



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"

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* In Memoriam

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Dear Friends:

This year, we celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Cardinal Kung Foundation that was incorporated in November 1991. We have every reason to thank God for the fact that this 15th anniversary has brought us the great gift of Pope Benedict XVI's letter (the Pope's letter) to the Catholic Church in China. We celebrate this gift with joy and thankfulness, recognizing that **Pope Benedict XVI has confirmed that much of the analysis that the Cardinal Kung Foundation had previously made proved to be true and that many questions that the Cardinal Kung Foundation had previously asked proved to be relevant.**

More than 7 years ago, the Foundation was very concerned that many practices and advocacies of members of the hierarchy of the universal Church and of prominent religious orders were not in line with the published directives from the Holy See governing relations with the Catholic Church in China or with the Church dogma. Being unable to get answers from the Holy See, the Foundation issued an open letter to the officials of the Holy See in March 2000 for definitive answers. Many of the concerns in our open letter were shared by friends of the Foundation. Although this open letter was never answered by the Holy See, **Pope Benedict's recent letter to China, dated on Pentecost 2007, has not only provided almost all of the answers to the questions in our open letter, but also reached the same conclusions on some important issues that this Foundation has advocated in our other newsletters.** It is appropriate at this time to review the Foundation's open letter and other newsletters in the light of Pope Benedict's letter to China.

Readers of our most recent July 2007 newsletter are aware that we presented therein a 19-point synopsis of the Pope's letter and offered some reflections on it. As noted in that July newsletter, in the presentation of the 19 points, in order to preserve the original essence of the Pope's own teaching, and in order to make the synopsis as easy to read as possible, we made every effort to use the Pontiff's own wording without quotation marks. We will also apply the Pope's wording as far as possible in this newsletter. In what follows, we will present an analysis of some of our previous newsletters — especially our March 2000 open letter to the Holy See (published in our June 2000 newsletter) — in the light of the Pope's letter. In the course of this analysis, we shall refer to the number of each relevant point of our synopsis of the Pope's letter in our July 2007 newsletter simply as item 1 or item 13 of our synopsis.

1) **Go Public** — In our Christmas 2005 newsletter, we offered our opinion that the bishops of the Patriotic Association who had obtained legitimation from the Holy See ought to make their legitimation public by a profession of Faith, and that a profession of Faith, by definition, is public, not private. **We wrote:**

When these bishops accepted the appointment from the Chinese government and were consecrated bishops without the approval of the Pope, they did it publicly and pledged their loyalty also publicly, not to the Pope, but to the Chinese government. However, when they supposedly repented and requested recognition from the Pope, they did it secretly, not publicly....How could this secret arrangement be justified in view of the damage they have done publicly to the Church and to its faithful? Moreover, the word "profession" comes from Latin and means "PUBLIC PROMISE". When Christians profess their Faith, BY DEFINITION they do so PUBLICLY. There is no such thing as a private or secret PROFESSION of Faith. It is a contradiction in terms. Therefore, if those official Patriotic bishops have indeed repented, **such repentance, in my opinion and in generally accepted procedures and courtesy, should have been done publicly and their reciting of the Creed for professing their Faith, as defined above according to the Latin meaning, should also have been recited publicly for the whole world to hear for the Pope to judge...**

In item 11 of our synopsis, we referred to the Pope's statement about certain bishops in China to whom he had granted full and legitimate exercise of episcopal jurisdiction, but who had failed thus far to provide any clear signs to prove that they had been legitimized. In his letter to China's Catholics, **the Pontiff calls upon these bishops to be brought into public domain at the earliest opportunity and to provide unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Pope.**

Therefore, our conclusion: "...such repentance...should have been done publicly and their reciting of the Creed for professing their Faith...should also have been recited publicly..." and the Pope's words "...these bishops to be brought into public domain...and to provide unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Pope" are in fact synonymous. The Pope has confirmed our analysis.

However, we are not aware that any of the Patriotic Association Bishops who has been legitimized and recognized by the Holy See has come into the open and provided "unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Pope."

