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July 2010

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

Many people have remarked, “the Mass in the Official Church also prays for the Pope!” “Well,” I have replied, “anyone can pray for the Pope for whatever reason; not only a Catholic, but even a Protestant, a Muslim, or anyone belonging to any other religion, or no religion, can pray for the Pope.”

Numerous articles and some senior members of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church have repeatedly asserted that these two Churches in China are the same Roman Catholic Church. I have received many inquiries from the public requesting me to clarify this issue, especially when they are traveling to China and are uncertain which church they should attend for their Sunday Mass.

Therefore, the same question bounces back. Are these two Churches the same Church in that their members are obliged to be in full communion with the Roman Pontiff and the universal Church? I have no authority to make such a decision. However, I will follow my simple faith and share with you some of my thoughts. If they were the same Church, as some in the Catholic hierarchy have alleged many times and for so many years, then these two

Dear Friends:

We recently celebrated Pentecost Sunday on May 23. This is the day the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, descended on the fearful Apostles and changed hesitant men into roaring lions for Christ. How fitting it was when on this same feast day, on May 27, 2007, one of the most recent significant Letters ever addressed by a pope to the Church in China was issued. In this Letter, the Pope assigned May 24, the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, to be, for the universal Roman Catholic Church, the official day of prayer for the Church in China. For this, I wish to thank our supporters who offered many Masses and other form of prayers for the suffering Church in China on or around May 24th. *Deo Gratias.*

In the past nineteen years, ever since the establishment of this Foundation, we have made an effort to update you on the news happening in the Church in China and discussed with you a number of issues facing it. In this letter, I will try to revisit some of these issues that were discussed years apart, in an attempt to connect the dots among them so that some of you, especially the newer members, will be more informed about the changes and the conflicting reports from the media on what is truly happening in the Church in China.

The Basic Issue

In China, as most of you may have known, there are: 1) The official Catholic Church, which is a government-established and sponsored Church organized in 1957. It is independent from the authority of the Pope. 2) The unofficial Catholic Church, which is commonly known as the underground Church. This underground Church is not recognized by the Chinese government and it remains illegal in China, but is in total communion with the Pope and with the universal Roman Catholic Church.

The issue is therefore: Are these two Churches the same Roman Catholic Church, headed by the Successor of St. Peter, Pope Benedict XVI, although they are different in name, but celebrate the same liturgy and pray the same prayers?

Churches should both have already been completely reconciled and unified with the explicit approval of, and in full communion with, the Pope. In the ensuing paragraphs, I will share with you my observations.

Questionable legitimization and the validity of the sacramental orders of bishops of the official Catholic Church

Official Catholic Church Bishops Legitimized by the Pope: In his Letter to China, Pope Benedict XVI, speaking of the bishops of the official Church, declared that many “*Pastors . . . have consented to receive episcopal ordination without the pontifical mandate, but the Pope . . . has granted them the full and legitimate exercise of episcopal jurisdiction . . . Unfortunately, in most cases, priests and the faithful have not been adequately informed that their Bishop has been legitimized. . . . What is more, some legitimized Bishops have failed to provide any clear signs to prove that they have been legitimized. For this reason it is indispensable, for the spiritual good of the diocesan communities concerned, that legitimation, once it has occurred, is brought into the public domain at the earliest opportunity, and that the legitimized Bishops provide unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Successor of Peter.*”

The question we must ask now is, therefore, not so much whether those official Church bishops have been recognized by the Pope — most of them have — but rather, whether those bishops, having been recognized by the Pope, have provided “*unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Successor of Peter,*” and made this recognition known to the public at the earliest opportunity?

When those official bishops accepted 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 were recognized by the Pope, they claimed to have professed their Faith in papal authority in private, or in secret, as many religious from the official Church had done in the past. We wrote in our 2005 Christmas letter, “*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 bishops have indeed repented, such repentance, in my opinion, should have been done publicly in order to set examples heroic enough for their faithful to follow, because bishops are shepherds of the diocese. Furthermore, their recitation of the Creed, the standard formula in making a Profession of Faith, should also have been recited publicly for the universal and visible Church to hear and for the Pope to acknowledge, regardless of the risk they might have faced. That is the spirit of the martyrs.

