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Follow up to the Pope's Pastoral Letter of 2007

On May 24, 2009, on the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, the world Day of Prayer for the Church in China, the Holy See published an online *Compendium*, approved by Pope Benedict XVI, to help Catholics in Mainland China understand and interpret better the main points of his Pastoral Letter to them in 2007.

Presented in question-answer form, which seeks to give concrete answers to the everyday dilemmas of Chinese Catholics, the *Compendium* is prioritizing spiritual reconciliation before any structural merger of the official and unofficial Catholic communities takes place, and drawing a distinction between the two. It emphasizes the need to act as well as to pray, and expresses communion concretely through exchange of experiences, like sharing pastoral projects and taking on common initiatives.

The *Compendium* specifically addresses the divisions within the Church that have resulted from the manner in which people have dealt with civil authorities and government agencies. It observes that **"division, giving rise to serious suspicions, mutual accusations and recriminations, is a weakness that causes grave concern."** The *Compendium* calls for "arduous efforts at reconciliation," noting it requires "moving beyond personal positions or viewpoints..." These are urgent steps that must be taken "if the bonds of communion between the faithful and the pastors of the Church in China are to grow and be made visible."

The *Compendium* recognizes the Church does need a workable relationship with the state and, consequently, is still seeking to normalize its position within the People's Republic of China, something which it notes requires good will on both sides. It also reassures the government that the Church does not have a mission to change the structure and administration of the state.

It also repeats the papal words that Church teaching invites people to be good citizens and contribute to the common good of their countries, while at the same time asking the state to allow Catholic citizens

the freedom necessary to exercise their faith fully.

The *Compendium* notes that recognition by civil authorities is necessary for the Church to function publicly. It points out that the clandestine condition of the Church in China is not normal and that history shows that pastors and members of the laity have suffered greatly in the process of living within the limitations imposed by the state.

In terms of making concrete decisions on how to move forward in the complexity of varied circumstances that have led people to "adopt attitudes, make gestures and undertake commitments that are contrary to the dictates of their consciences as Catholics," **the *Compendium* leaves the question of whether people should or should not join an officially registered community up to the wisdom of local bishops.** However, it also stresses here the importance of collegiality, encouraging them to consult together and share their wisdom and experience.

While the *Compendium* addresses the difficulties caused by the presence of illicitly ordained bishops, it also explains the approach the Holy See has taken over the past years to their irregular status: "It must be kept in mind, especially in this case where there is little room for freedom, that in order to evaluate the morality of an act, it is necessary to devote particular care to establishing the real intentions of the person concerned, in addition to the objective shortcoming."

The *Compendium* notes that, ideally, the Church should strive to abandon its clandestine condition, yet also admits this can be extremely difficult, as it may not be done at the expense of denying basic principles of faith of ecclesial communion. It also notes that situations vary greatly from one area to another; consequently, **the *Compendium* neither excludes the possibility of accepting or seeking government recognition, nor encourages doing so.** [UCANews. Sunday Examiner]



Church News

50th Anniversary

On December 19, 2008 in Beijing, the celebration of the **50th anniversary of the autonomy of the Chinese church** was in regard to the appointment and consecration of bishops. The practice of independent appointment and consecration, begun in 1958, was instituted by Mao Zedong in order to build a Church independent from Rome.

About 300 personalities, including 45 bishops, participated in the celebration held in the Grand Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square. Also at the meeting were Ye Xiaowen, director of State Administration of Religious Affairs, and Tian Congming, head of minorities and religions. Also present was the patriotic bishop of Kunming, Ma Yinglin, ordained in 2006 without the approval of the Holy See. Bishop Ma, who is secretary of the council of Chinese bishops, also spoke at the meeting. According to many observers, Ma Yinglin is being groomed by the government to become president of the Patriotic Association, the organ of state control over the Church.

In his keynote address, Du Qinglin, head of the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee said: "The Vatican must not interfere in China's internal politics, **including using religion to interfere in our country's domestic affairs**," the Vatican must break off its so-called diplomatic relationship with Taiwan and recognize the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government representing China; "only on the basis of these two fundamental principles can both sides have constructive dialogue, overcome difficulties, narrow differences and make real progress towards improving relations."