- 2) **Schismatic and Incompatible with Catholic Doctrine** — In Section I of our open letter to the Holy See (published in our June 2000 newsletter), we raised a very important question: "Is the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CPA) a Schismatic Church?" In that section we explained that the CPA defines itself by its autonomy and independence of the Holy See. **We also quoted the statements of a number of Pontiffs**, including Pope Pius XII, Pope John XXIII, and Pope John Paul II, all of whom consistently stated, in principle, **that the CPA is either indeed a schismatic Church** or emphasized that one cannot be Catholic apart from full communion with the Successor of Peter. In item 7 of our synopsis, we observed that **Pope Benedict states** in his letter that **the proposal for a Church that is independent of the Holy See in the religious sphere is incompatible with Catholic doctrine**, an apparent reference to the CPA-led Church that the state insists must be autonomous.

Our referring to the CPA as "schismatic" and the Pope's description of the autonomous CPA-led Church as "incompatible with Catholic doctrine," amounts to the same thing.

- 3) **One or Two Churches in China** — It is noteworthy that, in his own letter to China, Pope Benedict never uses the term "schism." (Interestingly, as noted in our Christmas 2004 newsletter, Msgr. Eugene Nugent, a Vatican representative in Hong Kong, when issuing new guidelines for China in 2004, described the Patriotic Association as having "the characteristic of being in schism.") On the other hand, as noted in item 12 of our synopsis, Pope Benedict refers to a very small number of bishops in China who have been ordained without Pontifical mandate and who have not asked for or have not yet obtained the necessary legitimation. By referring to these bishops in this way, **Pope Benedict implicitly acknowledges that there are indeed two Churches in China: one that is in communion with the Successor of Peter (One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church) consisting of the entire underground Church and most of the CPA bishops who are now in communion with the Pope, and one that is not in communion with the Successor of Peter, consisting of a few CPA Bishops who have not been recognized by the Pope.** Please note that Pope Benedict never categorically said, as Cardinal Tomko had said, that the "two groups in the Church in China" (the underground Roman Catholic Church and the Patriotic Association) "are not two Churches because we are all one Church". This two-Church scenario implied by the Pope is the same as what the Cardinal Kung Foundation pointed out a number of times, especially in its in-depth analysis published in our July and Christmas newsletters of 2001. **We said: "China has two Churches that call themselves Catholic. They are not the same Church."** At that time, the Holy See's official spokesperson has not disclosed that there were many CPA bishops who had already been legitimated by the Holy See and were in communion with the Pope; therefore, we had ample reasons to believe that they were not in communion with the Successor of Peter. Indeed, Pope Benedict never said in his letter that there is only one Church in China. His call for Church unity in China would make no sense if, as many still maintain, even after Pope Benedict's most recent letter, there is only one Church in China.

We have advocated that **China has two Churches because one Church is not in communion with the Successor of Peter. The Pope's acknowledgement that there are CPA bishops in China not in communion with the Successor of Peter is based on the same dogma that to be in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, all members including their bishops must be in full communion with the Successor of Peter.**

- 4) **Underground Church's Possible Extinction** — The underground Church is rapidly to become extinct because the Holy See has not appointed any new bishops in the underground Church for the last 10 years or so. Currently, only approximately 31 underground bishops remain. Of the 31, 20 are more than 80 years old, and 6 are between 70-80 years old. There are only 5 underground bishops who are under 70 years old! Obviously, without the ordination of any new underground bishops, within the next five years, in keeping with standard mortality statistics, few underground bishops will remain. Thus, the Pope's emphasis on unity will ring hollow when within 5 or 10 years, there will be a single-digit number of underground bishops. By that time, there will be only the official Patriotic Church's bishops shepherding the Catholic Church in China. With whom does the Holy See wish the official CPA-controlled Church to unite? Without the appointment of new bishops in the underground Church, the suffering underground Roman Catholic Church, whose members will have by then experienced more than 60 years of severe persecution for their Faith to God and for their total obedience and loyalty to successive Popes, will finally be de-facto eliminated, not by the Chinese

communists, but by the Holy See itself by virtue of its refusal to appoint any more underground bishops. Rome would possibly lose the loyalty and obedience of tens of millions proven faithful in China who have suffered immeasurably for the Successor of Peter. (Please read for more details in the July 2001 and July 2007 issues of our newsletter.) We wish that the Pope had explained in his letter to China why the Holy See has engaged in its progressive severance of the underground Catholic community. If this were the official policy of the Holy See, shouldn't the Holy See declare it publicly? Moreover, as the Holy See wants the Chinese government to recognize the current underground bishops as legitimate pastors, why has the Holy See herself not recognized them in its official listing of bishops in its *Anuario Pontificio*? (We raised this same question toward the end of Section VII of our open letter.)

