old Roman Catholic Church. In His speech on December 3, 1996, the Pope apparently referred to the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association as "*a church which does not respond either to the will of the Lord Jesus, nor to the Catholic faith*".

- 2) It is very sad to note that nowhere in the captioned article does Msgr. Berardi speak out for the suffering underground Roman Catholic Church in China, nor ask the Patriotic Association leadership and the Chinese authorities why the Roman Catholic Church is still illegal in China.
- 3) On the subject of the Chinese government's population control efforts, the Article stated: "the bishop replied (should have written "the Patriotic Association Bishop replied") 'We teach our people the truth of the gospel; we also teach them natural family planning.'" In fact, in its pastoral letter on the *Dignity and Responsibility of Women* issued by the Patriotic Association's Bishops Conference, the bishops of the Patriotic Association openly advised women to implement "China's platform for the development of women". This platform includes birth control, sterilization, abortion and the "One Family, One Child" policy!
- 4) The Article reported that "an estimated 10 million Catholics enjoying limited freedom". This is wrong and misleading. There are about 8 to 9 million underground Roman Catholics in China who has been under severe persecution for half a century since 1949. There is absolutely no freedom for their religious activities. There are also 4 million members joining the Patriotic Association's Church. These 4 million Patriotic Association members enjoy a certain degree of "freedom" because they are sanctioned by the Chinese Government.
- 5) What the Article did not report was that while hundreds of millions of Roman Catholics celebrated Christmas, Easter, or Sunday Mass around the world, there has not been any public Mass in the last 40 years for the underground Roman Catholic Church across China. Roman Catholics have no open churches in China, because they are underground. A Holy Mass, a prayers service, and even praying over the dying by the underground Roman Catholics are all considered subversive activities if done without the government's permission. The government has never granted such permission to the underground Roman Catholics for their religious activities. Religious services by the underground Roman Catholics can only be secretly conducted in private homes or deserted fields. The Chinese government deems these private gatherings of Roman Catholics as illegal, unauthorized, subversive and punishable by exorbitant fines, detention, house arrests, imprisonment or labor camp internment. For example, our press release on October 13, 1998 described the arrests and fines of an underground priest and many laypersons and nuns on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, because they were caught attending the Holy Mass in the open field. FIDES' Press Release on January 5, 1999 described how the Chinese authorities used sexual seduction to blackmail the underground Roman Catholic religious.
- 6) Many of you have been in China. Many of you have been to the Cathedral in Shanghai, the Cathedral in Beijing and other churches elsewhere. However, what you may not have realized was that you were not in a Roman Catholic Church. You were in a church belonging to the Patriotic Association. These churches look Catholic. The vestments are the same, as are the prayers and the hymns. But they are not Roman Catholic. Why? Let me explain.

First - The most important article in the constitution of the Patriotic Association is its autonomy from the Pope. It does not recognize the supreme administrative, legislative and judicial authority of the Pope. Theology 101 teaches us that no one can possibly claim communion with the Pope while simultaneously denying the supreme authorities of the Roman Pontiff. Moreover, during the World Youth Day celebration in Manila in January 1995, the Pope stated very clearly: "*A Catholic who wishes to remain such and to be recognized as such cannot reject the principle of communion with the successor of Peter.*" Therefore, the Patriotic Association is NOT in communion with the Pope. Without such communion, the Patriotic Association could not possibly be the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Therefore, when Msgr. Berardi talked about the "evidence of love for the pope" by the Patriotic Association Catholics, I wish that Msgr. Berardi would point out to the public that "love for the Pope" is not enough to make them Roman Catholics. Many other religious believers and non-believers have the same "evidence of love for the Pope", but they are not Roman Catholics. They must also be obedient to the Pope and must recognize Him as the supreme authority of the Church in order to satisfy one of the few requirements to be Roman Catholics.

Second - The bishops of the Patriotic Association are not appointed by the Holy See. They are appointed by the Chinese government and are consecrated without the approval of the Holy See. During the consecration of the Patriotic Association, the communion with the Roman Pontiff is not even mentioned. Instead, they took an oath to uphold the principle of an autonomous church and to cut off all control from the Pope.

