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Editor's Note:

The **23rd National Catholic China Conference**, organized by USCCB and co-sponsored by the *Ricci Institute of Chinese Western-Cultural History*, met at Belleville, IL on the weekend of October 3-5. Some 75 participants came from all across the USA and China, as well as from the UK/Council of Churches' China Program. Almost half the group were Chinese – including 23 of the clergy, religious and catholic lay graduate students from China currently in studies in the USA. [cf. p3.]

The **Keynote Lecture**, given by *Michel Marcil SJ*, reviewed developments in the Church in China in the past 25 years. A report of a **Sociological Survey** of the demographics of Christianity in China was also provided. Three of the graduate students in the Maryknoll Program engaged in an **Interactive Panel** discussion of three excellent papers about the lived reality of being Church in China today - *through Chinese eyes*. Their material elicited lively dialogue and discussion all weekend - suffused with great hope and enthusiasm for the future of the Chinese Church.

A film study [**To Live** by Zhang Yimou] led by Larry Lewis MM, drew all present into the story of tragedy and turmoil, but also the ultimate triumph of spirit, of the Chinese people in the past half century. A final session provided interesting and informative **updates on current projects and programs of partnership with the churches in China**. *Bishop Ignatius WANG* of Oakland Diocese presided at the Eucharistic Liturgy to conclude the Conference.

Proceedings available:

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After endless electronic media transmission of the **Beijing Olympics** – what can possibly be added? The Torch was extinguished with fanfare echoing the fabulous Opening Ceremonies; yet the glow and warmth in the hearts of the Chinese people continues to burn brightly.

Fr. Mike Sloboda, mm - Senior Researcher at Holy Spirit Study Centre in Hong Kong, offered some inspirational thoughts which inform the following reflection.

OLYMPICS 2008 in China: One World; One Dream

In the run up [literally and figuratively] to the 23rd Olympiad at Beijing this past Summer, the Olympic Torch traveled from Greece to China midst well publicized protests and mixed receptions. Ignored by the western media however, was the interesting fact that the Chinese media consistently referred to the Torch as "**The Holy Torch**". Terms such as "*solemn*", "*respected*" or "*inspirational*" might well have been used to identify the flame – but *holy* was the most commonly preferred designation. Here we may find new insights to complement other well known analogies between sports and spirituality, as used in the Pauline Letters.



Obviously we think of the Holy Flame which is the Holy Spirit - at work in our lives from the first Pentecost when the first apostles were imbued with courage and energy symbolized by *tongues of fire*. Or we may think of divisions of race, nationality, creed and culture afflicting the people at the tower of Babel, now overcome by the youth of the world, united by the common language of their skills and artful strivings for prizes, awarded beneath the *Holy Torch* - the towering pillar of flame at Olympic Stadium.

On several occasions surrounding the Olympics, Pope Benedict XVI also employed religious language and symbolism in universal culture to exhort the world community. Following the Mozart Concert presented at the Vatican by the Beijing Symphony last May, the Pope spoke of "*music and art in general, as a privileged instrument for the encounter and reciprocal knowledge and esteem between peoples and cultures*". He called the Olympics "*an event of great significance for the entire human family*", saying that like other art forms, "*sports can overcome barriers between nations and delight the whole world.*"; and reminded us that "*it is better for young adults to compete on an athletic field than on a battlefield!*"

The motto "**One World, One Dream**" - all the *razzle dazzle* nor naysayers notwithstanding - challenges all those open to being inflamed by the Holy Spirit, to press on towards the golden goal of peace and justice in a more harmonious world.

Church News

BEIJING CHURCH WELCOMES VISITORS

Some expatriate Catholics attending the Olympics reported being *"surprised to discover that the Catholic Church actually operates in China"* and that the liturgy ... *"is the same as back home"* and prayers for the Pope were offered as they are universally.