Now, the Pope has seemingly agreed with what we wrote in our 2005 Christmas letter and required that “*the legitimized Bishops provide unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Successor of Peter.*” Having been legitimized, the repentant official bishops must also now let the public know UNEQUIVOCALLY that they are in full communion with the Pope, meaning that they will submit to the Pope, not only as their spiritual leader, but also to his supreme administrative, legislative, and judicial authority over the Catholic Church. This means that in order to be in communion with the Pope, these bishops in question must, as mandated, make a public profession of faith “*at the earliest opportunity*”.

Is simply praying for the Pope and reciting the Creed at Sunday Mass or on other major feast days, such as Holy Thursday, a sufficient and “*unequivocal visible sign*” of full communion with the Pope? If this is the case, I am not aware of any papal announcement to that effect, nor has any member of the clergy in the underground Church, with whom I am in contact, informed me of this fact.

In an impassioned dialogue with *AsiaNews* in June 2009, Cardinal Joseph Zen, the retired bishop of Hong Kong, pointed out that the Pope had spoken very clearly in his Letter to China in 2007 about the principles that must guide the life of the Church in China. This certainly includes the steps to be taken that we mentioned above for the legitimization of the official bishops. Cardinal Zen lamented that “*unfortunately, over the past two years this move towards greater transparency has not taken place. In fact, it seems . . . sliding down the slope of compromise.*”

Therefore, sadly, I am not aware whether any one of those aforementioned official Church bishops has provided “*unequivocal and increasing signs of full communion with the Successor of Peter*” as mandated by the Pope. Neither the Holy See nor the media have written about it. In as much as their communion with the Pope is in question, is

one wrong in questioning whether or not the Church that those official bishops in question are representing is in fact the same Church as the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church?

Official Catholic Church Bishops Not Legitimized by the Pope: Furthermore, Pope Benedict in his Letter to China notes that “. . . *there are certain Bishops – a very small number of them – who have been ordained without the Pontifical mandate and who have not asked for or have not yet obtained, the necessary legitimation. . . . They are to be considered illegitimate, but validly ordained, as long as it is certain that they have received ordination from validly ordained Bishops and that the Catholic rite of episcopal ordination has been respected. Therefore, although not in communion with the Pope, they exercise their ministry validly in the administration of the sacraments, even if they do so illegitimately.*” How can the faithful be certain, then, in attending Masses in the official churches, that the priests or the bishops there have, in some cases decades ago, “*received ordination from validly ordained bishops and that the Catholic rite of episcopal ordination has been respected,*” so as to assure themselves that these pastors are true priests, and, therefore, that the Mass is valid? Inasmuch as these illegitimate bishops, assuming they are validly ordained (and how are the simple faithful to know this for certain?), are not, as the Pope himself wrote, in communion with the Pope, how can this official Church to which those illegitimate but possibly valid bishops have given their allegiance be the same Church as the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church?

Unofficial Church or the Underground Church Bishops: The above two important areas are obviously left in serious doubt in the government-controlled official Catholic Church regarding the question of their communion with the Pope. On the contrary, the bishops of the unofficial Church, also known as the underground Church, have remained loyal to the Holy See in spite of martyrdoms and persecution by the communist government. Pope Benedict said in his Letter to China that their “*episcopal ordination(s) (are) in conformity with Catholic tradition, that is to say, in communion with the Bishop of Rome, Successor of Peter, and at the hands of validly and legitimately ordained Bishops in observance of the rite of the Catholic Church.*” Therefore, applying the simple syllogism, one could ask not only if the official Church is the same Church as the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, but also if the official Church is the same Church as the unofficial or the underground church in China?

