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Religions & Christianity in Today's China

Vol. II 2012 No. 1

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Editorial

Today we can present to our readers the first issue 2012 of *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* (中国宗教评论). It includes the regular series of News Updates which give an insight into recent events and general trends with regard to religions and especially Christianity in today's China, followed by a report on recent developments in the field of the religious media in China, entitled "Transcendent and Secular at the Same Time." The article "The Chinese Church's Response to Migration within Mainland China" – Part I – aims to offer an analysis of the impact of migration within China on the pastoral and social works of the Catholic Church. Part II will be published in the next issue.

Religions & Christianity in Today's China is freely available on the website of the China-Zentrum, www.china-zentrum.de. Additionally, readers who subscribe to *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* will regularly receive e-mail updates providing web links to the contents of each newly published issue.

The China-Zentrum is a non-profit organization. For the publication of *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* we are dependent on the generosity of our friends and readers. In order to help us cover inevitable costs, we would be very grateful if you could consider sending in a voluntary contribution.

Sankt Augustin, February 2012 *The Editors*

News Update on Religion and Church in China September 15 – December 4, 2011

Compiled by Katharina Wenzel-Teuber
Translated by David Streit

The "News Update on Religion and Church in China" appears regularly in each issue of Religions & Christianity in Today's China (RCTC). *Since the editorial staff learns of some items only later, it can happen that there are chronological overlaps between "News Updates" of two consecutive issues of* RCTC. *In these cases stories referred to in earlier "News Updates" will not be repeated. All "News Updates" can be found online at the website of the China-Zentrum (www.china-zentrum.de). – The last "News Update" (2011, No. 2, pp. 91-113) covered the period May 14 – September 28, 2011.*

September 15, 2011:

Beijing Review: Students from rural areas are falling behind

Fewer and fewer students from rural areas are managing to enroll in one of the leading universities in China. According to a 2010 study, only 17% of undergraduate students at Qinghua (Tsinghua) University in Beijing were from rural areas, despite the fact that rural students accounted for 62% of all registered participants in the nationwide university entrance exam. In 2011 less than 15% of undergraduate students of Qinghua University came from China's rural areas. At Beijing University, the number of students coming from the countryside dropped from 30% (1978–1998) to around 10% over the last ten years. Overall, the number of rural students at leading universities has dropped alarmingly below 20%. According to the article, one of the main reasons is the unfair distribution of educational resources between urban and rural areas (*Beijing Review* Sept. 15).

September 25–26, 2011:

Pastoral Commission of the official Catholic bodies meets – with the presence of an unusually highly placed figure of the Communist Party leadership

Members of the newly established Commission for Pastoral Care and Evangelization of the state-sanctioned Catholic governing bodies (the Patriotic Association and the official Conference of Bishops) came together for their first meeting in Ningde (Diocese of Mindong, Fujian Province). Ten bishops (three of whom, including commission chairman Bishop Zhan Silu, are not recognized by Rome), 13 priests, a sister and eight lay people took part. Zhu Weiqun, deputy director of United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party and a senior cadre of the central Party leadership, came

from Beijing specifically for this meeting. According to a *UCAN* report, Zhu repeatedly told commission members that it was the Church's main task to hold fast to patriotism; he also said the two national Church authorities must "not be ambiguous but be firm on the principle of an independent Church." The *UCAN* report speculated that Zhu's participation was a possible indication that Beijing is paying greater attention to and wants to exercise greater control over the official Catholic leadership bodies, as well as to strengthen the position of Bishop Zhan Silu, in whose diocese 90% of Catholics belong to the underground Church.

The Commission also produced a document, which, while repeatedly quoting Pope Benedict XVI, speaks among other things of the need for raising awareness of evangelization among all members of the Church and of promoting adaptation of the Church to local society and the development of an indigenized theology. It stresses the important role of the media in evangelization and calls for greater control (*guanli*) of Church related websites in China, which – as the document claims – have been somewhat "chaotic" in their reporting, thereby harming the unity and stability of the Church (*UCAN* Oct. 12; www.catholicchurchinchina.org Oct. 5; Nov. 7 [Text of the Commission paper], see also the article "'Transcendent and Secular at the Same Time, News from the Field of the Religious Media" in this issue of *RCTC*).



The „Good Shepherd" adorns the cover page of the new document on the website of the two official Catholic governing bodies.

September 26, 2011:

Xinhua: 8–10 million abortions in China each year

Cheng Linan of the China Medical Association explained that 47% of the women who abort are unmarried and under 25 years of age. These numbers are the result of a recent countrywide survey carried out by the association. The number of abortions is particularly high among migrant workers who generally have inadequate knowledge of or access to birth control methods, Cheng said (*Xinhua* and english.news.cn Sept. 26).

