



Easter 2015

Dear Friends:

Wishing you a Holy and Happy Easter

As Lent draws to a close, our spirits look forward to the joy of Easter. There would be no Resurrection of the Lord, however, without His Passion. It seems that the Church in many places throughout the world, especially in the Middle East and China, has been chosen by God in our time to carry the Cross with Jesus under intense persecution. What an honor to be so chosen! As Cardinal Kung told the clergy of the Shanghai diocese on New Year Eve of 1952, when persecution was intensified, *"I am very grateful and happy to see the deep faith and fidelity among you. I am most grateful to God. God is willing to be glorified in our diocese."* Even the students of the diocese did not shy away from the increasing persecution from the communist government. The students told their bishop in 1952, *"The past year has great significance to us. We recall vividly this period of blood and tears. However, in pain, we received hope and warmth. In sacrifice, we found joy and love."* Indeed, there were so many martyrs and confessors of the Faith in China, not only among bishops and clergy, also among the students and laity. More than Simon of Cyrene, who was chosen, reluctantly at first, to help Jesus carry His Cross part of the way to Calvary, the persecuted Church in China and Christians elsewhere must carry this Cross with Jesus the full "five miles" all the way from the governor's hall of Pontius Pilate to the top of the hill of Calvary. These "five miles" have extended for a long time under Chinese communist regimes, and now Islamist extremist terror.

The Church relives the Savior's mortal life on earth throughout the centuries. At the Church of Our Lady of the Angels and Our Lady of the Martyrs, Rome, Cardinal Kung preached:

"Pope Pius XII once asked a group of seminarians how many special signs distinguished the true Church of God. They answered immediately, 'It is one, holy, catholic and apostolic.' The Pope said, 'There is still a fifth sign.' The seminarians did not know how to answer. The Pope said, 'Persecution.'..... if the Church enjoyed peace all the time without any persecution, it would be very abnormal. It would be a reason for us to worry and examine ourselves, perhaps we were not living as faithful disciples of Christ. As persecution must be expected, it comes as a special sign of the Church and we should not try to make compromises or concessions of any kind in order to bring the persecution to an end quickly."

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

As Christ hung dying on the Cross, He proclaimed that now, with His death, all things were "consummated." Mankind had been redeemed, the gates of heaven would be opened forever for the just. Cardinal Kung in his meditations on the passion, which were written in prison, had this to say: (This prayer card is available for you upon your written request)

"Jesus accepted suffering inflicted by every kind of person. The apostles betrayed Him, the Jews made accusations against Him, the Gentiles cursed Him, high priests, officials, soldiers and people all determined to kill Him. Because Jesus suffered in order to save all classes of people, so He accepted sufferings caused by all kinds of people, including all of us. Are we not increasing His suffering by our lack of faith, committing sin and not loving His Sacred Heart? We should offer our sufferings in reparations for our sins and those of others, asking for mercy and forgiveness and not fail to respond to the graces Jesus obtained for us through His Passion."

With hardened hearts the chief priests left Calvary, after seeing that Christ was dead and noting where He was buried, and, ignoring the Sabbath rest, they went to Pilate to ask for soldiers to guard the tomb, in order to prevent His disciples from stealing away the body. The chief priests, even the Apostles, did not understand Jesus' promise that He would rise again in glory on the third day.

We have a similar episode with the burial of Shanghai's first martyr, Father Beda Chang, a young, robust priest/scholar who graduated from a theologate in France. In 1951, at the time of his arrest, he was the principal of St. Ignatius High School and dean of the Aurora College of Art and Science. It was the early period of the Three-Self Movement, the forerunner of the government founded Patriotic Church. Father Beda Chang eloquently refuted the Three-Self Movement and vigorously defended the holy and apostolic union of the Catholic Church in China with Rome. For this he was arrested in 1951. He died in jail after three months of the most inhuman abuse. The communist government, after seeing that their enemy, Father Chang, was dead and buried, placed guards at his tomb for the same reason as Pilate placed soldiers to guard the tomb of Christ. Fr. Beda's death energized the entire Shanghai Diocese, clergy and laity alike, to prepare to die for their Faith. The government issued a statement denouncing the prayers and Masses for Father Chang as a "new type of bacteria warfare by the imperialists – a counterrevolutionary mental bacteria." (Weir, Charlene, *The Wisdom of the Popes*, page 219)