- 5) **Educating Seminarians and Priestly Faculties** — In Sections II and III of our open letter, we ask, respectively: “Why Are Roman Catholic Bishops and Religious Orders Educating Seminarians of the Schismatic CPA?” and “Why Are Roman Catholic Bishops in the United States Granting Priestly Faculties to Priests of the CPA?” In his letter to China, **Pope Benedict renders these two questions irrelevant, because, as noted in item 19 of our synopsis, all previous guidelines for China issued by the Holy See have been revoked and replaced by the new directives.**
- 6) **Pope’s Recognition of CPA Bishops** – **Pope Benedict clearly has responded** to the question of Section IV of our open letter: “Is It True that the Vatican Has Recognized Some Patriotic Bishops?” As noted in both items 11 and 12 of our synopsis, the Holy See indeed has done so. (We might add that this is the first time that an authority in the Vatican has officially made this public.) Inasmuch as the Pope has said that “a very small number” of official bishops have not yet obtained the necessary legitimation, we certainly can extrapolate that **a great majority of official bishops have been recognized by and are, to varying degrees, in full communion with the Pope.**
- 7) **Financially Supporting the CPA** — In Section V of our open letter, we ask: “Why Are Catholic Officials and Organizations Financially Supporting the CPA and not the Underground Roman Catholic Church in China?” **While Pope Benedict does not directly address this question, he does, as noted in item 10 of our synopsis, call upon the Chinese government to recognize the bishops of the underground Roman Catholic Church as legitimate pastors.**
- 8) **Attending Service in a CPA Church** — Section VI of our open letter addresses the issue of “Catholic Visitors in China Attending Religious Services in or by a CPA Church.” As noted in item 16 of our synopsis, **Pope Benedict instructs that the faithful must, within the limits of the possible, seek bishops and priests who are in communion with the Pope.** Nevertheless, he adds, **where this cannot be achieved without grave inconvenience, the faithful may, for the sake of their spiritual good, turn also to those who are not in communion with the Pope.** Related to this point is Pope Benedict’s instruction, noted in item 15 of our synopsis, that concelebration of the Eucharist presupposes, as conditions, profession of the same Faith and hierarchical communion with the Pope and the universal Church. This means, the Pope continues, that **it is licit to concelebrate with bishops and priests who are in communion with the Pope** even if they are recognized by the civil authorities and maintain a relationship with entities required by the civil government [the CPA] and extraneous to the structure of the Church, provided that this recognition and this relationship do not entail the denial of unrenounceable principles of the Faith and of ecclesiastical communion.
- 9) Section VII of our open letter raises a variety of questions, two of which are relevant in the light of Pope Benedict’s letter. All others are negated by (1) the Pope’s revocation of many faculties previously granted to the underground prelates and his revocation of all directives of a pastoral nature as described in item 19 of our synopsis, or (2) by the Pope’s refusal to recognize the present College of Catholic Bishops of China, or (3) by the Pope’s recognition of the majority of the CPA bishops.

9.1) CPA’s Pastoral Letter -- The first is a question about a pastoral letter issued by the CPA bishops’ conference in 1995. In that letter, the CPA bishops called for all Chinese Catholics to support the Chinese government’s policies on contraception, sterilization, and mandatory abortion for those families who already have one child. We asked how the Holy See could remain silent about this letter. While the Pope does not respond directly to our question in his letter to China’s Catholics (although his teaching on these matters is undeniably clear), as noted in item 13 of our synopsis, **Pope Benedict points out that the present College of Catholic Bishops of China cannot be recognized as an episcopal conference by the Holy See.** This is the case, he explains, because the underground bishops — those not recognized by the government but in communion with the Pope -- are not part of it; it includes bishops who are still illegitimate; and it is governed by statutes that contain elements incompatible with Catholic doctrine. The statutes to which the Pope refers directed the CPA bishops to write the 1995 pastoral letter that supports government policies contrary to Catholic doctrine. Also relevant to this issue is Pope Benedict’s instruction, noted in item 8 of our synopsis, that the claim of some entities, established by the civil government and extraneous to the structure of the Church, to place themselves above the bishops and to guide the life of the Church does not correspond to Catholic doctrine.