Unity and Reconciliation of the Official and Unofficial Catholic Churches

It takes at least two parties in order to reconcile and to unite. If they are already united, then why talk about *reconciliation*? All issues of division and contention are supposed to have been resolved in order to be qualified as one party; if not, then there are still two different parties and there is a lack of unity. One of the four marks of the Roman Catholic Church is *oneness*. The other three are holy, Catholic, and apostolic. Cardinal Kung used to say that “persecuted” is a fifth mark of the true Church.

Unity -- If, one of these days, the Holy Spirit should enlighten the Church with special graces to find, without compromising papal authority and doctrine, ways to resolve the issues separating Protestant Ecclesial Communities and schismatic Orthodox Churches from the Roman Catholic Church, we will then have only One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, because then all Ecclesial Communities or Churches bearing different names would have been united with Rome and all issues dividing them from the true Church would have been resolved.

This is the same for the Roman Catholic Church in China. If the official and unofficial Churches are truly the same Roman Catholic Church, as claimed by so many Church officials, there should be no more distinctions between these two Churches. There should not be any more talk of unity and reconciliation. There should not be any more “*ifs*” to qualify the bishops of the official Church; because, these two aforementioned Churches should have already been united and reconciled. The fact that the Roman Catholic Church authorities are still urging reconciliation and unity between the official and unofficial Churches means that these two Churches must have some fundamental differences that have not been resolved. Therefore, can they be the same Church?

In his Letter to the Church in China, the Pope mentioned the word “*unity*” and “*reconciliation*” or their derivatives many times. He did not say even once that these two Churches in China are the same Church. In fact, the Pope stressed his “. . . *favour(ing) their unity . . .*” that is, of the official and unofficial Churches. He did not say that they have already united. He only said that he “*favoured*” it.

Reconciliation -- Numerous articles and declarations from the Church officials proclaim the urgency and necessity for reconciliation between the two Churches in China. In his Letter to China, Pope Benedict wrote: “. . . *the*

purification of memory, the pardoning of wrong-doers, the forgetting of injustices suffered and the loving restoration to serenity of troubled hearts, all to be accomplished in the name of Jesus crucified and risen, can require moving beyond personal positions or viewpoints, born of painful or difficult experiences. These are urgent steps that must be taken if the bonds of communion between the faithful and the Pastors of the Church in China are to grow and be made visible. . . .”

But, many self-appointed “China experts” have prejudicially described many priests in the underground Church as elderly men who could not “*move past*” what they have suffered and could not work positively for a united Catholic Church in China. Again, in his interview with *AsiaNews* in June 2009, Cardinal Joseph Zen commented that “*a certain number of...young missionaries who have never worked in China, were easily enthused by what they saw during their brief trips to China: open churches, congregations singing etc.... Therefore, they were heartened by the freedom that they believed to be real. As a result they accused the underground Church of stubbornness, unwilling to accept a new reality.*” Unfortunately, these “China experts”, who may be well-intentioned, are very misinformed, bringing great sufferings to those loyal underground shepherds. And, there are too many of these “China experts” among us.

In our newsletter dated Christmas 2008, we published seventeen letters from the underground religious who are pursuing higher education in Europe. Please read the following excerpts from two of those letters that we published. It made me cry.

“The Pope wants us to go public. We wish to respond to the Pope’s advice for the opening up of the underground Church and to be in communion with the brothers and sisters of the official Church. But the local government refuses to recognize our religious status, wants us to be reeducated in its official seminary in Beijing, and to accept the government’s political reeducation and examination. We will be allowed to carry on our pastoral work only if we pass all these reeducation requirements; otherwise, we are still considered illegal. We of course know what exactly the government is demanding for all these reeducations. How would a priest feel if he, having already worked for approximately 20 years, had to go back to a communist seminary to be reeducated in its theology and political thought? This would not simply be a review of knowledge, but more importantly an attempt to change my viewpoint on faith and theology. Or put simply, to be brain washed. The result could be not only the denial of my past decision to be an underground priest, but also the betrayal of my faith and conscience. So the underground religious cannot just blindly cross their line and go to work for the official Church. It is not the leadership of the underground Church that is refusing to give up its current pastoral work or to give up remembering its past persecuted experience, or to purposely not cooperate with the government. It is the ‘one sided’ appeasement policy of the Vatican that failed to work out the details of how the underground Church religious should be merged with and accepted by the official Church. It is very regrettable that the appeasement policy of the Vatican has not obtained the understanding and the reasonable response from the Chinese government. We should not just be pushed across the line without a clear understanding with the Chinese government, of how this process should be peacefully carried out.”