- 7) In an attempt to cover its political agenda and to make it appear more like a Church, the Patriotic Association established in 1980 "The Chinese Bishops' Conference". Please note that the name of this conference "The Chinese Bishops' Conference" was without the word "Catholic". When the Patriotic Association bishops traveled outside China, they had to identify themselves as the bishops from the Patriotic Association. This did not have the desirable marketing appeal.

So, in 1992, "The Chinese Bishops' Conference" changed its name. They inserted the word "Catholic" in their title and changed it to "China Catholic Bishops' College". Patriotic Association members now introduced themselves as Catholic priests or Catholic bishops, without ever having to disclose that they are members of the Patriotic Association, and without ever having to disclose that they have no ties to the Vatican. To add insult to injury, many of those trips to the United States by the Patriotic Association's personnel are paid for by the United States Government.

This deceptive change in terminology produced predictable results. Since then, numerous articles have appeared in the media, including diocesan newspapers such as *Catholic New York*, Catholic magazines, and Catholic Radio about the "Catholic Church in China". These articles were, in fact, describing the Patriotic Association Church. Numerous tours to China have been organized by Roman Catholic institutions such as the U. S. Catholic China Bureau. These tours were supposed to visit the churches and seminaries of the "Catholic Church", but in fact they visited the Patriotic Association's facilities. Many conferences have been sponsored by Roman Catholic institutions ostensibly for the "Catholic Church in China", but in effect are for the Patriotic Association's Church. Along the way, the loyal underground Roman Catholic Church and its persecution by the Chinese Government were almost never mentioned. As a result, these articles, tours and seminars have badly deceived the public.

In the meantime, Patriotic Association priests and bishops, masquerading as bona fide Catholic clerics, traveled around the world and solicited donations. Misinformed Catholic institutions, some of them possibly well intentioned, donated millions to the Patriotic Association while the underground loyal bishops were left with almost nothing.

- 8) The Article also reported that Msgr. Berardi was "on a study tour sponsored by the U.S. Catholic China Bureau at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J." The name *U.S. Catholic China Bureau*, in my opinion, is a very confusing name. It sounds like an official organization representing the Catholic Church in the United States. It is not. It is an arm of the Maryknoll Missionaries who sponsored about fifty Patriotic Association seminarians and priests to study in various Roman Catholic Seminaries in the United States. They are given full tuition, room, and board scholarship from various dioceses. Upon completion of their studies, the Patriotic Association seminarians will return (some have already returned) to China to be ordained, not by the underground Roman Catholic bishops, but by their Patriotic Association bishops. They will serve in the Patriotic Association dioceses which, as mentioned earlier, are not in communion with the Holy Father. Some of these seminarians were mentioned in the captioned article.

On the contrary, there are about 1000 underground Roman Catholic seminarians in China. These dedicated young men have chosen to follow the footsteps of the Chinese martyrs, their underground bishops and His Holiness Pope John Paul II to serve the Church during the most difficult years. (Pope John Paul II was an underground seminarian.) It is heart-broken to note that no missionaries in the free world have sponsored the underground Roman Catholic seminarians en masse to the United States to study like the Maryknoll has sponsored the Patriotic Association's seminarians.

- 9) Some U.S. dioceses have even granted faculties to Patriotic Association priests, allowing them to openly offer Holy Mass and administer other Sacraments including hearing confession in a Roman Catholic parish. Many Catholics who are the recipients of these sacraments from a Patriotic Association's priest are in the dark, because they do not know the identity of the priest. I for one will never allow a Patriotic Association priest, albeit his "evidence of love for the Pope", to hear my confession and give me the last rite, as long as the Patriotic Association is not recognized by the Pope. This granting of faculties to Patriotic Association priests together with other actions send an unmistakable but wrong signal to the Chinese authorities that while the Patriotic Association is not recognized by the Pope, it appears that it is now *de facto* recognized by certain element of Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States.
- 10) China continues its oppressive religious policies partially because many church leaders sent wrong and misleading signals. I am afraid that the captioned article is one of the many that had given the Chinese government these signals.

