



## THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION

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Easter Season, 2018

Dear Friends,

Web Page: <http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org>

*We pray that you will be blessed with joy, peace and hope of the Easter Season.*

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

### **18<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Cardinal Kung**

On March 10, 2018, Cardinal Kung was remembered at a Solemn Latin High Mass at the Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist, Stamford, Connecticut where his funeral Mass was offered by James Francis Cardinal Stafford, Personal Envoy and Representative of Saint Pope John Paul II. At the Anniversary Mass, hanging on both sides of this magnificent altar, was a pair of 12-foot tall red banners written in Cardinal Kung's own handwriting. ***“Neither fire nor sword will take away my faith in God.”*** The words explained the journey of Cardinal Kung from 1949 to 2000: 32 long years in solitary confinement deprived of the sacraments, Mass and religious books; separation from his diocese, family and country; and finally his death in exile in the USA. As The Servant of God, Archbishop Fulton Sheen wrote, “The West has Mindszenty, the East has Kung. God is glorified in his saints.”



After China turned Communist in 1949 Father Ignatius Kung Pin-Mei, in obedience to the Holy Father, became the first Chinese national Bishop of Shanghai, Administrator to Soochow and Nanking. For five years before his arrest in 1955, he vigorously prepared the diocese by training catechists to pass on their faith to future generations. He turned down offers from friends to leave China in order to stand by his clergy and faithful, and reminded his priests of God's promise of Easter. In memory of the Cardinal's hope and courage, pray for China during this Easter Season, as the fate of millions in the underground church is hanging in the balance awaiting the outcome of the Vatican-China negotiations.

**Pledge of Fidelity** To strengthen the resolve of the diocese, Bishop Kung accompanied all the clergy and seminarians on a pilgrimage to the Basilica of SheShan, Shrine of Our Lady of Help of Christians. Standing before the statue of Our Lady, they solemnly pledged that they would not compromise their faith nor deny the Church. During the persecution, most of them accepted long imprisonment or even martyrdom.

**His Fidelity and Life Sentence** It will be helpful to revisit few events in Cardinal Kung's life to understand the reasons why an underground church exists in China. Bishop Kung was arrested in 1955. The chief prosecutor offered him immediate freedom if he would accept leadership in the Independent church (Chinese Patriotic Association). Kung said firmly, ***“I am a Catholic Bishop. If I renounce 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 never my duty.”*** The Chief Prosecutor snapped back, “Do you know that I can put a bullet in your head?” Bishop calmly replied, ***“I will be in heaven immediately.”*** Five years in jail, isolation and long interrogation sessions did not break his fidelity to the Holy See. In 1960, Bishop Kung was sentenced to life imprisonment for counter-revolutionary, not working with the government. He disappeared from the world with no letters, visits or relief parcels, not even from his family. In the early 1980s after Bishop Kung served over 20 years, the government relaxed slightly its policy towards sentencing. Many sentences were reviewed. Some were

reduced. Bishop Kung was asked to renounce the Pope and to admit his crime in exchange for a shorter sentence. He turned down the offer immediately. He later explained: *“If my position could be negotiated, I would not have been jailed in 1955.”*

**Released and the Free World** In 1987 after serving 32 1/2 years of incarceration, this ailing 85 year old Bishop was allowed to leave for USA for medical treatment and to see his family. Few years later, the Chinese government officially exiled him. In 1991, Saint John Paul II announced that Bishop Kung had been elevated to Cardinal in pectore (in the heart of the Pope) in 1979 while he was in jail. Cardinal Kung lived in the free world for 12 ½ years and was a powerful witness of the religious persecution in China. His Coat Of Arms said, “One fold and One Shepherd.” Before his departure to Vatican to receive his red hat, he spoke to the bishops in China through the Voice of America inviting the Official Bishops to join him spiritually in the eternal city.