“In spite of the effort by the Vatican to publicly merge the underground Church with the official Church, the local government is not willing to give legal status and to offer jobs to the religious and other leaders of the underground Church. In the meantime, one year after the China letter from the Pope, more and more underground faithful, at the urging of the Vatican, started to join the official Church. Therefore, taking full advantage of support from the Vatican, using the Vatican’s own authority, the Chinese government was able to realize, almost within one year, the policy of ‘self-propagation, self-support, self-administration,’ and an independent Catholic Church that the Chinese government was not able to implement for more than 50 years, a policy continuously condemned by all the Popes since 1949. . . . Under this condition, why should the Chinese government be anxious to establish normal diplomatic relations with the Vatican? It is to the clear advantage of the Chinese government to wait for the Vatican to give in completely until all the conditions set forth by the Chinese government are met by the Vatican!”

To add a thought of mine to the above paragraph. The Chinese communist government is rapidly accomplishing its objective to bring the Catholics to the Official Church, which remains tightly under the control of the Chinese government. By the Vatican’s own policy of not appointing new underground bishops (at least we are not aware of any), nearly all underground bishops will die of old age within the next ten years. When that happens, assuming the continuation of the communist persecution, how will there be One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in China

without underground bishops? By the Vatican's own design (if there no change of policy in the Vatican), the Official Church will be the only surviving Church in China. Negotiation and dialogue with the Chinese government by the Vatican will no longer be necessary.

These two letters are only samples and do not present isolated cases. These are representative of the opinion of a cross section of new generations of underground religious and pastors who enthusiastically persevere in their vocations in the underground Church during the very difficult recent decades. They are educated, knowledgeable, and fiercely loyal to the magisterium. For more information, please read our Christmas 2008 letter or go to http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/articles/newsletter/christmas_greetings2008.htm.

In the last sixty years, we all know that there has been a struggle between the Chinese communist government and the Roman Catholic Church. A stark contrast in policy and position of these two sides clearly emerged. The Chinese government had never wavered its objective to eliminate the universal Roman Catholic Church in China by sponsoring a government sanctioned official Church under the authority of the Patriotic Association. In the meantime, the Vatican adopted a convoluted policy, zigzagging its policy from Pope Pius XII's very tough stand to Pope John Paul II's appeasement, and now to Pope Benedict XVI's more paternal policy of unity and reconciliation. The recent policy did not provide precise and well thought out procedures for the underground or unofficial Church. The end result of these Vatican policies will only serve to severely weaken the morale and the structure of the underground or unofficial Church in China as described by the letter from the underground priest quoted above.

Ten years ago in March 2000, the Cardinal Kung Foundation issued an open letter to the officials of the Holy See for definitive guidance, because we were deeply 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. Although this open letter was not officially answered by the Holy See, Pope Benedict XVI's letter to China seven years later in 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 newsletters. For details, please visit http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/articles/newsletter/autumn_greetings2007.htm.

Through Pope Benedict XVI's own Letter to China in 2007 and through the work of Cardinal Joseph Zen and other Church officials, a number of important directives, comments and critical analyses on the Vatican's China policy have been made. There is no question that we all hope for a united Roman Catholic Church in China approved by both the Pope and the Chinese government and for the end of the sixty years of persecution. But, Obviously, there is much difficult work ahead.