Both the chief priests of the Jews and the communist police feared that the remains of their "Enemy" be the cause of miracles. No miracles would be tolerated at these tombs, neither by the chief priests who condemned Our Lord to death, nor by the communists who killed Father Beda Chang. No miracles allowed! The Chinese government went so far as to warn Bishop Kung, Father Chang's bishop, if anything occurred miraculously, that he, Bishop Kung, would be held responsible.

The persecutions of the Catholic Church continues today in China. Cardinal Zen ZeKui, the Bishop Emeritus of Hong Kong, said: "*The Chinese government has intensified the persecution recently*". Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) scoffed: "*There is a huge gulf now between China and the Catholic Church....religious freedom, as bad as it was, has further deteriorated in China....Authorities continued to harass Catholics who practice their faith outside of state-approved parameters....*" Even though China has attained rapid economic growth for over two decades, China still has no religious freedom.

There is [an insert in this newsletter featuring several dozen blood martyrs and dry martyrs](#). Thousands of such martyrs have graced the Church in China. These pictured martyrs are but a handful that I am very familiar with. They all in one way or another have much to do with me and with my family. They include my uncle, Cardinal Kung, my schoolmates, friends, teachers, high school administrators, diocesan officials, and pastors.

It is only right that the Church on earth honors those who wear the martyrs' crown in heaven. The Church in China carries a heavy cross today as it has since 1949 when the communists took over China. After sixty-five years of continued persecution, the faithful in China need a "strong spiritual stimulus" by hopefully having some of these martyrs beatified or canonized, so that they will be publically recognized for their heroism and fidelity. These faithful need this stimulus far more while they are enduring such persecution than after the trials end. Furthermore, there is no indication that this will end soon.

Today, many foreign missionaries are once again working in China. They work with the Catholic Patriotic Association, or with its Patriotic Bishops. They teach in various schools and seminaries, and do social work. Millions of donations from overseas religious communities continue to pour into the Catholic Patriotic Association dioceses. It is easy to imagine the confusion and sadness in the Underground Church watching these daily events. The persecuted Underground Church needs the beatifications or canonizations of the martyrs as an affirmation that fidelity to the Pope, Christ's representative on earth, and the communion with the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church are still relevant today as they were sixty-five years ago. May the thousands of martyrs in China intercede for all of us from heaven. May we rise with them glorious in Christ on the Last Day. In your Lenten prayers, please also remember the Underground Church so that all the faithful loyal to the Pope may have a grace-filled and safe Holy Week and Easter.

Letter from China

Recently, one of our underground students from Rome returned to China. He was clandestinely ordained a priest. I was very inspired by his letter to me:

"2015 brings a new beginning! God has given me the grace of being ordained a priest in China, and then He has granted me a safe return to Rome. I want to take this occasion to express my gratitude to God for His blessings and to thank you and all my other benefactors for their financial help and special prayers for me.

"My ordination ceremony was conducted, as usual, clandestinely, in the presence of only a few persons. They are priests, seminarians, and nuns, but without my family members. The Bishop reminded me, 'During your first Mass, don't forget to include your own intentions and to offer thanks for everything given to you, since you have now given yourself to God.' To me, the Bishop's words not only applied for those specific moments, but they will also be a guiding principle for the rest of my ordained life.

