



THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION

Christmas, 1999

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MAY THE TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS BE WITH YOU

The bright lights and merry music of this holiday season should not make us forget that on the first Christmas night, there was no room in the inn for the Holy Family, who were left in the darkness of the stable. There was no official welcome for the Son of God. In fact, as we know from Scripture, the authorities sought to kill the Christ-Child. Indeed, the first Christmas was "underground."

Persevering in fidelity to the Successor of Peter despite intense persecution, the underground family of Roman Catholics in China exemplifies the true spirit of Christmas hope. We join our prayers to theirs in this hope that the day will soon come when their sufferings will bear the fruit of religious liberty for all. We hope that underground Roman Catholics in China will one day be able to celebrate in public and without any restraint their communion with the Successor of Peter and the universal Roman Catholic Church.

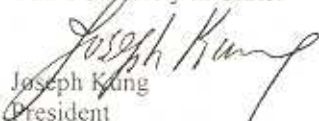
At the same time, unlike the inn keepers of the first Christmas, we must do all we can to highlight the presence of the Christ-Child in the "stable" of the "underground" Roman Catholic Church in China. Thus, we recall the arrests and the disappearances of many brothers and sisters in Christ as listed at our web site, that the peace, joy and love of Christmas as we have in the free world will soon be theirs.

According to a **classified document** issued this past August, the Chinese government is planning a large-scale suppression of the underground Catholic Church if diplomatic relations with the Vatican are established, out of the fear that "the Vatican will try to take advantage of such normalization of its relationship with China to regain the power of the Roman Catholic Church in China." According to the document, those who fall short of full compliance with the Patriotic Association will be sentenced to "re-education" or labor camps. Moreover, it says that "the underground Church.....must be eliminated by means of the destruction of seminaries and convents; the underground churchmust be eliminated by re-education, forced labor, dismissal and isolation of 'stubborn' priests and bishops.....All seminaries and convents which are funded by the underground church will be publicly dismantled. All members of the novitiate, whether men or women...who do not behave well will be sent back to their home province."

So, we see that "Herod" has not ceased threatening the Christ-Child. However, it was with the same hope of the Holy Family that, on July 31, 1999, more than 500 people, clergy and laity, gathered in Stamford, Connecticut to observe, with **Cardinal Ignatius Kung**, the 50th anniversary of religious persecutions in China, alongside the celebration of the Cardinal's 98th birthday, the 70th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood, his 50th anniversary as bishop, and his 20th as a Cardinal! We are most grateful to those who joined in this celebration. Moreover, in accordance with Chinese custom, **we look forward to celebrating Cardinal Kung's 100th birthday this coming July**. Huddled together in the "stable" with the Holy Family, with all the members of the underground Roman Catholic Church in China, we share the hope of longevity, both for the Cardinal, and for the religious liberty of the Church throughout the world.

In closing, we are happy to announce that Fr. Stephen F. Torracco, Ph.D., a professor of theology at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts, has been appointed Editor of the Cardinal Kung Foundation Newsletter. During the past six years as Editor of *Catholic International*, Fr. Torracco has always been very supportive of our efforts for the underground Roman Catholic Church in China. We welcome him in his new role and look forward to his continued contributions to the life and faith of the Roman Catholic Church in China.

Yours Sincerely in Christ


Joseph Kung
President

"With what prayerful longing and love do I follow the life of the loyal Chinese Catholic communities." Pope John Paul II, July 1, 1991

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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Homily

At the Mass of Thanksgiving for His Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung on the Occasion of His 20th Anniversary of Being Elevated to the Sacred College of Cardinals by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, 50th of Episcopal Ordination, 70th of Ordination to the Priesthood, and 98th birthday

**By His Excellency Most Rev. Andrew Tsien, Bishop of Hualien, Taiwan
Noon, July 31, 1999, Holy Spirit Church, Stamford, CT, U.S.A.**

Your Eminence, Most Reverend Bishops, Reverend Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We, the bishops, priests, brothers, sisters and Catholic laity, gathered here today from all over the world, at the invitation of our beloved and most respected Cardinal Kung, come to celebrate His Eminence's patronal feast day of St. Ignatius Loyola. Together with Cardinal Kung, we honor and give thanks to Our Lady of SheShan. We ask for her blessings and loving protection of the Roman Catholic Church in China.