Sunday Masses – in Chinese, Latin, English, French and some other languages, were available for visitors. Priests were also welcomed by the Bishop of Beijing Diocese, Joseph LI Shan to celebrate Mass at local parishes. Information on religious services was posted on the Internet; and local guides were briefed on how to assist visitors wishing to attend religious services. Teams of priests, religious and laity joined other religious ministers assigned to the Olympic Village to provide pastoral ministry to the athletes.

As for any large, public gathering, in China, as elsewhere, security measures were in force – especially at South Church [*Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception*] where several visiting heads of State worshipped and were later received by Bishop Joseph LI.

Some people came away with what they described as "mixed feelings" – among them, *Bishop John TONG Hon*, Co-adjutor Bishop of Hong Kong Diocese – invited as a special guest of the PRC government, along with *Bishop Jose LAI Hung Seng* of Macau. Expressing pride in his country as host of the Games, and of being honored by the official invitation, Bishop TONG nonetheless, took the occasion to urge the China authorities to be *"more open minded"* in their attitudes towards religion; not to feel threatened by the Church; and to relax their harassment and detention of Church leaders for simply practicing their faith and fulfilling their rightful pastoral obligations.

GOOD NEWS abounds! An editorial in *The Sunday Examiner* of the Hong Kong diocese [9-05-08] cautioned visitors at the Olympics against taking away "too rosy" a picture of the Church in China! While in today's world of spin and open media, image and reality strive side by side everywhere, still the Gospel instructs us *"by their fruits you shall know them"*. As the Holy Father so eloquently emphasized in his historic *Pastoral Letter to the Church in China* at Pentecost 2007, there is but one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church in China .. and even to the casual observer- as the Olympic visitors attested – it is flourishing.

PAULINE YEAR PASTORAL LETTER

Pope Benedict XVI has proclaimed the Pauline Year (June 28, 08 – June 29, 09) to commemorate the 2,000th birth anniversary of St. Paul the Apostle. Many dioceses in China held special observances – or plan to do so in the coming months. *Bishop Dumas ZHANG Hanmin* proclaimed the opening of the Pauline Year in his diocese of Jilin in NE China, by ordaining five young men to the priesthood on July 3rd.

In Pastoral Letter on the Year of St. Paul, written by *Bishop JIN Lu Xian* of Shanghai (92 years of age) and dated August 30, [also his 70th anniversary as a Jesuit,] the Bishop invites the faithful to deepen their knowledge of Saint Paul and imitate his missionary zeal. The Pauline Year coincides with the 400th anniversary of the evangelization of the city of Shanghai. The Bishop sees it his pastoral duty to address his faithful on the challenges of evangelization and the example of the Apostle of the Nations par excellence.

The figure of Saint Paul is present in 8 parts: who is Saint Paul?, physical attributes of Paul, Paul's character, his vocational call, the patrimony of Paul, the theological thought of St. Paul, the heart of Pauline thought, and Paul and Christ. Bishop JIN also explained the close link between Saint Paul and modern diocesan life. Paul had many challenges and life in Shanghai is not much different. *"Walking down the street, you are overwhelmed by temptations; you walk in your house, turn on the T.V. and you are impressed by the violence and negative content; go on-line, to blogs, and video games and you think that there must not be anything better than this"*. In sum, those who wish to be faithful to Christ face many challenges.

In concluding the Letter, Bishop JIN presents three images of Paul: Paul as an elderly man, showing his nobility of soul and great missionary spirit in spite of being deprived of freedom. Paul as a youth, presenting the great love Paul had for all people, Paul as an adult, showing what is at the center of Paul's mission: *"woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!"* (1 Cor 9:16). lastly, the Bishop asks all priests and faithful to imprint these three images of Paul in their minds and hearts, and to imitate him in their daily lives. [Fides 9/23/2008]