Persecution Continues

Approval by the government is no guarantee that the rights of the Church will be respected as we witnessed recently on the night of June 7 in the city of Ordos, in southern Mongolia, with the court-ordered destruction of the Dongsheng Catholic Church. The Church belonged to an open, government-registered, Catholic community of about one thousand parishioners. Notice had been given to the pastor that the government wanted the church demolished in order to make way for a new road. Father Gao En had met several times with Ordos' magistrates in an attempt to convince them not to do this. He and a lay leader, Yang Yizhi, were awakened around midnight by the loud noise and tried to stop the destruction but they were taken away in handcuffs and detained at the police station for twenty hours.

With the underground Catholic Church, the government's policy is still "business as usual" and the business is persecution. This past May 30 two underground priests, Fathers Joseph Wang Jianchen and Joseph Li De of Xuanhua in Hebei province were waylaid by police while on their way to say Mass on Trinity Sunday for the faithful in Huaian county. Church sources believe that Father Li's secret ordination six months earlier must have come to the attention of the authorities. Father Wang has been a priest since 1989. The detention of these two priests follows the detention last year of Fathers Liu Jianzhong, Zhang Cunhui, Zhang Jianlin, and Zhong Mingchang, all from Hebei. The priest were all eventually released, however Father Jianlin was sent to his home for "reflection" and he is obliged to report every day to the local authorities.

I need not remind our readers that in addition to the two bishops who have died in prison in the past few years, Bishop Gao Kexian in 2005 and Bishop Han Dingxiang in 2007 (both of whom were arrested eleven years ago),

there are three bishops who are still in prison or labor camps and whose whereabouts are unknown. They are Bishop Jia Zhiguo (arrested more than a dozen times since 2004), [editorial note: Bishop Jia has now been released on July 7 just after the press of this letter], Bishop Shi Enxiang (arrested in 2001), and Bishop Su Zhimin (arrested in 1997). Bishop Su of Baoding is a prominent leader of the underground Church who had been arrested many times. He had managed in January, 1994, to meet with the valiant, pro-life, New Jersey Congressman Christopher Smith while the statesman was on a fact-finding mission in China. Upon Smith's departure from China, Bishop Su paid the price with his immediate arrest. Many priests, (see the Foundation website), were arrested in the past years, and are still incarcerated in detention centers, or in labor camps. Let us pray for them, or ask them to pray for us if they have already gone to their everlasting reward.

The Church of Innumerable Martyrs

In his pilgrimage this past May to Fatima, Portugal, Pope Benedict XVI emphasized the fact that the saints lived a radical Christian life, in opposition to pluralistic secularism, at times to the shedding of their blood: *“Living amid a plurality of value systems and ethical outlooks,”* the Holy Father noted, *“requires a journey to the core of one’s being and to the nucleus of Christianity so as to reinforce the quality of one’s witness to the point of sanctity, and to find mission paths that lead even to the radical choice of martyrdom.”*

This is the Roman Catholic Church in China, a Church of innumerable martyrs, who, even if many of their martyrdoms were a long dry one, the path the faithful freely chose was their *“radical choice of martyrdom ”* as the Pope had taught us.

In his prayer for China, which the Pope offered at the conclusion of his Letter to China, the Holy Father asked that Our Lady accompany the Church in China *“with maternal solicitude”* and intercede for the Church, *“together with Saint Joseph and the countless Holy Martyrs of China.”*

Similarly Pope John Paul II, a little less than a year before he canonized the 120 Chinese martyrs who died during the Boxer rebellion in the early 1900s, said in a message dated Dec. 8, 1999, to all Catholics of China that *“in your midst, too, the blood of your martyrs has become the seed of a multitude of authentic disciples of Jesus. My heart overflows with wonder and gratitude to God for the generous witness given by a host of bishops, priests, men and women religious, and lay people. And it seems that the time of trial, in some places, has not yet come to an end!”*

Recently, June 6, a modern-day martyr of Communist barbarity, [Father Jerzey Popieluszko](#), was beatified. The bound and gagged body of the thirty-seven year-old priest, who was well-known in Poland for his passionate sermons, and his criticism of Communist injustices, was dredged from a reservoir on the Vistula River Oct. 30, 1984, just eleven days after he was kidnapped by the secret police while returning from a night Mass in Bydgoszcz.