- 11) For more information on the persecution of the underground Roman Catholics in China, please visit our web site at <http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org>.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
Joseph Kung (signed)
President
The Cardinal Kung Foundation

An Underground Catholic Priest's Experience in a Chinese Labor Camp by An Underground Priest in China

*"How deep are the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How inscrutable his judgements, how unsearchable his ways!" (Rom 11: 33-34)*

Editor's Note: author's name is withheld for security reasons. The original text was in Chinese. Translated by The Cardinal Kung Foundation.

In the midst of a beautiful lustrous pasture in the highlands of Inner Mongolia lies a small island surrounded by a high wall with electric barbed wire. This is none other than the notoriously vicious and cruel Dong Tu Cheng Labor Camp in the Ba Meng District of Inner Mongolia.

That the Camp is vicious and cruel reflects not only the violent criminals who are committed here, it also vividly reflects the savage behavior of the camp guards who regularly used fists and batons on the prisoners. Survival of the fittest is, therefore, the challenge for prisoners in this Camp. No wonder Dong Tu Cheng Labor Camp is feared by all as a savage camp. Once someone has crossed the gate of this Camp, he/she is isolated from the outside world.

The Dong Tu Cheng Labor Camp is very large. It has its own brick factory specifically set up for the purpose of "education through labor". The prisoners work extremely hard for eleven to fifteen hours a day. Although such long and hard labor requires substantive food, the prisoners' meager rations consisted of only a few steamed buns and vegetable water. There are seven roll calls daily. Those who are absent during any one of these roll calls will be beaten savagely - that is, if the prisoner is treated leniently; otherwise, besides beatings, his camp sentence will be extended arbitrarily.

One day in May 1998 during one of the roll calls, someone unexpectedly cried out "*Shen Fu*" which means "Father". Everyone was startled and instinctively looked at the gate. They saw a square-faced tall man approaching them at ease. He was Father WEI Zhonghua (a fictitious name for security reasons) and was to spend three years in this camp.

Father Wei was ordained in 1995 and was assigned to his native land (name of the place omitted for security reasons). Full of zeal and love for his Lord, he labored day and night spreading the Gospel. As a result of his tireless efforts, many lost sheep returned to his fold and recognized once again the Words of the Lord. It was during this ardent evangelization effort that Father Wei was arrested on Christmas Eve 1995 for conducting "illegal religious activities". This was indeed a huge loss to his followers! It was not easy to even find a priest. Having found one, we had to lose this good shepherd. It was also a big setback to the priest's missionary effort. But, "how deep are the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How inscrutable his judgements, how unsearchable his ways!" (Rom 11: 33-34)

Father Wei's responsibility was to evangelize. Evangelization was also the cause of his arrest. Because of the government's fear of his great influence on the faithful, he was quickly sentenced to three years in a labor camp only two months after his arrest. On a bright morning bathed in the brilliant sun, Father Wei entered this infamous Dong Tu Cheng Labor Camp as a "third class prisoner", the lowest classification reserved for religious prisoners.

Some prisoners asked the newcomer, "What made you come here?" Father Wei answered: "I am a Catholic priest." This simple sentence made everyone burst out in laughter. In a mostly non-Catholic society, there is a general misconception that a "priest" is a person who has abandoned his family and has no understanding of enjoyment and love. It was, therefore, rather unthinkable and scornful that this man in front of them, quite similar to themselves, could be a "priest". Seeing their expression, Father Wei understood their thoughts. He did not make any effort to explain; instead, he prayed in his heart that their ignorance and scorn would be forgiven.

A "third class prisoner" is given "special treatment" in the labor camp. For the first few months, almost all activities were under continuous "protection", which is a glorified term for "surveillance".

The objective of the so-called "education through labor" was a tactic to force a prisoner's will to submit, using extreme physical fatigue. In this labor camp, even the stronger prisoners would be weary, let alone the weaker ones. It was almost impossible to handle the long hours of work, let alone the intensity of the work. The basic work of the prisoners was to transport the semi-finished bricks. Every prisoner had to manually transport (push) 70 loads each day - 35 loads in the morning and 35 loads in the afternoon. Each load weighed 500 kilograms (1,100 pounds) and had to be pushed for half of a kilometer. In other words, each prisoner had to manually push 500 kilograms (1,100 pounds) of semi-finished bricks for 35 kilometers (22 miles). Those who failed to accomplish the task were savagely beaten. As a result, prisoners would use all their strength to push this heavy load, perspiring unceasingly, in a frantic attempt to accomplish the task. Regardless of their efforts, they were frequently beaten.