"The ceremony ended very early in the morning. Because of the police at the front gate of the Church, we waited till 2:30 am to leave the church. At this wee hour, others were all resting. However, I was wide-awake. Filled with the Grace of God, I wrote down the feelings that seized me at that moment:

1) *"Today I am ordained;
No flowers, applause or fervent audience;
I am content
For He has given me all that's beautiful.*

2) *"People say,
'Family should have attended';
Jesus says,
Abandon everything for me.*

3) *"People say,
'A cloak of grandeur you must adorn';
Jesus reveals
Himself to me in His crucifixion.*

4) *"Today I am ordained, Saturday!
The day of the Blessed Mother;
This day Christ was buried;
This day is made holy to me walking alongside Blessed Mother.*

5) *"I am blessed,
I possess Him, I possess all;
Thus I begin my journey with my Blessed Mother;
I am blessed.*

"I sincerely want to thank you once again for your prayers. I believe Cardinal Kung must have been among you all, giving me special help from Heaven. Whenever I celebrate Mass, I will especially remember you and my benefactors.

"I am forwarding to you, Mr. Kung, a letter of thanks from my Bishop."

Dear Mr. Kung,

In the loving care of the Almighty God, I send you this Christmas greeting from a Bishop's house where I am unable to perform the normal function of a spiritual leader. I thank you for your help and support to Rev xxxx all through the years. His answer to God's call and his spiritual journey to priesthood is undoubtedly the fruit of your prayers.

At the same time, I invite you to travel with him, in your prayers, the spiritual journey all through his life as a priest, so that he will be a faithful, conscientious and good son of the China underground Church.

Finally, through the intercession of our Blessed Mother the Virgin Mary and Cardinal Kung, may the Lord bless your family and your work.

Bishop of xxxx (Date.....)

Since receipt of above letter, two more underground priests were clandestinely ordained in the same quiet early hour. I look forward to more joyful news such as this, as more underground seminarians assisted by your generous donations are graduating from universities in Europe with advanced degrees. Thanks be to God.

China News

1) Did this Bishop really die in prison? - Bishop Cosma Shi Enxiang, an underground Bishop of Yixian in Hebei, China, may have died in jail. He was to turn 94 this month. He was first sent to jail in 1954. The New York Times reported: "He was in and out of jail in the 1980s and 1990s. On April 13, 2001, at the age of 80, he was taken into custody...., and held without being charged...." No one was able to contact him during the subsequent fourteen years. Neither his body, nor even his ashes, have been returned to the family. AsiaNews reported that the Baoding council, when it was asked about the Bishop's death, replied it knew nothing and said that the village mayor (who broke the news of the death) was drunk, or misheard, or understood it wrongly. The death of Bishop Shi, at the time of this writing, has been retracted by the Chinese government. We really do not know if Bishop Shi is still alive or is dead. Or, is Beijing hiding the body of Bishop Shi? A Yixian faithful told AsiaNews:

"We just want the body or his ashes, and we want to give a proper burial to this martyr of the faith', who spent 54 years (more than half of his life) in prison. But in China the dead are as frightening as the living, if not even more so."

2) Illicit Ordinations of Bishop - According to UCANews, "China will continue its practice of electing and ordaining bishops independent of the Holy See, according to a 2015 working plan by the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA).... New working plan for religious affairs gives no hint of rapprochement with the Vatican."

3) China Visit by The Pope - Cardinal Zen said: "Should the Pope be invited now to visit China, I would advise against it. Based on the lack of religious freedom and the recent intensification of China's oppressive religious policy, I have no reason to doubt that such an invitation would be just a trick to manipulate the Pope and create a false impression. And one of its effects would be to cause pain to those who are faithful to the Pope's authority...There is no sign of any goodwill on the part of China."