Over the past three years, there had been signs of dialogue and encounter between The Vatican and China, leading to hope for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two. Du's hardline speech, and the celebration of the 50th anniversary of episcopal independent consecration signal the end of this hope for the moment. [AsiaNews]



Nan Tang,
Beijing

Unnoticed important news

On April 29, 2009 UCA News in Hong Kong reported what a Vice President of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, Mr. Anthony Liu Bainian, said about the approval of the candidates elected to be consecrated bishops: "There is no need to ordain a bishop right after his election." Dioceses would need some time to subject the choice of Bishop to further scrutiny. Liu also added that papal approval would not be a factor for the Bishop Conference of the Catholic Church of China determining a Bishop candidate's suitability: "Since China and the Vatican do not have diplomatic ties and a normal communication channel, we will endorse the qualified candidate just as in the past." Liu added that **it is up to the local diocese to ask the Vatican to approve the bishop candidate if the diocese wished to.** [UCA News]

22,308 baptized at Easter

According to statistics sent to Agenzia Fides from "Faith" - a Catholic newsletter in China - there were 22,308 people baptized from the 90 dioceses in China this Easter (2009). Last year Faith published statistics from 80 dioceses, which had baptized a collective total of 13,608 people. This year, the statistics were taken from all of the 90 dioceses. The 22,308 new faithful are almost all fruits of the intensification of evangelization in this **Year of St. Paul**.

In the four municipalities under central government control, there were 2,465 baptisms. There were 400 in Beijing, with a large number of scholars and young people; 154 in Tianjin, 311 in Shanghai, nearly 1,400 in Chongqing. In the northeastern regions of mainland China, there were 1,300 baptisms; 1,580 in the northwest; 6,761 in the north; 1,776 in the central area; 3,488 in the east; 2,015 in the southwest; and 2,326 in the southeast.

It is worth noting that in the province of Sichuan, affected by the earthquake on May 12, 2008, over 2,000 baptisms were recorded. According to a local priest, "the earthquake destroyed our churches, but not our missionary spirit, nor our faith and hope. In fact, it has served to reinforce and reawaken the religious sensibilities of the people." [Agenzia Fides]

Pastoral and catechesis

People who are not acquainted with China would be astonished to see the many programs of Church Community Building and direct Evangelization that are going on in China. In several dioceses special programs are being organized for the formation of religious in the field of spirituality and catechesis. At the parish level many lay Catholics are actively involved in catechetical instruction and accompany catechumens towards baptism. There is however **an urgent need: the formation of catechists** to initiate adult catechumens into the faith and the life of the Christian community.

For the past 10 years, the Verbiest Institute in Belgium has offered scholarships for the formation of Church ministers in more than thirty dioceses. It also organized formation sessions for lay catechists. The Institute is now expanding these sessions into more complete formation programs with courses on Bible, Theology, Liturgy, Pastoral and Catechesis. There are contacts with bishops who invited our Institute to organize these formation programs in each diocese.

In order to give a clearer view of the programs, here are some examples of courses being offered from the pastoral-catechetical point of view: The Position and Task of the Bishop (content of "Successores Apostolorum" a Vatican document); Introduction to the New Catechism; New Trends in Catechesis; History of Catechesis (from the time of the Didachè), followed by a Course on History of Catechesis in China; the Adult Catechumenate; Catechesis for Adolescents; Children Catechesis; Catechesis in Special Education; Pastoral Counseling; Prayer and Spirituality of the Christian etc.

While mainly outside of China discussions go on about existing problems in the Church in China, **many more positive and constructive activities are going on inside the Church of China.** The media do not pay much attention to these. Verbiest Institute focuses on that field and hopes that someday, the problems on the official level will find a solution. Meanwhile, the Verbiest Institute keeps contact with what is alive inside the Catholic Church community in China.

[Verbiest Update, Jan 09]

In Memoriam



Death of Rev. Emery Tang, OFM

The U.S. Catholic China Bureau is saddened to report to CCQ readers that Father Emery Tang, OFM, a *founding father* of the USCCB, died on 15 June, 2009.

Through the years Fr. Emery has remained a great supporter of the Bureau. We will long be grateful for his sharing the mission for the Church in China.

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Social Issues

The secret journal of Zhao Ziyang

This Memoir has already been widely reported and reviewed in the popular media, in conjunction with news coverage of the 20th anniversary of the student protests at



at Tiananmen Square in Spring 1989. [cf. Wall Street Journal 05-17-09]. (see Reading Notes P.8)

The book is based on thirty hours of tapes recorded by Premier ZHAO Ziyang. Prior to his death in 2005, **the tapes were secretly carried out of China over several years, and** then transcribed and translated for publication by the editors. Adi Ignatius is the former Beijing Bureau chief for the NYTimes.