The prisoners did not expect this newly arrived, slimly built and scholarly priest, Father Wei, to be able to meet the work quota. They all expected to be entertained by watching Father Wei being scourged. The camp guards were eagerly waiting to "teach this priest a lesson". Work began. Everyone had to push this heavy load of the semi-finished bricks back and forth. The priest was no exception. Days went by. The priest was never beaten. On the contrary, he was always the first one to accomplish the work every day. The prisoners were puzzled and instinctively thumbed-up the priest. However, the camp guards were not receptive to the priest's effort. They were waiting for an opportunity to humiliate this priest.

The opportunity came. There was a heavy storm that turned the camp into a mud field. It was very difficult to walk, and even more difficult to work under these conditions. As a result, the guard assigned three prisoners to each cart to transport the bricks. However, because Father Wei was a third class prisoner deserving "special treatment", he was left to push the cart alone and was expected to transport 70 loads as usual. Father did not object. He accepted the order. He prayed unceasingly, praying for God's mercy, and for the Holy Mother's protection. He worked alone on this mud field with 500 kilograms (1,100 pounds) weight for each load and completed the required 70 loads on time, having pushed a total of 35 kilometers (22 miles). Many times, he looked back as if wondering who was helping him to push. The prisoners were shocked at the Father's accomplishment. The guards were stunned. The priest himself was astonished. In amazement, the prisoners asked Father Wei: "Where did you get so much strength?" Father answered plainly: "God helped me." Henceforth, the prisoners looked at the Father in a different light, because he was not just a prisoner like others. They believed that Father Wei was truly protected by God. The guards stopped bothering the Father and stopped trying to "teach him a lesson". Deep down in their hearts, the guards secretly respected him. True, "many are the sorrows of the wicked, but kindness surrounds him who trusts in the Lord." (Ps 32:10)

Those who were selected by God must complete their work. Although Father Wei's formal mission of evangelization was cut short since he entered the Labor Camp, he continued to be a witness to God's Words with his unselfish love, unceasing prayers, and sacrifice, quietly accepting the suffering God gave him. After his work each day, he prayed, offering his day's labor to God. While the prisoners rested on their beds, Father knelt in the corner of the room and prayed. The prisoners would ask: "Are you not tired? Why do you not get some rest?" Father answered: "This is the best rest I can have." It is true that without prayers, there is no vitality in life. Prayers are the source of this vitality. In the beginning, seeing the quarrel, jealousy, cursing and arguments among the prisoners, Father did not know how to handle them. He tried to influence them by his love and prayers. Although there was very little success in the beginning, Father was not disappointed; because he trusted in God. Father was in fact very hopeful of influencing the prisoners.

Shortly after his arrival in the Camp, Father Wei received several food parcels and clothes from his parishioners. He laid everything on a table and told the prisoners: "Please help yourself." Everything was snatched away before the Father even had a chance to finish his sentence. Father did not blame them, because he knew how much they needed these things in such poor conditions. However, such an unusually charitable gesture immediately brought suspicion from his cellmates.

There was a young man nicknamed Tiny Woo in the Camp. Tiny was a high school graduate and was very intelligent. He was in the Camp because he committed theft. Tiny thought that the only way to gain other people's fear and respect in the Camp was to use force. He had never seen anyone trying to use generosity and kindness. He therefore alerted all his campmates to be on guard, because they could not understand Father's ulterior motives in the sharing of his meager possession. Perhaps Tiny was right, because his way of thinking reflected life in the Camp. However, the facts proved that Tiny was wrong. It was not only once or twice, but many times that Father Wei distributed everything he received from his parishioners to his campmates, without any strings attached. The campmates could not find out Father's "ulterior motives". The only thing they discovered was the Father's love for them and his spirit of holiness. Perhaps, this material advantage did bring good relations to the campmates after all. They gradually became friendly to the priest.