4) Sino-Vatican relations - Pope Francis, on his plane trip back from South Korea, in his usual informal and spontaneous way boasted that ".....If I want to go to China? For sure! Tomorrow!....." Cardinal Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, echoed that there are "promising prospects" for China-Holy See relations. It appears that there is an element of optimism in the air

regarding the Sino-Vatican relations. In December, Pope Francis even declined a meeting with the Dalai Lama to avoid a diplomatic faux pas. However, the *Tablet*, a Catholic weekly of England, reported that "*China has instructed the Holy See to stop interfering in its internal affairs 'in the name of religion,' if it wants a thaw in relations between the two countries.*"

So, where do we stand? There are so many problems to be solved if an accord could be reached between China and the Vatican. To name just a few: there is Taiwan; the nomination of bishops; the dissolution of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association; the excommunicated bishops; the illegitimate bishops; the commingling of illegitimate and legitimate bishops in their ordinations; the balance of the official and unofficial rights for one unified structure; the tolerance of the Chinese government for the Roman Catholic Church in China to profess its religious truth freely; and other problems. What credibility does China have to give us any hope that it will make enough of a compromise in order to achieve a good agreement with Rome? Did not experience already demonstrate that in these past years, the Vatican has already conceded too much to the Chinese communist government? What else can the Pope do short of compromising basic Roman Catholic dogma? It is China that must start understanding that basic Catholic dogmas are not negotiable and it is China that must start making meaningful compromise so that the genuine Roman Catholic Church can conduct its divine mission there unhindered. It was China, not the Vatican, that first severed diplomatic relations with the Holy See by expelling the Papal Nuncio in 1951.

5) Chinese Communist Party Membership - The *Independent* newspaper of England reported that "*applicants to the Communist Party of China will be rejected in the future if they are found to embrace any religion, and existing members will be forced to denounce their beliefs.*" However, Christians now outnumber communists in China. Churches are overflowing, and communist leaders are furious about that.

6) Church Destruction - Two Catholic churches in two neighboring provinces in China were demolished in one week while a third had its cross removed, all in September 2014. Also, in May 2014, 23 churches in Wenzhou city were served with demolition orders and according to reports more than 300 crosses have been removed from religious sites.

Changes in projects

Support a Nun Program: Effective immediately, Novice program will be renamed as "Support a Nun Program". It has expanded to include all nuns in the convent to subsidize their basic living expenses. They are novices, postulants, and all sisters who have taken vows. The fees for sponsorships will remain unchanged at \$100 for six months or \$200 for one year. Other procedures will also remain the same. In fact, some convents already ask all nuns, including the novices, to pray for your intentions every day. Thus, we will all receive greater spiritual benefits from their daily prayers.

Partner in Vocation: Previously, we requested US \$600 donation from you for sponsoring each seminarian studying in China. This is an education fund for training seminarians and other religious in China and overseas. Due to rapid increase of the cost of living in China during the last ten years, the cost for educating a seminarian, including room, board, tuition, books, and other essentials are now US \$2,500 per seminarian for each year. Some seminarians are also attending universities in China. The costs are still much lower when compared with the cost for educating a seminarian at 10,000 Euro in Europe and \$25,000 in the United States. We have promised to subsidize US \$1,200 for one seminarian or other religious for each academic year in China or in Europe. A sponsor may donate \$100 per month, or \$600 every six months, or \$1200 in lump sum for one year. You can do this very conveniently through automatic recurring credit card donations on our website, or through the mail. We need one hundred of those sponsors. The students will remember their sponsors in their prayers. If you wish to donate a smaller amount toward this program, we will welcome your donation too. This vital project affects the future Catholic Church in China. Please support us.

Donation Request

In our Christmas letter last year, we indicated that we had almost a thirty percent drop in our donation receipts for the last fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. We stated that the reduction of receipts will curtail our various programs. Many of you kindly responded with a special gift. For that, we are most appreciative and very thankful for your generosity. However, from December 15, 2014 to the time of the printing of this Easter letter, only 30 percent of our regular donors have responded. If you did not have a chance to send us a donation due to the busy holiday season, we pray that you will kindly send a donation to the Foundation soon, any amount that you can afford. Our financial assistance is critical to the many charitable and religious works of the underground Church.

The Cause - Please pray one Hail Mary daily for the opening of the cause of Cardinal Ignatius Kung.

Your sincerely in Christ

Joseph Kung
President, Cardinal Kung Foundation

Please Remember The Cardinal Kung Foundation In Your Will

Thank You