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2008

In preparation for sending its delegation to participate with *Pope Benedict XVI* at WYD 2008 in Sidney, Australia last July, many dioceses in China sponsored local WYD Rallies. In mid June Shanghai diocese gathered some 300 youth [ages 16-30] at Sacred Heart Church in PuDong district. - where *Columban Fr. Warren Kinne*, who teaches philosophy at *FuDan University*, gave the key note address. This was followed by small groups discussing "the experience of experiencing God"; *Jesus challenges to human relations today; and how to read the Bible?"*

Music, food, and other festivities typically suited to the youth culture of today, helped to create in microcosm the atmosphere of the international event – culminating with the Eucharistic Liturgy led by *Bishop Joseph XING Wen Zhi* [45] – the youthful co-adjutor Bishop of Shanghai. Many of those attending spoke appreciatively of the help they received to deal with the complexities and ambiguities that challenge them daily.

BIBLE FOCUS ON CHINA

The 7th Plenary Assembly of the **Catholic Bible Federation** [CBF] highlighted support for **biblical pastoral ministry in China as a priority** for the next 6 years. NE Asia Regional Coordinator Cecilia CHUI spoke of the "great hunger and thirst for the word of God in China" and pastoral workers from other lands eagerness to assist in this field.

Emphasis will be on biblical pastoral formation of clergy, religious and laity; printing and distributing affordable bibles in various formats and providing supplemental biblical pastoral materials; promoting dialogue and a service of love to achieve the mission of reconciliation in light of God's work.; and networking to support this ministry, especially among Chinese engaged in biblical studies abroad. Three priests from China – two of whom are abroad - and including Rev. Joseph ZHANG WenXi at CUA in the USA - were among participants of the CBF Assembly held in Tanzania last July. Sr. LiNa RONG of the diocese of XianXian in Hebei Province is another scripture scholar now at CUA – pursuing a doctorate with a concentration in the Wisdom literature. . Both Fr. ZHANG and Sr. RONG are participants in the *Maryknoll Society-sponsored Project for Education and Formation of China Church leaders.*

MARYKNOLL EDUCATION PROGRAM

In mid Sept. the *Maryknoll Society* sponsored *Education and Formation Project*, welcomed five new participants: [3 sisters and 2 priests]- from four dioceses in China. Following a period of English language updating at *Gonzaga University* in Spokane, WA, they will begin graduate studies in various disciplines determined by their diocesan bishops and religious superiors in China.

These students join 25 others already in the program [11 priests, 10 sisters, 2 seminarians and 2 lay women] from some 14 dioceses. They study at 9 US colleges and universities – most pursuing master's degrees, while 6 are doing doctoral degrees.

The past year some 9 graduates return to their dioceses having completed their studies. *Fr. John Ren Da Hai* will return in November. They join more than 75 others who have completed studies through the Maryknoll Project and are actively serving the Church in China in various key ministries. Among them five have been named diocesan bishops or auxiliaries by the Holy Father; and three Sisters elected as major superiors of their Orders. Many of the priests serve as faculty at China's Major Regional Seminaries, and as spiritual directors, Rectors, and Deans of Study. In addition to those who have initiated cutting edge pastoral, social and medical ministries, several sisters are serving as Formation Directors for other young Sisters.

Since 1991, more than one hundred young church leaders from almost 30 dioceses have passed through the Maryknoll project. Last May, when the USCCB Executive Director and Senior Associate were in China for consultation with diocesan bishops and church leaders, it was exciting to meet up with these young priests and Sisters and experience their enthusiasm and hope for the future of their Church. Notwithstanding, the constraints and ambiguities which continue to challenging the political climate in China vis-à-vis religion, these courageous religious and priests focus their energies and zeal on all the opportunities and 'open doors' they see all around them; and strive to respond as best they can, given the very limited material and human resources at their disposal. As a Sister Church in Mission, the US Church is called to enhance and expand both spiritual and material partnerships with the Catholic Church in China – as Pope Benedict XVI's Pastoral Letter to China Catholics has challenged us to do.