Premier ZHAO was the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and key architect of China's early economic reform. He was chiefly responsible for implementing the *Reform and Openness Policies* initiated by the paramount CCP leader, DENG Xiaoping, beginning in 1979. ZHAO remained a close confidant of DENG, until he gradually came to understand that major political reform was necessary in order to sustain the economic progress. Corruption and bad governance were gradually eroding progress and equitably sharing of benefits about which the university students began to protest and demonstrate all through the Spring of 1989. Finally, **ZHAO opted to take an adamant stance in support of the students' cause.** Most crucial of all, he refused to carry out the ruthless military crackdown on the protestors in Tiananmen Square, purportedly ordered by DENG, in the early hours of June 4, 1989.

The editors suggest that ZHAO may have been motivated to carefully carry out what must have been a tedious and even risky task, in hope that his arguments might influence a future generation of leaders who may one day re-visit these tragic events. Thereby he mightily succeeds in not only exonerating himself; but more importantly enables the leading political powers to rehabilitate the Party, the Nation and its people; and to reconcile their own historical memories, free to pursue a more secure, just and peaceful society.

[Sr. Janet Carroll, MM]

Number of Chinese studying abroad

The Chinese Ministry of Education said that a record high of 179,800 Chinese students went abroad for overseas study in 2008.

The top three destinations for Chinese last year were **the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom.**

The number of Chinese returning home after overseas studies in 2008 reached 69,300. That's a 56% percent increase from 2007. Ministry statistics show that from 1978 to the end of 2008, more than 1.39 million Chinese studied abroad; of those, 390,000 returned home. [Xinhua, March 2009]

Final toll for students in quake: 5,335

The Sichuan government has released the final tally of students killed or missing in the magnitude-8 earthquake on May 12, 2008 blaming their deaths on the scale of the disaster.

Tu Wentao, director of the Sichuan Department of Education, said at a press conference in Chengdu that **5,335 students and kindergarten pupils were either killed or missing**, accounting for 6 per cent of the total 87,449 quake victims.

The figure was significantly lower than many had estimated and did not match the number given by Mr. Tu shortly after the quake. At the time Mr. Tu said 7,650 schoolchildren were killed or missing in the quake.

The number of schoolchildren killed in the earthquake has been kept secret for months because of fears that the release of the figure could lead to social unrest sparked by distraught and angry parents. Many parents have blamed shoddy school buildings for the deaths.

Cai Changrong, whose nine-year old daughter was killed at Xinjian Primary School, refused to accept the official conclusion. *"Three quarters of the school building crumbled to the ground while buildings nearby still stood largely intact. Was it not because of poor quality?"* the 38-year-old father asked.

Mr. Cai said that the official verdict was the most ridiculous official response he had come across in years. *"Numbers are meaningless if justice is not served"* he added. *"The parents want to know the truth about the deaths of their children, but until today their wishes have been dealt by an arrogant response without any sincerity."*

[South China Morning Post]

Just like Bamboo: 2009 Chinese Voices Speak

Able to stand on its own, bend with the winds of change, Chinese bamboo is strong and resilient. Since January 2009 Chinese voices have resembled bamboo in their ability to speak out on social issues that recall the collective historic 20th century anniversaries of the 1919 student led May Fourth Movement, the 1949 founding of the People's Republic of China, the June 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre.

Contemporary Chinese voices are like bamboo. Even as a 12/18/2008 *AsiaNews* reported Chinese President Hu Jintao's celebration of 30 years of "stability" and continued "reform and openness" built on Deng Xiaoping's economic reform, on 4/15/2009 *Associated Press* writer **Gillian Wong** wrote "China orders local gov'ts to listen to petitioners" because 3 to 4 million people were upset with their social status. Similarly, the 5/13/2009 *Epoch Times* told of a "Quit the Party" movement: begun in 2004, more than 54 million Party members in and out of China have opted out.