Please note that it took only twenty-six years for Father Popieluszko to be beatified. How wonderful and holy it is. I feel very joyful over his beatification and am praying to him for his intercession for many of my personal needs and for our Church in China. However, I cannot help but remember that the headmaster of my high school in Shanghai, [Father Beda Chang, S. J.](#), a renowned and eloquent scholar, was arrested by the Chinese communist government on August 9, 1951. Three months later on November 11, Father Beda Chang lay dead. We now know that his death was the result of his unspeakable sufferings for his flat refusal to the offer from the Chinese communists for him to take the leadership of the Independent Church in Shanghai, a forerunner of the official Patriotic Association. He was interrogated ruthlessly and continuously night after night. When his lack of sleep for months finally poisoned his nervous system, Father Beda fell into a coma. The Blessed Mother came and took him home.

Like Father Popieluszko, Father Beda Chang of Shanghai is also a modern-day martyr of Communist barbarity. The difference is, after twenty-six years, Father Popieluszko is rightly beatified. On the other hand, for Father Beda Chang, it has been almost fifty-nine years since his martyrdom. Yet, we have heard nothing for the cause of his beatification.

We have hundreds more, or even thousands, of martyrs from China like Father Beda Chang, S. J., who were slain for their Faith by the communists ever since they took over China in 1949. They were undisputed martyrs for their Faith. They chose the ultimate sacrifice in order to remain faithful to the Roman Catholic Church in China. To

illustrate a few more: there is [Bishop Peter Joseph Fan Xueyan](#), who was the Bishop of Baoding in Hebei for about forty-one years. He was pronounced dead in jail on April 13, 1992, by the Chinese communist government. He was incarcerated for thirty-four years in jail and labor camp. The newspaper *Avvenire* in Italy published a photo of Bishop Fan's corpse. Reuter news quoted the newspaper: "*There was a large bruise on the right side of the man's face. The bones of his legs appeared to be broken. The two legs were tied so tightly together with white cloth that it was difficult to untie them. There was obviously something they wanted to hide.*"

There is [Father Francis Chu, S.J.](#), who died in 1983 after thirty years in prison – one year before the death of the venerable Father Popieluszko. There is [Father Wu Ying Feng](#), who was tortured to death in jail during the Cultural Revolution. There is [Father Wang Jensheng](#), who was arrested in 1953 and died in jail fifty years ago in 1960 after great torment and suffering. There are [Brother Joche-Albert, FMS](#), and [Mr. Francis Shen](#), the President of the Legion of Mary of Shanghai Praesidium, who were executed in public in 1951 and 1963 respectively. The list can go on and on.

There are also many “dry” martyrs who died after they were released from decades of imprisonment. They are [Cardinal Ignatius Kung](#), imprisoned for thirty-two and a half years, [Archbishop Dominic Tang](#) for twenty-two years, Father [Francis Tsai \(Cai\)](#) for thirty-four years, [Father Chang Hsipin](#) for twenty-one years, and Father [Chu Hungsheng](#) for thirty-one years, and many more.

We have heard no hint from the Vatican concerning the beatification and canonization of any of the above-mentioned champions of the Faith. Why not? Martyrdom must be promptly recognized, particularly in this modern world. Although I am saddened that so many Chinese communist-era martyrs, some of whom I have known personally, have been waiting so long to be raised to the altar, I am immensely grateful and joyful that they have given the “*the radical choice of martyrdom*”.

I do not know if Father Popieluszko would have been beatified if Poland were still under the yoke of Communism. When it comes to Communist regimes, is it political considerations, or fear of intensifying persecution, that seemingly puts any canonizations of its Catholic victims on hold? I do not know. But, is it right and fair?

The same can be said for Slovenia's [Lojze Grozde](#), a nineteen-year-old man, who was tortured and killed in 1943. He was finally beatified a few weeks ago on June 13. His short life was a total oblation to Jesus and Mary. While walking to his home he was accosted by Communist thugs who accused him of being a spy. The only “documents” they found on him were a missal, a book *The Imitation of Christ*, and another book on Our Lady of Fatima.