AITECE UPDATE



This year AITECE celebrates 20 years of providing professional education service in major colleges and universities – especially in the more economically disadvantaged regions in central and southwestern China. The program is coordinated by *the Columban Fathers Society* – the Irish

Missionary Order primarily dedicated to mission in China. In June 2008, the Columban Fathers relocated their central administrative headquarters from Dublin to Hong Kong to better serve their growing presence in Asia.

Since 1988, some 329 teachers from 16 English speaking countries have served as AITECE teachers, nearly 90% of them for two years. Of this group, 58 were from the USA, applying through USCCB which serves as AITECE/USA liaison to recruit, facilitate and provide orientation for teacher candidates.

For the Fall 08 semester, two new teachers and one returnee were assigned to teach at SISU in Chongqing municipality, where many students come from the earthquake – ravaged areas of Sichuan Province. Qualified persons of all ages and educational background are welcome to apply. Basic information on AITECE is found at our website: www.usccb.net; or by Tel: 973-763-1311. We are currently accepting applications for the Spring 2009 semester. The US orientation is planned in early January and a second phase orientation takes place in Hong Kong in late January. The semester begins in the first week of February 2009.

NEW TAIWAN AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE

Mr. WANG Yu-Yuan [Larry] 61, was named Taiwan's new Ambassador to the Holy See – moving from his previous post as *Charge d'affaires* in the Netherlands. The change was attributed to personal career goals of outgoing Ambassador *TOU Chou-Seng*, 66, who has been invited to teach at *FuJen Catholic University* in Taipei. Most commentators interpreted the move as routine - without any special significance for either Vatican-Taiwan or Vatican- PRC relations. Currently, the Vatican is represented in Taipei by US-born *Msgr. Paul Fitzpatrick Russell* – named *Charge d'Affaires* to Taiwan by Pope Benedict XVI last June.

AN AITECE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE

During the academic year of August 2007 – July 2008, *Passionist Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D.*, [historian and director of his Order's Historical Archives in Union City, New Jersey], served as an AITECE ESL Teacher in the English Department of Sichuan International Studies University (SISU) in Chongqing, China.

In the Fall '07 semester he taught International Relations – to some 80 students; and one class each on modern Canadian, English, and Australian history, to about 150 students. He also taught Oral English to five sections of about 25 freshmen each. In the Spring '08 semester he taught six sections of Oral English; and was invited by the English Department to present special lectures on various topics such as: "*What Is the American Dream.*" The SISU Business Department also invited him to lecture on topics such as: "*Famous American Business Leaders of the 20th Century*" and "How to Seek World Knowledge." An off campus lecture at the Third Military Medical University was entitled "*American Culture and Health Care.*"

During his time in Chongqing, a mega inland municipality, Fr. Rob was interviewed on two occasions by the SISU TV station. In one he reflected on his SISU teaching experiences; and in the other, he reflected on his experiences of living through the May 12, 2008 earthquake, felt throughout the entire Sichuan Province and beyond. The SISU campus was evacuated; and while luckily there were no injuries, nerve-racking aftershocks were a major problem.

In addition to 14 – 16 professional teaching hours weekly, Fr. Carbonneau shared community life and fellowship at gatherings with other AITECE teachers at various universities in the City. He also regularly engaged with local Catholic Church leaders and worshipped with the Parish community at the historic St. Joseph's Church in the Jiefangbe district.

In company with the Chinese Christianity historian, *Dr Jean-Paul Wiest*, Rob visited the gravesite of the *Vincentian Fr. Vincent Lebbe*, who is buried on GeLeShan mountain behind the SISU campus. Lebbe was a venerable China missionary, highly esteemed until this day by the Chinese people for his zeal and unswerving commitment to establish an authentically indigenized Chinese Catholic Church. Pursuing his own professional interest, Rob also had opportunity to establish a working relationship with historians at the *Hongyan Historic Sites Institute* in Chongqing, where research is focused on deepening historical understanding among the Chinese peoples of the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945.)