One campmate became very sick one day. Everyone looked at him without knowing what to do. Father Wei saw his sufferings and was very sympathetic. He prayed quietly, seeking God's mercy and asking for a cure from the Blessed

Mother. With deep faith, he poured some Holy Water in a bowl. He told the sick campmate: "Please drink this water." The campmate took a look at the water and refused. The Father again urged him to drink the Holy Water. The sick man finally drank all the water. Before long, he was cured completely without a trace of his sickness. It appeared to be like the tale from "Arabian Nights". The sick man asked the Father: "What was the medicine that you give me?" The father said: "it was Holy Water." Immediately, the news of Father Wei curing the sick with Holy Water circulated throughout the Camp.

Many people in the Camp recognized that this cure by Holy Water was truly an unusual event. Through the Father's living example, the campmates began to see goodness, faith and God in him. They no longer considered him as a person without love. On the contrary, they saw him as a man filled with love for others. They no longer considered him as a "third class prisoner", rather they took Father Wei as their brother. They wished to be with him together. Under the priest's quiet influence, the campmates changed. The seed of God's Words had started blossoming in their hearts. Once, several campmates told the Father: "We wish to believe in *YOUR* religion." With a smile on his face, the Father answered: "Oh no. It is not *MY* religion. It is our *God's* religion." The Father secretly taught them the basic catechism and prepared them for baptisms.

Those who did not convert also changed their attitudes. They no longer worked with anguish and despair, but with hope and happiness. They began to think positively about their lives, realizing the value of their existence. Later, when the Father shared with them the parcels he received from his parishioners, they no longer grabbed and snatched. They shared among themselves with courtesy and politeness. Such behavior is most unusual in a labor camp.

During their last few visits to Father Wei, the parishioners noticed that when the prisoners saw them, many of them made the signs of the cross. The parishioners asked Father Wei: "Are they Catholics?" The Father replied: "Yes, some of them are Catholics, but all of them are future Catholics!"

Finally, the whole camp was influenced by Father Wei. Even the worst, hard-core prisoner was moved by the Father. When the Camp administration encountered some uneducated hard-core prisoners, they gave up using force; rather, they discussed the situation with the Father to lay down the ground rules. Whenever prisoners had the chance to talk to Father Wei, strange things happened. There was always a distinct improvement in their attitude and outlook.

Once, there was a young drug addict called Lee. He was filled with anguish and pain because he had no drugs in the Camp. After he had a long talk with the Father, he began to change his habits willingly, accepting the pain of withdrawal.

Three years went by. How many nights and days were there in these three years? Father Wei suffered together with all his campmates. Every campmate wanted to be called the Father's best friend. During these three years, Father Wei baptized three prisoners in the camp. After they were released, they registered in their own dioceses. Almost every campmate heard the names of Jesus and Mary. Many learned to make the Sign of the Cross and to say the Hail Mary. The prisoners would not start their meals until the Father said his Grace. They insisted that the rice would taste better and sweeter after the Grace. This could very well have been true.

Three years had passed. Father Wei was due to be released. Before his departure, the Father promised to come back to pick up Tiny Woo when he was ready to be released and promised to baptize him. Both Tiny and the Father were looking forward to that day. It finally came. It was a brilliant day in Spring. Grass was sprouting and flowers were blossoming. Once the Father stepped inside the gates of the Camp, the prisoners, guards, and administrative personnel immediately came forward to greet him. A true friend of the Labor Camp had kept his promise and come back to take Tiny home.

Accompanied by Father Wei, Tiny Woo shook hands with his campmates and bade them good-bye. During the last few years, the whole camp was transformed from a notoriously savage camp to a camp of friendship and love. Yes, "the fields are shining for harvest (Jn 4:35) "

Father Wei took Tiny Woo to his chapel and baptized him. The baptism was witnessed by many of the faithful and Tiny became a true Catholic. Next day, when Father Wei was ready to send Tiny home, Tiny said: "Father, I want to become a priest. I no longer have a home. The seminary will be my home." Tiny did not go home. He telephoned home instead. Then, accompanied by Father Wei, Tiny marched through the gates of an underground Roman Catholic Seminary. --End--

***Please Remember The Cardinal Kung Foundation, Inc. In Your Will
Thank You***