



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

Blessed Mother. History has witnessed the heroic efforts of these catechists, the Legion of Mary, parishioners, and clergy, many of whom gave their lives up to God in defiance of the Communist-created Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. The Shanghai Catholic Youth Group in a 1953 New Year rally openly declared their love and fidelity to the Church and to Bishop Kung: "in darkness, you light up our path. You guide us on our treacherous journey. You sustain our faith and the traditions of the Church. You are the foundation rock of our Church in Shanghai."

On September 8, 1955, the world press reported the shocking midnight arrest of Bishop Kung along with more than 200 priests and Church leaders in Shanghai. During the months before his arrest in 1955, Bishop Kung refused many offers of safe passage out of

THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION

Christmas 2009

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Merry Christmas

In Luke's Gospel we read that the angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. God chose to announce Jesus' birth first to those who, in Jesus' time, were on the margins of society, the ones most scorned and despised. Those shepherds proceeded in haste to Bethlehem to worship the Christ Child and to announce his birth to others. (Luke 1:8-18) The question is: would the people of Jesus' time listen to the message of the shepherds, or would they dismiss it, or meet it with indifference, simply because the shepherds were those most scorned, marginalized and despised by society? In the same way, the people of the underground Roman Catholic Church in China cry out their message to the universal Church. It is a message about fidelity to Christ and to the Church – the Body of Christ, about the persecution that they suffer as a result of that fidelity, and about, as I wrote in our last Christmas letter for 2008, their "discontent and anxiety, even despair and anguish...about the underground Church today." As we celebrate Christmas, let us make certain that we heed the message of the shepherds of Jesus' time and the "shepherds" of our time.

The Late Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung A Faithful Shepherd

One of the shepherds of our time is, no doubt, the late Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung, a noble yet humble, steadfast and faithful spiritual leader, whose entire life was a witness of faith to God and fidelity to the Holy Father. In his *Mission* magazine in 1957, Archbishop Fulton Sheen wrote: "The West has its Mindszenty, but the East has its Kung. God is glorified in His saints." This newsletter commemorates the tenth anniversary of the death of Cardinal Kung.



Cardinal Kung was ordained a priest in 1930 and consecrated a bishop in 1950. While he was serving a life sentence in a lonely cell in Communist China, he was made a Cardinal *in pectore* at the age of 78 by Pope John Paul II.

In the midst of persecutions, Bishop Kung boldly declared 1952 the Marian Year in Shanghai, placing the diocese under the protection of Holy Mother. There were uninterrupted 24 hours of daily recitations of the rosary throughout the year, in parishes and private homes. Leading the congregation, Bishop Kung prayed: "Holy Mother, we do not ask you for a miracle. We do not beg you to stop the persecutions. But we beg you to support us who are very weak".

Knowing that he and his priests would soon be arrested, Bishop Kung trained hundreds of catechists and personally worked with the Legion of Mary dedicated to the veneration of the

China and chose to remain with his flock. Months after his arrest, he was taken to a mob "struggle session." Thousands were ordered to attend to hear the Bishop's public confession of his "crimes." He was pushed forward to the microphone to confess. To the shock of the Public Security Police, they heard the Bishop's loud righteous cry, "*Long live Christ the King, Long live the Pope.*" Defying the presence of the police force, the crowd responded immediately with the same. Quickly, Bishop Kung was dragged away to a police car and disappeared from the world for five years. Treated like a common criminal, he was brought to trial in 1960 and sentenced to life imprisonment. The night before the trial, the Chief Prosecutor once again offered Bishop Kung a chance of freedom in exchange for his leadership in establishing a government church, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. His answer was decisive: "*I am a Roman Catholic Bishop. If I denounce the Holy Father, not only would I not be a Bishop, I would not even be a Catholic. You can cut off my head, but you can never take away my duties.*"

Steadfast in his fidelity and love for his Church, Bishop Kung remained behind bars for thirty years including spending many long years in solitary confinement. He was finally "released" from prison in 1985 after 30 years, and was to serve 10 more years of house arrest in the custody of the Patriotic Association, the puppet church. Another two and one-half years later, his "freedom" was finally restored at the age of 85. However, his charge of being a counter revolutionary was never exonerated. In 1988, Joseph Kung went to China to escort the elderly Bishop to the United States for medical care.