EDUCATION

USF Ricci Institute Update



In a report on programs of the *RICCI Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History* of the University of San Francisco Center for the Pacific Rim, *Dr. WU Xiao Xin* highlighted several exciting new developments in the field of research and exchange on the history of Christianity in China.

A Qing History Symposium entitled *Westerners and the Qing Court* was held in October, convened in collaboration with *Ren Min [Peoples] University in Beijing*, with participation by *The Beijing Center*. [TBC is a US Jesuit colleges' sponsored study-abroad program in fields of history, culture and language.]

California-China Exchange Program "Renewing the Friendship: Developing Religious Studies/Theology and related Academic Disciplines in Chinese Universities". This program, initiated by Jesuit schools in California, in cooperation with *FuDan University at Shanghai*, gives high priority to establishing a full religious studies curriculum; and aims to promote religious studies programs on a people-to-people basis.

Narratives from the Hinterland: supported by a three-year \$300,000 grant from the *Henry Luce Foundation*, the Ricci Institute will enlarge its existing network of Chinese scholars from the urban, coastal areas to universities in six provincial capitals in inland cities. Each program will include visiting scholars from China to the Ricci Institute; public lectures and seminars in the host universities on the study of Christianity in China; and future publications.

Canton Diocese Archives. In a collaborative venture with both the Jesuit China and Portuguese Provinces, and USF, the Canton Diocese Archives will be transferred from Lisbon to the Ricci Institute [12,000 folios from 1878-1950] for a new digitization project. A \$50,000 grant from the *Odell Foundation* in the San Francisco Bay Area will be matched by the Jesuit China Province to underwrite this project.

Oral History Projects. **Dr. Jean Paul Wiest** - a *Senior Fellow of the Ricci Institute* - [who is supported in part by an annual grant to the Ricci Institute from USCCB] - continues his work to develop textbooks to teach research and methodology in oral history; and to train local scholars in the context of the Chinese social and cultural environment. Last Spring, Dr. Wiest also provided an Oral History Workshop at FuShun in Liaoning Province, for Sisters representing several religious congregations, to support their goals to record their respective histories and develop their own archives.

Opportunities to work with new generations of senior scholars are expanding all around China; and many educational administrators and faculty at China's major universities are showing ever greater willingness to work with partners from abroad.



US Catholic China Bureau's

12th Religious Study Tour to China

April 18 - May 5, 2009

*Visit places of cultural and
religious significance*

*For more details
Contact 973-763-1131
or check our website
www.usccb.net*

Estimated Costs: \$4,000 (dbl/occ)
All inclusive

Earthquake Update



Mid-Term Report

Earthquake Relief works Projects in SiChuan Province



Jinde Charities, the first NPO of the Catholic Church in China, with the steady support of overseas partners, Caritas Germany, other Caritas Network members, some State government and in collaboration with the local Church partners and government agencies, actively took part in the rescue and relief campaign.

Summary of Report: Works Completed and Ongoing

1. Chengdu Coordination Office for relief works in the disaster area (4 staff + volunteers)
2. More than 52,000 victims received 6,550 tents for temporary shelters (US\$2 million)
3. Some 43,000 victims received 645 tons of rice and 67.53 tons of cooking oil for one month food security (est. US\$ 420 million)
4. Temporary bases were set up for three parishes in the disaster area
5. Psycho-Social service started in the field after a ten-day training session in Shijiazhuang
6. Reconstruction projects are in planning

Financial status (RMB)

Total cash contribution from foreign and domestic donors*	6,267,048.75	Total contribution in kind from foreign donors	12,619,517.60
Total expenditure	3,516,496.08	Total delivery in kind to the victims	12,619,517.60
Balance	2,750,552.67	Balance	0

