



# THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



## The Cardinal Kung Foundation

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### **Bishop Yao Liang of Xiwanzi, Hebei has died and Three Underground Priests in Xuenhua Have Disappeared**

*Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A.* — Underground Catholic Bishop Leon Yao Liang 姚良主教, the auxiliary bishop of Xiwanzi 西灣子 in Hebei 河北, died on December 30, 2009. He was 87. We have not yet learned of any funeral arrangements for his burial because the news of his death appears to have been tightly controlled by the Chinese authority.

Bishop Yao was born in 1923 in Gonghui Village 公會村, Zhangbei County 張北縣. He was ordained a priest in 1946. After ordination, he was assigned to various churches as assistant pastor. He was restricted in the region of Xiwanzi for his priestly duty by the Communist regime in the early 1950's, earning his livelihood from vegetable farming and from selling fire wood. In 1956, he was forced to enter labor camp, and in 1958, was sentenced to life imprisonment. His "crime" was to be in communion with the Pope and with the universal Catholic Church. He was finally released from the prison in 1984 after 28 years in labor camps and prison. He was ordained a bishop on February 19, 2002 under a mandate from the Vatican.

In the meantime, we learned that three underground Catholic priests from Xuanhua 宣化, Hebei, Fathers Zhang Cunhui 張存惠 age 46, Zhang Zhanglin 張章林 age 45, and Liu 劉 (??) age 32 disappeared in June 2009. They are believed by the local Catholic community to have been kidnapped by the Government's agent and are now detained in an unknown location. Underground bishop of Xuanhua, Bishop Zhao Kexun 趙克勳, is now hiding under a government arrest warrant. Other priests are under intense pressure from the government to join the Catholic Patriotic Association, which is an independent government sponsored religious agent independent from the Vatican.