9.2) Too Quiet on Religious Persecution -- In Section VII / 3 of our open letter, we pointed out that there are many bishops, religious personnel, and other Catholic faithful still in jail. We asked: “Has the Vatican taken steps to liberate any other bishops, priests, and other faithful currently in jail in China?” Although Pope Benedict does not specifically answer this question, we noted in item 3 of our synopsis that **Pope Benedict calls for a**

respectful and open dialogue with the Chinese bishops and the civil government for the purpose of allowing Catholics to live and express fully certain aspects of their belonging to the Church and of their hierarchical communion with the Pope. As noted in item 4 of our synopsis, Pope Benedict again responds to this question when he explains that **the Church seeks to overcome tensions, divisions, and recriminations, when he calls for the purification of memories, the pardoning of wrong-doers, the forgetting of injustices suffered, and the restoration of serenity to troubled hearts in order to grow and make visible the bonds of communion between the faithful and the pastors of the Church in China.** Also, as noted in item 5 of our synopsis, Pope Benedict responds to this question even more clearly when **he acknowledges the widespread persecution of the faithful even to the point of the shedding of their blood.** Nevertheless, he adds, **we must love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.**

- 10) **Annual Mass** -- Finally, in our March 2001 newsletter, we announced our promotion of the celebration of an annual Mass for the persecuted underground Roman Catholic Church in China. At the time, we proposed the annual date of the Sunday closest to October 1, the date that is the National Day of the founding of the People's Republic of China and also the anniversary of Pope John Paul II's canonization of the 120 blessed martyr saints of China. Thus, we are extremely grateful that, as noted in item 6 of our synopsis, **Pope Benedict has decreed that May 24, the feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians be an occasion for Catholics of the whole world to be united in prayer with the Church which is in China.** Therefore, beginning in 2008, **the Cardinal Kung Foundation shall move its annual Mass to May 24** in order to join spiritually tens of millions of Catholics all over the world in prayer for China.
- 11) **Conclusion** -- We understand clearly that Pope Benedict did not write his letter to China in order to answer our open letter to authorities in the Vatican (Cardinal Ratzinger was the first recipient of this open letter). In fact, we are not even sure that he received and read this open letter. **But the fact that in his letter to China the Pope raises and answers directly and indirectly so many questions and concerns that are more or less the same questions and concerns that we asked in our open letter written more than seven years ago proves how important and relevant that open letter's questions were.** In addition, the fact that other important topics discussed in the Pope's letter, such as "unity" (paragraph 3 above) and the need for CPA bishops to publicly display signs of full communion with the Pope (paragraph 1 above) were first raised in our newsletters also proves that our analysis of various issues is accurate -- especially in light of the fact that the Pope reached our own conclusions. Someone has criticized this Foundation by emphasizing that "times have changed." In fact, regarding the topics that we have discussed above, time has NOT changed. What was true is still true. The previous dogma of the Catholic Church is still the dogma of the same Church. In our open letter, we asked simple questions and raised simple issues. These questions and concerns were raised largely by the underground bishops in China. They asked the Foundation to clarify them. The Foundation, representing the underground Church and acting as her mouthpiece, contacted various members of the Church hierarchy for clarification. However, our efforts were not successful. Hence, our open letter was written in the legitimate hope that the Holy See would answer these questions and address the serious issues that we illuminated. The questions could have been answered by many within the Vatican's hierarchy. However, none replied. They did not even have the courtesy to acknowledge receipt of this open letter. **Inasmuch as the questions and concerns that Pope Benedict raised and addressed in his May letter to China existed more than seven years ago when we posed them in our open letter** (actually, these conditions were brought to the attention of the Holy See much longer than seven years ago, as we had spent many years in vain trying to obtain answers from the Holy See before we wrote the open letter), **can one imagine what China-Vatican relations would be today had this Pope's letter to China been written seven or more years earlier?** We have the right to ask questions, and we have asked, but have no power to move those with authority to act. Nevertheless, seven years later, we are exonerated by virtue of the Pope's own letter to China. Now that the Pope has answered our open letter -- albeit some indirectly -- our wait for the Holy See's reply is over. However, we still cannot yet rest our case, because **we now need resolutions as well as enforcements of the aforementioned issues** that are consistent with, and not contrary to, the unrenounceable principles of the universal Church.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely in Christ


Joseph Kung,
President

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