There is no question that the faithful in China would be animated with renewed zeal if some of her more modern martyrs, slain by the Reds in hatred for the Faith, were canonized, or at least beatified. Father Igor Luzar, postulator for the Venerable Grozde, said that his beatification represents “*a strong spiritual stimulus*” for the people of Slovenia. Wouldn't the beatification or canonization of any martyr in any country represent “*a strong spiritual stimulus*”? Wouldn't any country, especially those still under the control of communists, need this “*spiritual stimulus*” by having their martyrs speedily recognized by the Catholic Church? Wouldn't the effect of this “*spiritual stimulus*” be so powerful for evangelization that it surpasses the effect of “political correctness” that put the earned beatification or canonization of the martyrs on hold, using misguided reasoning because it is for the “larger-picture”? I believe that the answers to these questions have to be “Yes”. Besides, what “picture” could be larger, stronger, and more important than the “*spiritual stimulus*” that Father Luzar had referred to?

It is only right that the Church honors those on earth who wear the martyrs' crown in heaven. The Church in China carries a heavy cross today as it has, most especially, since 1949. The faithful in China need such a “*strong spiritual stimulus*” far more while they are enduring such persecution than after the trials end. The faithful Chinese would be so excited with joy if the Pope, having encouraged us to make this “*radical choice of martyrdom*” that we have, could at least reward these martyrs in China with a beatification by raising them to the altar, because as the head of the visible Church, the Pope can recognize upon earth the reward the martyrs have been given in heaven. Not to do so promptly is not to encourage the “*radical choice of martyrdom*” as the Pope has urged. It is, in fact, tantamount to almost seemingly abandoning the faithful members of the Church who still suffer under the same godless leviathan that continues to persecute the Church in China.

Only in heaven will we know fully the value of the cross and the providential designs of God in giving our oppressed brothers and sisters this generous share in the mystery of the Passion of His Son. May the Church in China continue to bear the precious cross with joy. May the Church not only be compassionate to the separated brothers and sisters, but also be compassionate to those who have remained faithful to their Catholic Faith for the past six decades in spite of persecutions. May the Church be very generous to timely reward China without further delay with this “*spiritual stimulus*” as Father Luzar had affirmed.

An Appeal for Funds

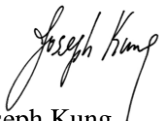
We are very grateful for and do realize that any donation made to this Foundation in this difficult economic environment is a significant financial sacrifice for our benefactors. During the recent past, many of our donors had no choice but to reduce their donations due to unemployment or to reduced income. We pray that their temporary financial setback will be over soon. During the past eighteen months, our total donations were reduced by 20 percent. We are now short of approximately \$60,000 for our committed projects.

One of the most important programs of the Foundation is the financial support to the underground religious students both in China and overseas. We already have many graduates with a Master’s degree or Ph.D. who returned to work in the underground Church during the past three years. However, the Foundation is facing a serious deficit for this program. The possibility to discontinue or further reduce financial support to some underground religious is real. The underground dioceses are too poor to support these students on their own. It will be a waste of much needed talents if they must return to China before completing the requirements for their degree because of our insufficient funds to support them.

In addition, we have more than one hundred handicapped orphans to support. The funding to the orphanage, which was modest to begin with, also needs to be reduced. Unfortunately, the orphans will not have some of the most basic essentials they need since we are this orphanage’s primary supporter. The Chinese government will not support a disabled orphanage operated by an underground bishop. The government will not take care of these disabled orphans. There are many other pastoral activities, as well, that this Foundation sponsors in China. I am afraid that these will also have to be curtailed.

Unlike other dioceses around the world, the underground Church in China cannot solicit donations directly and openly from the public. The Cardinal Kung Foundation must beg for this silent Church. If you are blessed with some financial ability during this difficult economic time, please help us to keep our projects going.

Yours sincerely in Christ



Joseph Kung
President, Cardinal Kung Foundation

Please Remember The Cardinal Kung Foundation In Your Will

Thank You