The Roman Catholic Church in China has been persecuted by the atheistic communist regime for the last fifty years. Such persecution is continuing. The Church in China has no freedom and no dignity under the present authoritarian government. We therefore wish to take this opportunity, in the presence of our Cardinal, with one heart and in one voice, to beg our Lord Jesus Christ to have pity on the billions of Chinese people. We ask Our Lord to grant them peace and the freedom very soon.

I was consecrated a bishop in April, 1992. This is my third visit with the Cardinal during the past seven years. The first visit was on his birthday August 2, 1994. I concelebrated Mass with the Cardinal. I expressed my personal respect and admiration to the Cardinal and to the loyal Church in China, of which Cardinal Kung is the leader. I had previously invited Cardinal Kung to consecrate me, but he could not go to Taiwan because of his state of health. Instead, the late Archbishop Dominic Tang consecrated me a bishop. It was a great honor for me. It was also a great blessing that I was consecrated as a successor to the apostles by one who himself was a Confessor of the Faith, Archbishop Dominic Tang.

My second visit was on May 28, 1995. It was the Cardinal's sixty-fifth anniversary of his priesthood. Archbishop Tang also came personally to congratulate the Cardinal. I came also to extend my respects to His Eminence and to the loyal underground Bishops.

This is my third visit. I came at the request of His Eminence Paul Cardinal Shan, the President of the Bishops' Conference in Taiwan, to represent the Bishops' Conference. I am very happy to have this honor to offer their respects and love to Cardinal Kung, the honorary chairman of the Bishops' conference of the loyal Church in China. Although the bishops in Taiwan cannot be here in person today, they are here in spirit.

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it." (Ps 118:24)

In the first place, we shall offer this Mass of thanksgiving according to Cardinal Kung's intention, to honor Our Lady of She-Shan, for her blessings and loving protection of the Roman Catholic Church in China, which has suffered a half century of persecution. These same fifty years coincided with the episcopacy of Cardinal Kung. His Eminence wishes to thank our Lord Jesus Christ for choosing His Chinese children to bear witness for the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Through the loving protection of Our Lady of SheShan, the number of Roman Catholics not only has not decreased, but has tripled during this half century of persecution.

We must thank God, however, for giving us Cardinal Kung. In him we can see a good shepherd of the loyal Church in China. Twenty years ago, Pope John Paul II secretly included Bishop Kung in the first group of Cardinals he created in 1979. At that time, Bishop Kung was still in a Chinese prison. In doing so, the Holy Father wished to praise the heroic actions of the suffering Church in China. Finally in 1991, when the Holy Father made public the secret which he had held in his heart for twelve years for Bishop Kung, the whole world was greatly and pleasantly surprised. The loyal Church in China was greatly encouraged. This amounted to a message to the bishops of the Patriotic Association that they should have courage to stand up to defend the fullness of faith, never to compromise with the atheistic Chinese communists on matter of faith and truth.

Many loyal priests and bishops were martyred for our Lord Jesus Christ. God continues to give our Cardinal long life so that he can accept this glory on behalf of those martyrs. We now have the constant prayers of Cardinal Kung for the loyal and suffering Church in China. We now have our Cardinal as the voice of the loyal Church, telling the world that the loyal Church is still witnessing the faith under extremely difficult conditions.

We also hope that those in the free world who are advocating the "bridge Church" can see and hear the sufferings of the loyal Church in the person of His Eminence Cardinal Kung. Consequently, we hope that they will stand by His Eminence and join in the struggle for freedom, human rights and democracy for China. We hope that they will not compromise their faith before the Chinese Communists, will not support the Patriotic Association out of fear of the Chinese communists, will not

recognize the Patriotic Association as the true Church, and will not use such methods to deceive themselves or others to please the Chinese communists. Such overtures, if carried out, will simply encourage the Government to continue its persecution of the loyal church without fear, leaving no room for the loyal Church to exist.

Therefore, today is a day of prayer for everyone. We have no resentment and hatred for anyone, because God is love. God loves us. God also loves the members of the Patriotic Association, loves the Chinese communists, and loves those who sympathize with them. We pray to the Holy Spirit to open their hearts, and accept the light and love of the Holy Spirit. Do not be afraid of God. Do not be afraid of the Church. Do not be afraid of speaking the truth. Most of all, do not be afraid of the good Chinese Roman Catholics. Do not wound the truth in order to curry favor with the Chinese communists. For the past fifty years, the Chinese people have believed that Catholics were the most unjustly persecuted, and also those who suffered the most.