At present, Vatican is working hard on a Vatican-China agreement to unify the Patriotic church and the Underground. It is expected that Vatican will be reconciled with all Patriotic bishops and will direct all underground clergy to register with the Patriotic church. Then, Patriotic church and underground church will worship as one united Church under the Patriotic church control. It was precisely to avoid worshipping under the Patriotic church’s control that Cardinal Kung and hundreds of Roman Catholic clergy accepted martyrdom or to worship clandestinely. Let us repeat Cardinal Kung’s plead, *“[The Catholic Church in China will never disappear. Stay with us with your prayers until Holy Mother saves us in her own time.](#)”*

### Foundation News

**Mass Stipend Program** Due to the new religious policy in China, effective immediately, we have temporarily suspended accepting requests for Gregorian Masses and Novena Masses until we are sure that it is possible for the underground priests to offer 30 days or 9 days of Masses uninterrupted. We will, however, honor all such requests already on hand. We will be happy to accept requests for regular, individual Masses which are important support for the underground clergy. Thank you.

**Masses for our Benefactors** During the year, the Foundation offers about 200 Holy Masses for our benefactors, living or deceased. Whenever we are informed of the death of a benefactor, a Holy Mass is offered for the repose of the soul.

**World Day of Prayer for China** In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI established an annual World Day of Prayer for China on **May 24<sup>th</sup>**. *There will be a [Solemn Latin High Mass offered at the Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist, Stamford, Connecticut, on Friday, May 18, 2018 at 7PM.](#)* You are all welcome to join. The address is 279 Atlantic Street, Stamford CT. Each year, many donors offer Masses at their own parishes around May 24 for the persecuted Church in China. We are very grateful! Your prayers, sacrifice and Masses for China are especially urgent now. If you need a Our Lady of SheShan prayer card, with a prayer authored by Pope Benedict, please email [cardinalkungfdn@cs.com](mailto:cardinalkungfdn@cs.com). *If a priest wishes to introduce World Day of Prayers for China to his congregation or seminary, we will be happy to support him with these prayer cards for his congregation.*

**HouseTop Magazine** **HouseTop** is a magazine published by the **Saint Benedict Center, The Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary**, Still Rivers, MA. Each issue looks in depth at the life of a saint. A recent issue has a 25-page article on Cardinal Kung. In this community’s hearts, Cardinal Kung has the heroic virtues of a saint! The community wrote with great understanding and affection for the Cardinal as they have met him on numerous occasions. Reading the Cardinal’s life will give you a better understanding of the persecution in China. You can buy a copy (\$3) from [www.saintbenedict.com](http://www.saintbenedict.com)

### China Update

**President Xi’s Jinping** The 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress held in October 2017 in Beijing passed some significant resolutions affecting China’s policies for the next 10 years and beyond.

1) The Congress approved and incorporated “*Xi Jinping Thought*” into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China, fully endorsing Xi’s policies and vision for China. Xi maintained that China would be a political system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Religion must “sinicize” their faith and strongly against any foreign influence.

2) President Xi Jinping was reconfirmed concurrently as the President of China, the General Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, effectively controlling all policies in China.

In March 2018, the term of President Xi was confirmed to be without limit. Instead of a 5-year term, Xi is now President for life, controlling the Communist party, the Government and the Military.

### Major Changes in Government

**State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA)** Since its formation, the Patriotic Bishops Conference reported to the SARA which controlled church activities. This Bureau in turn reported to the United Front Work Department (UFWD), the Communist party that sets policies. To step up control on all religions, The Communist Party dissolved the SARA placing the bishops directly under the Party (UFWD) control. With this change in the reporting line, The Vatican-China agreement and the future Catholic Church in China will be controlled by a Communist party through UFWD.

**Removal and Destruction of Crosses** Xia Baolong was responsible for the removal and destruction of 1700 crosses in Zhejiang in 2013. He is well regarded by President Xi. Xia recently was elected Vice Chairman and Secretary General of the Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference, a senior position in the party. This will be a major setback for religious freedom.

## **New Religious Policy in China**

1) **“America”**, the Jesuit magazine, reported that the Right to Worship is guaranteed under the China Constitution if it is guided by Party policy. *“Religions must practice the core socialist values and must not endanger national security or harm state interests.”*

2) **Registration** Bishops and priests must be registered with the Communist government in order to perform any religious activities. Detailed information regarding finance, its sources, activities, participants, and locations, etc. must be reported.

3) **Religious Facilities** must be registered and approved. The penalties for violations include fines between 100,000 and 300,000 Yuan, confiscation of property, or heavy fines and punishment assessed on the owners of the properties.