September 26, 2011:

Caritas Macau to manage food bank on behalf of the government

The Macau SAR government began the food bank (Short-term Food Assistance Programme) in 2009 following a sharp rise in inflation. It decided to outsource the service to a local NGO, thus making use of the wider NGO network to reach more people in need, especially those who for various reasons are not known to the state social services. Over the next two years, the government expects to spend 10 million Patacas (approx. € 930 000) on the project, and hopes to reach 6,000 people (*Fides* Sept. 27; *UCAN* Sept. 23).

September 30, 2011:

Hong Kong: Filipina domestic worker wins landmark permanent residency case

Hong Kong's immigration law stipulates that foreigners who work for more than seven consecutive years in Hong Kong are eligible to apply for permanent residence. The law, however, explicitly excludes foreign maids or domestic helpers from this scheme. A Hong Kong court has now ruled this exclusion unconstitutional. The Hong Kong government says that while it respects the ruling, it plans to appeal the verdict. According to *Reuters*, there are 146,000 Indonesian and 139,000 Filipina domestic workers, of whom 117,000 have been working in Hong Kong for more than seven years. The *BBC* reports that domestic workers are required to live with their employers, may work only as domestic workers and must leave Hong Kong – if they have no permanent residence permit – as soon as they become unemployed and are unable to find a job in a new household within two weeks. Opponents of the ruling warn of additional government social spending. Some politicians also fear that the ruling could force the Hong Kong government to ask Beijing for an interpretation of the Hong Kong Basic Law (*BBC News* Sept. 30; *Reuters* Sept. 30).

October 3, 7, 15, 17 and 25; November 3; December 3, 2011:

Six more Tibetan monks or former monks and two nuns set fire to themselves in protest

- October 3: Kelsang Wangchuk (17 years old), monk of Kirti monastery, Ngaba (Aba) in Sichuan Province. Present condition unknown.
- October 7: Khaying (about 20 years old), a former monk of Kirti monastery. He died on October 8.
- October 7: Choepel (about 18), a former monk of Kirti monastery. He died on October 11.
- October 15: Norbu Dramdul (about 19), a former monk of Kirti monastery. Present condition unknown.
- October 17: Tenzin Wangmo (20), a nun of Dechen Ling Choekor monastery in Ngaba (Aba) in Sichuan Province. She died the same day.
- October 25: Dawa Tsering (38), a monk of Kardze monastery, Sichuan Province. Present condition unknown.
- November 3: Palden Choetso (35), a nun of Ganden Jangchup Choeling monastery in Tawu (Daofu), Kardze (Ganzi) Prefecture, Sichuan Province. She died the same day.
- December 3: Tenzin Phuntsok (46), family man and a former monk of the Karma Gon monastery in Chamdo (Changdu), Tibet Autonomous Region. He died on December 9.

This brings to 12 the number of Tibetans who have set fire to themselves during the course of 2011 (for the earlier cases of March 16, August 15 and September 26, see the "News Updates" of previous issues of *RCTC*).

According to Robert Barnett in the *South China Morning Post*, observers point out that the last case of self-immolation has now spread the protest to a monastery of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, which is not under the Dalai Lama. The *Eurasia Review* has reported a similar attempt by a Tibetan outside the PRC to set himself on fire near the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi on October 4, and another in Nepal on October 1.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry, among others, has commented on the suicides by burning, and the Karmapa Lama has also taken a stance; see the entries of October 11 and November 9 below (Open letter from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International to President Hu Jintao of Nov. 3, with the

list of the first 11 who set fire to themselves which was adopted here partially; *Eurasia Review* Nov. 10; *South China Morning Post* Dec. 3; www.tchrd Oct. 19; cf. *RCTC* 2011, No. 1, pp. 11, 17; No. 2, pp. 105, 108, 113.).

October 6, 2011:

The U.S. Senate apologizes for laws discriminating against Chinese immigrants

In its unanimously adopted Resolution SR 201, the U.S. Senate noted that earlier anti-Chinese laws in the U.S., including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (which prohibited the immigration of Chinese nationals and which was definitively repealed only in 1943) were not compatible with the principles of equality contained in the Declaration of Independence. The resolution regrets that the Chinese had been excluded both physically and politically from the U.S. for 60 years and reaffirmed that the Chinese in the United States and others of Asian origin enjoy the same rights as everyone else. Activist Haipei Shue, who had lobbied for the resolution, told *Xinhua* that he was delighted with the news. He said this was only the first step and explained that they wanted to start an education campaign to get Americans to understand their Chinese ancestors.