Solidarity in Faith and Compassionate Presence

Over 40 religious from 5 Sichuan dioceses of the region hit by the May 12 earthquake, went with their Retreat Director *Fr. Luke Tsui Kam Yu*, of Hong Kong diocese to visit the earthquake area. They participated in Mass, celebrated in the provisory chapel provided by *Jinde Charities* near the famous Church of *Bai Lu*, built by the *Paris Foreign Missions* (MEP) in 1908. The group then shared their experiences of faith, put to the test by the terrible natural disaster, with the Catholics who suffered the immediate effects of the earthquake. The faith of these people has been renewed by the outpouring of support they have received from all over the world, especially that which came from the Holy Father. Sichuan is a province with a great ethnic variety and the participants were from 10 different ethnic backgrounds. After the Retreat, they also presented a small contribution on behalf of everyone, given with all their love and support. Catholic aid being provided to victims of the earthquake has been constant. Local authorities commented, "we know we can always count on the Catholics to be with us." [Fides 9/29/08]



Comforting the traumatized

Fr. Zhang Yiqiang, the parish priest of Bailu, discussed with Fr. John B Zhang from Jinde Charities



Jinde volunteers in action



Friends from Caritas Germany and vice Director of Jinde Charities visiting Sisters serving in the disaster areas.



Let's work together

22 May 2008 Bp Li is loading rice.



Chengdu Coordination Office



Bishop Anthony Dang Mingyan and Fr. Stephen Chen Ruixue from Catholic Social Service Center, Xi'an Diocese



Reading Notes

Guide to the Catholic Church in China 2008

Editor: Jean Charbonnier, MEP Singapore: China Catholic Communication
 Email mail@zhonglian.org. Limited copies also available from USCCB
chinabur@shu.edu US\$35.00 [inc. postage]

Most comprehensive Guide (bi-lingual listings) By Provinces/Dioceses/Parishes/
 Religious Congregations and names of Bishops/Clergy/Major Religious Superiors.
 Extensive supplemental references on International Church and Research
 Organizations concerned with China. A chronology of World and Chinese History and
 history of Christianity in China [618-2007] Bibliography on China Church 2001-07.



Venture Into the Unknown: Loretto in China 1920-1998

Patricia Jean Manion S.L. St.Louis, MO: Independent Publishing Co. [2006] \$20.00 PB

This is the story of a valiant group of women religious from the USA, who against all odds bore witness to the Gospel in early 20th century China – set in the context of the historical drama of wars and civil chaos in greater China at the time. Historical surveys have elsewhere documented the details of this context, but this account humanizes and personalizes it is the lives of these stalwart women missionaries.

Not to be missed is the moving Epilogue recounting the story of Sr. *Isobel Huang S.C.* – the last Loretto Sister in China, who persevered until her death in Wuhan 1998 – personifying the full flowering of the seeds sown by the Loretto Mission in China, watered by many trials and tribulations.

Annotated Bibliography of Christianity in China. Compiled by *China Academic Consortium*, and available on the web at www.errchina.com/cac/html (scroll down to annotated Bibliography). It list some 300 titles published in China by secular publishers from 1985 to the present – covering 21 categories, each with a Chinese summary and English translation. The bibliography introduces Christianity as a cultural and historical force, as well as basic (Protestant) Christian theology. It is based on writings of Chinese scholars in philosophy, literature and history.

What they're Reading in China. Since Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao claimed last November to have read *Marcus Aurelius' Meditations* nearly 100 times, the Roman Emperor's 1,800-year-old treatise on Stoic Philosophy has become a hit in China, reaching No. 5 on China Book International's best-seller list. A tome extolling the importance of virtue may seem an unlikely *must-read* amid the country's go-go economic boom, but it suggests many are looking for deeper meaning in their lives – and getting frustrated with China's wide wealth gap.

International Religious Freedom Report 2008:

US State Dept. Segments on PR China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and Tibet.

Available on web: <<http://www.state.gov/g/DRL/RLS/IRF2008>>



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