Some Chinese voices, like bamboo, stand tall. Charter 08' signer **Bao Tong**, 75, according to the 3/05/2009 *AsiaNews* the headline ran: "Absolute power of the Party will suffocate the people and the economy." Bao's was a direct appeal to the National People's Congress to "avoid corruption, the impoverishment of migrant workers, pollution, and waste of resources" and "reevaluate the Tiananmen movement." 03/19/2009 *Radio Free Asia* reported the view of **Li Fengzhi** in the story "Chinese Ex-Spy Speaks Out." Li, a former Ministry of State Security intelligence, voiced his displeasure with "government departments..." that are becoming "closed groups that seek economic and social benefits for themselves." Also, **the international quest for Chinese to stand tall** was filed in a 04/09/2009 *Epoch Times* story by Arleen Freeman: "China Human Rights Forum Held at the U.N." The Forum, as seen in everyday news was particularly attentive to Chinese voices aspiring to be heard in China on Human Rights and Democracy in relation to the policy on Tibet, Xinjiang, overall religious belief including Falun Gong. Furthermore, 4/28/2009 *The Times* noted that "The Internet is God's present to China." Dissident writer **Liu Xiobao** proclaimed how

he hesitantly learned the new technology of Internet to **help Chinese voices mature.** Finally, 5/05/2009 *Asia Times Online* published a story on Human-rights lawyers in China by **Verna Yu.**

However, the Chinese voices remembering this year the impact of Tiananmen Square of 1989 were more abundant than the actual protesters in the streets. This is due in large part, 5/27/2009 *Reuters* Ben Blanchard reported because "Tiananmen protest is a distant memory for China youth." Successfully, the Chinese government has eliminated now 20 year olds from learning about the 1989 Tiananmen protests and blocked Internet analysis to its public. Nevertheless, in Hong Kong where there was huge public protest, the 6/01/2009 *AsiaNews* published a story on **Cardinal Zen** of Hong Kong: "20 years on from Tiananmen, Deng is dead: it's time to change." However, more telling was the 3/08/2009 *Sunday Times* story by Michael Sheridan that "**Mao veterans call for a liberal China**" as stated, for example by Mao's 91 year old secretary. Certainly, past memories and present day realities came together through the 6/03/2009 *China Infodoc Service* Factbox which listed 13 profiles of "China's leaders and the protest movement in 1989." Selected living Chinese participants outside China are **Wang Dan, Chai Ling, Wu'er Kaixi, and Fang Lizhi.**

The most compelling Chinese voice however is that of the then General CCP Secretary **Zhao Ziyang** in 1989. Before his death in 2005 he managed to write and record his memoirs which have been published as *Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Premier Zhao Ziyang* (Simon&Schuster, 2009). (see P.4)

Observers outside of China might hear and interpret Chinese voices as if finding an opulent bamboo forest located in an economic zone of modern China. Contemporary news reports however serve as a reminder that the 2009 Chinese voices themselves are more like resilient bamboo. Their long time reverence for Chinese history of the past is very much understood by all in China today as the soil that will nourish the bamboo that has taken root during the 20th century.

[Fr. Rob Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D.]

World's Longest Trans-Oceanic Bridge

The **Hangzhou Bay Bridge** connecting the dazzling metropolis of Shanghai, China's financial and commercial hub and Ningbo, its second largest cargo port city, spans some twenty-one miles across Hangzhou Bay in east central Zhejiang Province. It shortens the overland distance between Shanghai and Ningbo by some seventy-five miles, and cutting driving time from four to two hours. Reported to have a 100-year life span, it runs six lanes in each direction; with current toll fees of approximately US\$12.50. - a bargain bridge toll by US standards.



Another masterpiece of modern architecture, conceived in the past two decades, the *S-shaped Hangzhou Bay Bridge* is another **example of phenomenal modernization and rapid socio-economic development**, especially in the prosperous maritime and coastal regions. The bridge will enhance the development of this area, known as

China's *Golden Triangle* comprised of Shanghai, Hangzhou and Ningbo. Home to about 8% of China's population and considered the 'hottest economic zone' in the country -the *Golden Triangle* produces more than 20% of national *GDP*.

Nearly a decade in design and planning, by over 600 experts, the bridge was officially opened to the public in May, 2008, after a year of experimental use, testing and evaluation. Engineers have taken every precaution to ensure infrastructural integrity, lighting and other safety monitors, and safeguards against even the most extreme weather conditions. Built at cost equivalent to US\$1.70 billion, 35% of financing came from private corporations in Ningbo; with another 59% from regional and central banks. The actual points of landfall are in CiXi County some 40 miles NW of Ningbo in the southern part of Zhejiang Province, and in Jiaxing County - about halfway along the 120 miles distance from Shanghai and Hangzhou.