Today is also a day to thank the Pope and to pray for the Pope. To give decisive recognition to the heroic actions of the underground Church, the Holy Father elevated Bishop Kung to the Sacred College of Cardinals while he was in a Chinese prison. To show his love for China, he elevated Bishop John Baptist Wu and Bishop Paul Shen to the same Sacred College of Cardinals. We beg God to bless our Holy Father with good health and to remove all obstacles to declare the blessed Chinese martyrs saints, especially those bishops, priests and laity who have died during the past fifty years, bearing witness to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. We hope that during this new millennium, we shall have thousands of Chinese saints loudly singing praises to God: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, He who was, who is, and who is to come" (Rev 4:8) "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, honor, and glory and praise!" (Rv 5:12) Amen.

A Weed-Eating Monk

By
Teresa Wang

I personally did not know this monk. I had never seen him before. I did not know where he came from. I did not even know his name. All I knew was that he was a Catholic priest; he was a person who tamed the prison; he was a glorious martyr; he was a hero who offered himself entirely for others, all because of love! He was also a trail blazer who showed us the way. I had given up my faith earlier on. But he led me back into the bosom of God.

Chiang was released from prison. This was during the end of the Cultural Revolution, but the unceasing red terror still haunted our daily lives. One day, Ming, a classmate of mine, invited me to his home in such jubilation tempered with a shroud of secrecy: his elder brother Chiang had returned from his imprisonment! I had long known the name of Chiang for he was the infamous hoodlum chief in our area. He was arrested during the Cultural Revolution and was imprisoned in the Heavenly Lake Farm in An-Hui Province. Heavenly Lake Farm was a terrifying labor camp. The mere mention of this labor camp would send chills down one's spine.

Ming's house was packed with people. Most of them were old followers of Chiang while he was the chief. The house was buzzing with greetings and small talk. When the people settled down, Chiang started talking, "I am going to tell you all the story of a monk, a Catholic monk."

"A Catholic monk?" This caught my attention and I pricked up my ears even though I had given up my faith long since.

Everybody called him "Monk," Chiang said. "Our prison cell had a total of forty-eight persons. A few were political prisoners. The rest were either thieves, robbers, rapists or heroes like me. The most respected person, however, in our cell was the monk. I was absolutely puzzled about this when I first moved in. A skinny old man, who knew neither kung-fu nor the art of boxing, was the most respected person? Was it because of imprisonment seniority? I heard that he had been in the camp since 1955."

"1955?" I relived momentarily the night of September 8, 1955. It was a night of horror and the beginning of worse to come. (Editor's note: September 8, 1955 was the day when Bishop Kung, the Bishop of Shanghai, was arrested together with over 300 priests and lay persons in one simultaneous sweep.)

Chiang continued, "The monk was a quiet person. His countenance was peaceful and calm. His eyes were bright and his gaze was sharp and piercing. Whenever we were in deep pain, or so enraged that we wanted to kill or to tear someone apart, our suffering and rage would subside and the atmosphere of hatred would gradually disappear so long as the monk was around, holding our hands and placing his right hand on our heads. There was a saying in the camp, 'do not fear heaven, do not fear earth, fear only the danger of a wife asking for divorce.' Whoever received such a letter of divorce from his wife, and one of these things would always happen, he would either cry his heart out or he would want to die and bang his head against the wall like the beating of a drum! All of us would watch this with a sense of indifference or ridicule. The monk was the only exception. He would embrace the person and hold his hands. Then he would place his right hand on the man's head. I did not see the monk talking or chanting. Strangely enough, the man who was howling only a few moments ago would calm down. Then the monk would talk softly to him for a short while."

"Laying the right hand on the head? Oh., this must be an act of benediction!," I immediately realized.

Chiang continued, "During times of boredom, we were a lustful bunch and would gather around and crack dirty jokes. We would pass around our home-made pornographic drawings. The monk was the only one who would not listen, who would not read and who would not laugh with us during this entertainment. He would sit at the corner of the cell with his head bowed and eyes closed. In fact, he would sit in that fashion whenever he had nothing to do. He would sit for a long time, too. At the end of each working day, all of

us had worked so hard that we would drop dead on our beds and be unable to move at all. The monk was the exception, and he would insist on sitting. One night, I woke up and saw him still sitting up. I asked him, "Aren't you tired? Better go to sleep early." He answered softly: "There is no better rest than this. He would give me strength." "Who?" I asked. He raised his head and looked up momentarily. He did not answer my question. I looked up in the direction he looked. I saw a roof, nothing but the roof."

