



THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



The Cardinal Kung Foundation

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Two Underground Roman Catholic Priests Arrested On

Their Way Home from Europe

Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A. — Father Shao Zhoumin 邵祝敏, the vicar general of Wenzhou 温州 diocese in Zhejiang 浙江 Province, and Father Jiang Sunian 姜溯讓, the chancellor of Wenzhou diocese, were arrested on September 25 in Shenzhen 深圳 of Guangdong 廣東 Province on their way home from a visit to a number of cities in Europe, including Rome, Italy. They arrived in Shenzhen at approximately 4 pm local time and were arrested at approximately 7 pm by police in the home of their friend in Shenzhen. They were taken away to an unknown location. We do not know where they are at present and do not know why they were arrested. We understand that the police took away a number of books and photos that the priests brought back from Europe.

Both Father Shao and Father Jiang were arrested on October 27, 2005 after they concelebrated a Mass with other priests to close the Eucharistic Year proclaimed by the late Pope John Paul II.

Father Shao was also arrested previously in 1999 and later released. Father Jiang was also detained in 1999 for publishing hymnbooks and was sentenced to a six-year jail term and fined approximately equivalent to US\$32,000, but was released in 2003.

Joseph Kung, the President of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, said: "Following the consecutive releases from jail of Bishop An Shuxin 安樹新 and Bishop Jia Zhiguo 賈治國 within the last 40 days, the hunt-down and arrests of these two priests in Shenzhen, which is thousands of miles from their home in Wenzhou, is a sign of the issue of religious freedom turning for the worse. We had hoped that the releases of Bishop An and Bishop Jia were not isolated cases, but rather the beginning of the release of hundreds of other imprisoned religious. We were wrong. These two arrests of Father Shao and Father Jiang dashed our hopes and proved that ours was wishful thinking. Also, these two arrests show that China is simply not sincere about improving its relationships with the Vatican and its human rights policy. I once again urgently call on the Olympic Committee to take note of these arrests and to consider canceling the Games in China in 2008 in order to preserve its good name and spirit."