Note: Google "*Hangzhou Bay Bridge*" for spectacular photos and additional info.]

Good Shepherd Church of Meihekou, Liaoling



The construction of the Parish church of the Good Shepherd, of Meihekou is almost finished. The last decorations are on the way. The formal blessing of the Church will be celebrated on June 19th 2009. The Bishop of the Jilin Diocese, Damasus Zhang, will come for this big feastday. The Benedictine Sisters and all the parishioners of Meihekou are very grateful for all the prayers and donations from foreign countries fulfilling the dream of a church in Meihekou, Northeast China.

Reading Notes



- **The Last Shall be First: The Life of TIEN Keng Hsin, China's First Cardinal.**
Ernest Brandewie .Germany: Steyler Verlag (2007). 203pp. pb \$28.00
 An introduction to the life of Thomas Cardinal TIEN, a religious priest of the *Society of the Divine Word* [SVD], and a distinguished churchman whose life paralleled a traumatic period in Chinese history. TIEN left a distinctive mark on the Roman Catholic Church of his time, both in China, and later as resident Archbishop of ChiaYi Diocese in Taiwan.

- **Democracy's Dharma: Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan.** *Richard Madsen. Berkeley: UC Press. 2007. 157 pp. Illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography and index. Pb \$21.00 [Amazon].*
Madsen, recognized for his collaborative work with American sociologist Robert Bella, is also well known for several researched studies on Catholicism in China since the 1950s. This latest book comes from field work in Taiwan beginning in 2000. It examines and interweaves two themes: the relationship between religion and democracy in Asia and conditions for growth of progressive forms of religion in the modern world. In this work, he focuses on three variants of contemporary Buddhism which have evolved in Taiwan in recent decades. It cogently and credibly deconstructs the 'myth' of a necessary *clash of civilizations* between Asia and the West; offering vision and hope for a new era.

- **China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural Connections, 1900-1950** *Eds. Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer. CA:Stanford U. Press 2009 432 pp. Figures, tales, illustrations, bibliography, Index. pb \$24.95*
 A compendium of essays presented at a 2002 Conference in the USA, in which a new generation of China scholars takes a fresh look at the unusual cross-cultural territory constituted by China's missionary-established Christian colleges. The overall tone of the collection breaks away from traditional self-laudatory analysis; and focuses on cultural interaction as a two way street.

- **The Diaries of the Maryknoll Sisters in HongKong: 1921-1966** *Editor: Cindy CHU Yik-yi. NY: Palgrave-MacMillan 2007 241pp. hc\$66.95.*
 A documentary survey which may be of interest to those who study cross-cultural relationships in historical perspective.

- **Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Premier ZHAO Ziyang.**
Eds. Adi Ignatius, Bao Pu, Renee Chiang . NY: Simon & Schuster 2009. hc. \$15.90
 The work reads almost like a verbatim account, a sort of "stream of consciousness" redaction. It provides a rare window into the power struggle going on inside the top leadership of the communist Party surrounding the tragic events in the Tiananmen Square and the streets of Beijing in May and June 1989. (See p.4)

An AITECE Update

Educational opportunities to work with college and university youth in China continue to abound. College students in China tend to be highly motivated, appreciative of their mentors and diligent in their studies. **During the 2008-09 academic year there were some 40 AITECE teachers** - from the leading English speaking countries in Europe, Asia and North America, located in some 10 provinces and municipalities all around China, at more than 20 tertiary educational institutions.

Recently, **teaching in disciplines other than ESL** is also open to expatriate teachers - in fields such as arts and literature, law, marketing & accounting, economics, sociology. Some universities are then open to shorter term (i.e. one semester) contracts; however, financial arrangements are adjusted accordingly. **If you feel called to this exciting venture** to live in China as a Christian presence, through professional **service**, please **contact Sr. Janet Carroll MM, the Aitece Liaison: <carroljc@shu.edu>**. Offer summary C.V., basic bio-data, academic credentials, note of volunteer experiences, and a brief (100 words) goals and motivational statement.

Preliminary information: <www.usccb.net> go to "**Service Opportunities.**"
Deadline for the Spring 2010 semester is **October 15, '09**. For the fall 2010 semester: March 15, '10.