



# THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



## The Cardinal Kung Foundation

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### **New Arrests of Roman Catholic Bishop and Priests in China**



*Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A.* - The Cardinal Kung Foundation, an advocate of the underground Roman Catholic Church in China, reports that one underground Roman Catholic bishop, three priests and one layperson were recently arrested.

Underground Roman Catholic Bishop HAN Dingxiang, Bishop of the Diocese of Yong Nian in Hebei Province, was arrested on or about December 1, 1999 when he was leading a religious retreat in Shijiazhuang. Bishop Han was recently detained and released many times in the past, each for a short period of time. He has now been taken away for almost 2 months. We do not know where he is. He is 63 years of age and was in jail in the past for about 20 years.

Mr. WANG Chengqun, an underground Roman Catholic lay leader in Baoding, Hebei was arrested shortly before Christmas, 1999. He is now held in the "Re-education through Labor" center in Gaoyangxian County in Hebei Province. This is his seventh arrest in the last 20 years, having been imprisoned for a total of approximately 10 years. When he was in the labor camp last time in 1997, he suffered a stroke, partially paralyzing him without any medical care from the prison authority. They kicked him out of the labor camp instead. His paralysis was not cured when he was arrested last Christmas. He is 65 years of age.

Underground Roman Catholic priests Father GUO Yibao and Father WANG Zhenhe, both of Anjiazhuang, Xushui, Hebei were arrested when they were on their way to offer a Mass in Easter, 1999. Both of them are now in Xushui Detention Center. No one is allowed to visit them. In addition, Father XIE Guolin of Xuguo Zhuang, Gaoyangxian, Hebei was also arrested in 1999. Details of Father XIE's arrest are not known.

Joseph Kung, President of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, said: "We do not know the official reasons for the arrests of these persons. However, we believe their arrests are the result of their religious activities in accordance with their conscience. Sadly, in China, the practice of religious activities is only allowed in accordance with the choice of the government. This choice of the government for all religious believers is to join the Patriotic Association. Practicing religion according to one's conscience and thereby refusing to join the Patriotic Association is illegal in China and is subject to arrest and to other form of punishments."