



THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



The Cardinal Kung Foundation

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Underground Roman Catholic priest and his parishioners beaten and arrested in China

Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A. --- Father LIN Daixian 林代先, an underground Roman Catholic priest belonging to the Pingtan 平潭 parish of the Fuzhou 福州 diocese in Fujian 福建, a seminarian and 9 parishioners were arrested by Chinese security personnel on July 25 at approximately 8 o'clock in the evening (Fujian time). The arrest was carried out during the celebration of a private Holy Mass in a private home in Pingtan, attended by approximately 50 faithful praying for the recovery of a cancer parishioner. In arresting Father LIN Daixian, the security police beat savagely the parishioners who tried in vain to prevent the arrest of Father LIN. In the process, many parishioners were beaten and suffered severe injuries, including broken bones and teeth, brain injuries causing severe swelling, fainting, and many other kinds of injuries. The private house where the arrests took place was totally ransacked and severely damaged. Father LIN, the seminarian, and nine parishioners are now detained in the Pingtan detention center.

Father LIN Daixian was arrested three times previously. The first time was on October 18, 2000 in connection with the canonization of 120 martyr saints on October 1, 2000 by the late Pope John Paul II. The second time was on August 15, 2001, and the third time was on November 22, 2001. This is his fourth arrest by the Chinese government for his religious beliefs. He is 40 years old and was ordained a Catholic priest in 1995.

We do not know the name of the seminarian and the nine parishioners who were arrested with the priest.

Joseph Kung, the President of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, said: "The Chinese government has repeatedly declared to the world that there is religious freedom in China. It also declared that this freedom is guaranteed by its constitution. Yet, this kind of arrest of innocent religious

believers keeps taking place. This is another example of the total disregard of religious freedom by the Chinese authority. The persecution of Roman Catholics in China is obviously not ancient history. The persecution continues and gets worse and bolder at a time when China is making significant economic progress, and also at a time when the Chinese government will host the Olympic Games in 2008. I appeal once again to the Olympic Committee to consider canceling the Games in China in order to preserve their good name and spirit rather than be tarnished further by their association and coexistence with the evil spirit of religious persecution in China."