4) **Restrictions on Religious Facilities** Cameras are being installed on sites of religious worships. Signs have been posted that young people age 18 or under may not attend religious activities even if parents accompany them. A church was closed due to this violation. Young people may not attend religious training or listen to homily. In future, young Catholic in China will not have sacraments until 18. Depriving the next generation of religious training will effectively control the growth of the Catholic Church.

6) **Religion for Party Members** Party members may not have religion, not even in private or after retirement. China has 38 millions Christians, 6 millions Catholic in the official church and an equal number in the underground church. The atheist government is alarm that the number of Christian and Catholics will soon surpass the number of communist party members.

7) **Control on online activities** Early this month, many online stores that sell **religious text** were told to take them off the shelf to avoid significant fines. A number of blogs on **Wechat** (a China based chat site) that is active in religious discussions were taken down overnight. Local stores have been warned that **Bible** may be sold by authorized establishments only.

## **The Vatican-China Agreement**

**The Vatican Position** Vatican considers this agreement historic as it will give the Pope the “final say” on the appointment of bishops. Similar negotiations took place during the Pontificates of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict but Vatican did not agree on their terms.

**Is Optimism realistic?** The negotiation team is very “optimistic” as they believe that Cardinal Parolin and President Xi have a mutual respect. Under this deal, the Pope the has final choice but only from a list of candidates pre-selected by the Patriotic Bishops Conference that is under the control of the Communist Party. It stands to reason that, being controlled by the Communist Party (UFWD), the Chinese Bishops Conference will rubber-stamp the Party’s choice. In reality, the Holy Father will be handing over his sacred authority and responsibility to a Communist government under this agreement. The Pope’s spokesman announced that after Easter that the signing of the agreement is NOT imminent, but contacts continue.

**Interview Given by the Secretary of State** [www.lastampa.it/2018/01/31/vaticaninsider/...interviews/parolin.../pagina.html](http://www.lastampa.it/2018/01/31/vaticaninsider/...interviews/parolin.../pagina.html)  
Cardinal Pietro Parolin confirmed that Pope Francis is aware of every step of the negotiation. Cardinal said that there is *“only one Catholic Church in China, but two communities of faithful called to follow a gradual path of reconciliation towards unity.”*

**One Church with Two Communities** One community is the **Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CCPA)** established by the atheist Chinese government in 1957. All clergy must register with CCPA and declared independence from the Pope whereas the other community is the **Roman Catholic Church in China**. This “one, catholic, holy and apostolic church” was founded by Christ some 2000 years ago.” A Catholic MUST stay in communion with the Successor of St. Peter. Thousands refused to renounce the Pope and therefore could not and would not join the independent church. They were persecuted as counter-revolutionary and had to worship clandestinely. It is heart-breaking that after 70 years, these heroic faithful are now being referred to by their own church as those who *would not work with the government*; rather than as *those who would not leave the Pope*.

**Bishops, Official and Underground** All Official bishops except seven have reconciled with the Holy See. These seven bishops were excommunicated by Vatican for accepting episcopal ordinations without Papal mandate and for other reasons. As a part of the deal, all seven excommunicated official bishops will be forgiven and be reconciled by Vatican.

During the past 10-15 years, the Vatican has not appointed any new underground bishops, even to replace those who died. Thus, the number of underground bishops has gradually been reduced from about 100 to 30 currently. After the agreement is signed, the Vatican will have to direct all 30 underground bishops to register with the Patriotic Association. Vatican will not be able to freely consecrate bishops except from those names submitted by the Patriotic Association and the Party.

**Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI’s letter to China** Cardinal Parolin referred to this letter to China which said that worshipping clandestinely is not a normal life in a church. But the Cardinal did not mention the subsequent section which stated, “the principles of independence and autonomy, self-management and democratic administration of the Church is incompatible with Catholic

doctrine.” The Cardinal also said that the fidelity and sacrifices of the underground church would not be forgotten. However, for the greater good, some members may be asked *to make the sacrifice* so that this agreement can move forward.

**Two Underground Bishops were chosen** to sacrifice for the success of the negotiation. In the winter of 2017, Archbishop Celli, a member of the negotiation team, ordered **Bishop Zhuang of Shantou**, an underground bishop to retire and to give his position to the excommunicated bishop Huang Bing Zhang, who is also a member of the Peoples’ Congress, the Chinese parliament. Another underground bishop, **Bishop Guo Xijin of Mindong**, was asked to accept a demotion to be the coadjutor bishop to an excommunicated bishop, Bishop Vincent Zhan Silu. These unjust and uncharitable treatments of the underground community created an outcry from around the world.