"The quietest moment in our cell was when mail parcels came and were opened," Chiang recalled. "Stitch by stitch, all of us watched the opening of the parcel. Absolute silence would permeate every corner of the cell. With the exception of the monk, there was anxiety, hunger, admiration, and jealousy in the forty-seven pairs of eyes that were glued to the opening of the parcels. He went his own way as if nothing was happening, or he would sit by a wall in the room with his eyes closed. It befits only a person with such calm and peace to be called a hero!"

"That was not just sitting by a wall. That was meditation and praying!" These words almost escaped me in an attempt to correct Chiang's ignorance, but they did not. I did not have the courage to admit that I was a Catholic. Moreover, I had turned away from God for so many years that I was not sure whether I was still considered a Catholic.

"There was no mail parcel for the monk," Chiang noted. "Nobody came to visit him. It seemed as if he had no family. Oh, no, I remember now. Once he did receive a parcel containing a winter jacket. He immediately gave that to Tzong who had no family. He kept the wrapping as a memento. According to the monk, he did not know who the sender was."

"The monk did not understand medicine," Chiang observed. "But every time one of us fell ill, the person that looked after the sick was always the monk. He would especially care for the dying. He would stay close to the dying at all times and would hold on tight to the hands of the sick person, accompanying him until he drew his last breath. At which time, he would close the eyelids of the dead person and make a sign of the cross on his forehead. You are truly exceptional, brother monk!" exclaimed Chiang. And he continued, "In the camp, the worst suffering was not hard labor, not being beaten while hanged. It was hunger! Imagine this: there was not a day that we had enough to eat, year after year! It was beyond description to express the feelings of hunger. At every meal, the monk would save two-thirds of his ration for others. He said, 'I have a small appetite. You are all young and need more to fill your stomach.' So we thought he was serious and took turns at sharing this. One day, Fung found the monk chewing and eating weeds in the bushes. When he saw Fung, he dropped the weeds hastily like a child being caught at some mischief. But Fung, with tears all over his face, dashed to the monk and grabbed his hands..."

"During his last year with us, the monk washed the heads of quite a few of us," Chiang remembered. "Regardless of whether he was a counter-revolutionary element, a hoodlum lord, or a gangster, he would cry his heart out during the head washing. Cry they did, but their hearts were filled with joy!"

"That washing of heads! That was the rite of baptism!" My heart was pounding, but there were no words from my mouth!

"A strange thing happened to those whose heads were washed. They fought no more and cursed no more. They liked to help and care for others, just as the monk did," Chiang said. "Last year, the monk died. He died of starvation. Liang, who was a doctor, could witness to that fact. In fact, we all knew quite well that he died of starvation. While he was seriously ill, we saw with our very own eyes that the stool he passed out were weeds!"

"After his death, the monk received the highest honor from us. Each one of us took out the best we had, the newest, the most precious or the most treasured. We dressed him with Whei's new army cap, Ping's new shirt, Ren's pants, Loong's socks, my shoes and Fung's white scarf. Although we dressed the monk haphazardly, he certainly had a new, clean and tidy look as opposed to the shabby look while he was still alive. He was ready for a formal dinner party. We also hung his only possession around his neck: it was a rope full of knots, a peculiar rope that for every ten knots there was a special single knot."

"That was a rosary!" Waves of emotion were choking me, choking my chest.

Chiang's narration continued, "In the camp, the most disgusting most punitive job was to bury the dead. Usually the dead were buried in a shallow dugout covered with a thin layer of soil. That would be the final destiny of the dead in the camp. Within a day or two, the grave would be unearthed by scavenging wild dogs. The dogs would wander around with severed limbs from the dead in their mouths. But for the monk, not only did we hasten to prepare the burial site, we also wanted to dig the deepest grave for him. Now, he is lying in a grave as deep as the height of two men, facing the rising sun. Every day, he would be the first to welcome the early rays of dawn and the first to watch the sun rising..."

I could not keep silent any more. Abruptly, I stood up and said loudly, "He was no monk. He was a Catholic priest. I am a Catholic too..." I broke down and started to cry. My crying muffled all that I wanted to continue to say. Everybody in the house was stunned and stared at me with mouths wide open. The atmosphere froze. The air in the room seemed taut with tension.

Chiang was first to recover and to react. He said in a low, solemn, but commanding tone, "Whatever was said here shall stay within the four walls of this room." Then he walked up to me and hugged me. He laid slowly his right hand on my head. Through tears in my eyes, I looked up at his face: a face full of peace and calm. I seemed to have seen the monk. "You! Was you head washed too?" I asked soberly. The hoodlum chief, Chiang, nodded in silence and held my hands ever more tightly... -End

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