Shortly before his release, he was "invited" to join a banquet hosted by the Shanghai government to welcome the late Cardinal Jaime Sin, Bishop of Manila in the Philippines. Cardinal Sin and Bishop Kung were seated on opposite ends of a long dining table making private conversations between them impossible. During the dinner, Cardinal Sin suggested that each person should sing a song to celebrate the occasion. When it was Bishop Kung's turn, he looked directly at Cardinal Sin and clearly sang "*Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam*" ("You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church"). After leaving China soil, Cardinal Sin promptly reported to Holy Father and to the world: *this man of God never faltered in his love for his Church or for his people despite unimaginable suffering, isolation and pain.*

After carrying Bishop Kung in his heart for 12 years, Pope John Paul II was finally able openly to elevate Bishop Kung, the Cardinal *in pectore* from 1979, to be a Cardinal in the Consistory on June 29, 1991 in the Vatican. Before leaving for the Vatican, and through Voice of America, Bishop Kung appealed and invited the Patriotic Association bishops to return to the mother Church with him, so that there will be *One flock and one Shepherd* in China. At the Consistory, the 90-year-old Bishop Kung humbly knelt at the foot of the Pontiff. Visibly touched, the Holy Father lifted him up, gave him his Cardinal's hat, and then stood patiently smiling as Cardinal Kung slowly steadied himself and returned to his wheelchair to the thundering applause of more than 7000 guests in the Audience Hall for an unprecedented seven-minute standing ovation.

In an interview on February 12, 1998, Mr. Ye Xiaowen, the former Director of the Religious Bureau of China, stated: "*Kung Pin Mei (The Cardinal) committed a serious crime by dividing the country and causing harm to its people.*" One month later in March, 1998, the Chinese Embassy in Washington confiscated the passport of this then 97-year-old Cardinal Kung, officially exiling him. In 1997, when China's Chairman Jiang Zemin visited the United States, Cardinal Kung appealed to him in vain to restore religious freedom in China and to release all Roman Catholics held in jail and labor camps. The appeal met only the deaf ear of the chairman.

His Eminence, Ignatius Cardinal KUNG Pinmei died at 3:05 AM on March 12, 2000 at the age of 98 in the home of his nephew, Joseph Kung. In his condolences, Pope John Paul II called Cardinal Kung the "*noble son of China and of the Church.*"

Written petition was sent to Bishop William Lori, the Bishop of Bridgeport, by me five years ago on August 4, 2004 for opening the cause for the canonization of Cardinal Kung. To date, Bishop Lori has not informed me of his decision. Please keep praying for Cardinal Kung's cause so that the Cardinal can be raised to the altar soon. Thank you.

Thanksgiving Mass for Cardinal Kung

In thanksgiving for the life and ministry of the late Cardinal on the 10th Anniversary of his death, a Mass will be held at the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, 279 Atlantic Street, Stamford, Connecticut 06901 at 12 noon on Saturday March 6, 2010. We thank Bishop William Lori, Bishop of Bridgeport, for kindly offering to be the main celebrant. You are cordially invited to join us at this Mass. Clergy are welcome to concelebrate at the Mass. Please RSVP if you are coming and indicate the number of guests with you.

For those coming out of town, we have reserved a block of rooms at the Stamford Marriott Hotel, 243 Tresser Blvd, Stamford, CT 06907 at a special rate of \$ 95 plus tax per night for a standard room with either a queen size bed or two beds. Parking is \$6 per night. The hotel is within a short walking distance to the Basilica. Please reserve directly with the hotel. Mention this event and the code **ckgckga** to request the special room rate. (Telephones) 800-228-9290 or 203-357-9555, (Fax) 203-324-6897, (Web) www.stamfordmarriott.com. Room availability at the special rate is limited.

Yours sincerely in Christ


Joseph Kung, President

Our gift is appreciated

Please Remember The Cardinal Kung Foundation In Your Will

Thank you