**Easter in China** The negotiations have emboldened the Chinese government. Before Easter, **Bishop Guo Xijin of Mindong**, was arrested briefly – he was the same bishop who was asked by Vatican to accept a demotion. Bishop Guo refused the government’s order to concelebrate with this excommunicated bishop. He said that when he sees the Pope’s signature commanding him to accept the demotion, he will obey the Pope. **Bishop Julius Jia Zhiguo**, Zhengding Diocese (the home of the disabled orphanage), was taken away before Easter to prevent him from celebrating the Chrism Mass with his priests, and from speaking with foreign reporters gathered in Beijing to report on the negotiations. Both Bishops Jia and Guo have been released, but have been forbidden to celebrate Masses as Bishops in the future until they have registered with the Patriotic Association.

### **Other Possible Effects of the agreement**

**What happened to Bishop Su** Bishop Su of Baoding was arrested 20 years ago when the Marian Shrine of Dong Lu was destroyed by the Chinese government. Will this agreement give immediate freedom to these arrested bishops or other religious prisoners? Their only “crime” was their allegiance to the Holy Father, which should no longer be a crime. Some leaked information indicated that *no sticky topic was put on the table*.

**Diocesan Administrators** We mentioned earlier that in recent years the Vatican has not ordained any new underground bishops to replace those who died. The Vatican has, instead, appointed “Diocese Administrators” to run the diocese. The Vatican has not mentioned the fate of this group of Diocesan Administrators. Would they be abandoned after running the underground dioceses for 5,10 or 15 years?

**The faithful Catholics** The Communist Party (UFWD) will be emboldened by this agreement as it would consider itself a new partner of the Pope. There will be more restrictions on the Patriotic church and more persecution on unregistered clergy. Currently, the underground church had some limited freedoms as the government does not have complete information on its activities. The government failed to control the underground church even with 70 years of persecution. Now, Vatican is an eager partner willing to offer with both hands the whole underground church to the communist government. The underground church will always obey the Pope. However, if a priest believes that he will be placed under a Patriotic Bishop who put the Party above the church, this priest may choose to retire from priesthood rather than violate his conscience. I received a note from a young priest who returned to China last year after graduated with a Master’s Degree from Europe. *“We are worried about the outcome of the agreement. One thing for sure, we will always be in communion with the Pope in spite of any difficulty. We have the experience of living in difficult times.....we have seen the sacrifices of our bishops and the martyrs before us.”* Your donation has helped to educate these dedicated and capable underground priests and nuns, for the future of the church in China.

### **Comments on China**

**Archbishop Bishop Sánchez Sorondo, S.J.**, Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences announced to the world that *“China is the best country implementing the social doctrine of the Church.... You do not have shantytowns, do not have drugs...Instead, there is a “positive national conscience”*. He also praised China, *“the economy does not dominate politics, as happens in the United States...”* Did he not know that China is a totalitarian state and has only one real politician, President Xi?

**Joseph Cardinal Zen Ze-kium, Cardinal Emeritus of Hong Kong** Cardinal Zen, 86, has long experience and contacts with both the underground church and the Patriotic church. He tirelessly urged the Patriotic Bishops to drop their independent church postures, and to stand with the Pope once reconciled. Cardinal Zen considers the agreement a suicide, and that no deal is better than a bad deal. When accused of being anti-Pope, he said that he is against a bad agreement. Once the Pope signs the agreement, he will become silent. For his commitment to religious freedom to Hon Kong and China, Cardinal Zen has just been awarded the **"Defensor Fidei"** (defender of the faith) Award granted by the Il Timone (The Helm) magazine to be held in Oreno (Milan) next month.

**Useful links** Here are some useful links offering timely news on China. You will need to ascertain the approach taken by each author. [china.infodoc@online.be](mailto:china.infodoc@online.be) <http://www.asianews.it> <http://www.ucanews.com> Google on Cardinal Zen

***Together, let us pray and invoke the protection of Our Lady of SheShan. Pray also for Our Holy Father.***

*Agnes Kung & The Directors of the Foundation*