After 1850, the number of Chinese immigrants, including those involved in the construction of the railroads, increased sharply. Hostility towards the Chinese was particularly strong in California, which issued its own discriminatory laws (*San Francisco Chronicle* online Oct. 11; *Xinhua* Oct. 7; e-lobbyist.com/gaits/US/SR201).

October 7–9, 2011:

Meeting of the Association of Catholic Intellectuals of Zhejiang Province



68 participants from ten cities and four dioceses of Zhejiang met in Wenzhou for an experience of sharing. The Association was founded in 2003 and has over 1,000 members. The chairman of the organization, Fr. Zheng Jiamao, said that there are many Catholic academics in the province, but that their talents were not fully developed for the benefit of the Church. The Association was formed in the hope that they can do more for the Church, he explained. According to *UCAN* it is probably the second such group in China. The first was the Catholic Intelligentsia Association of the Diocese of Shanghai, founded in 1986 (*UCAN* Oct. 10, including photo of the participants).

October 10, 2011:

Centennial remembrance of the Xinhai Revolution – celebrations in Taibei and Beijing with different accents

On October 10, 1911, a military coup against the Qing Dynasty led to the end of the more than 2,000-year-old Chinese empire and to the founding on January 1, 1912 of the Republic of China. On the eve of the anniversary, Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, said in Beijing that reunification through peaceful means would best serve the interests of all Chinese people. In Taiwan, Ma Yingjiu, President of the Republic of China, said on October 10 at the ceremony in Taibei that the government in Beijing must not forget the ideals of the founding father [Sun Yatsen] and should work toward making freedom, democracy and equitable distribution of wealth a reality. *AsiaNews* reported that in mainland China, authorities cancelled some lectures on democracy which had been scheduled in connection with the anniversary. In preparation for the anniversary, the various religious communities in Taiwan took part in special worship services which included an interfaith prayer service for peace in Gaoxiong on August 23 (*AP* Oct. 10; *AsiaNews* Oct. 5; *South China Morning Post* Oct. 10, 11; *Xinhua* Oct. 8; cf. *RCTC* 2011, No. 2, pp. 106-107).

October 11, 2011:

Foreign Ministry spokesman comments on self-immolations of Tibetan monks and places the blame on the "Dalai Lama clique"

At a press conference, Liu Weimin, spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said that in recent months a number of monks and nuns have attempted to set themselves on fire and that the incidents are under investigation. According to him, the "Dalai Lama clique" has not condemned this extreme behavior, but has openly glossed over the deaths and has spread rumors in order to incite more people to emulate these examples. Liu said that the behavior of the clique is a disguised form of violence and terrorism. It is contrary to both the human conscience and to Buddhist teachings and, he claimed, is condemned by indigenous Tibetans, including religious groups (*Xinhua* Oct. 12).

October 11, 2011

Vatican Insider reports that nine Catholic priests have been blocked from entering China since June

The nine priests – four Italians, four of Chinese origin and a Frenchman, most of them residing in Hong Kong – were each turned back at the border crossing or at the international airport in Beijing. According to *Vatican Insider* among them were the Italian Fr. Franco Mella (social activist in Hong Kong / July 27); Fr. Bruno Lepeu, MEP (superior of the Paris Foreign Missionaries in Hong Kong / late July); Fr. Gianni Criveller, PIME (an expert in Chinese church history with a visa for academic work in Beijing / late July) and Fr. Peter Choy Wai-Man (head of the theology department at the Diocese of Hong Kong's Holy Spirit Seminary). In mid-September, 86 year old Fr. Angelo S. Lazzarotto, PIME, who maintains many academic contacts with China and who has regularly visited the country since 1978, was turned back upon his arrival in Beijing and was obliged to take a return flight three hours later. According to information from *Vatican Insider* the Government has drawn up a blacklist of at least 20 persons, mostly priests, whom they consider as having ties to the Holy See and whom they have decided not to allow entry into China. This action is understood as a retaliation for, in particular,

the excommunication of the two bishops consecrated without the consent of Rome in June and July, *Vatican Insider* reported (*Vatican Insider* Oct. 11).

October 16, 2011:

Catholic nuns run the Beijing Marathon for charity



"Sisters on the run" in Beijing. Photo: *UCAN*.

52 nuns, four priests and two religious brothers joined the team of runners organized by the Catholic welfare organization Jinde Charities. Six sisters and one priest managed to complete the full distance of 42 kilometers, others ran sections of the marathon. The sisters, belonging to nine different congregations, took part in the marathon in order to support 14 different projects.

A total of 30,000 runners participated in the 2011 Beijing Marathon. The starting point for the race was Tian'anmen Square (*UCAN* Oct. 18).

October 17–21, 2011:

15th Asian Liturgy Forum discusses the inculturation of burial rites

Liturgical experts from Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan, approximately 40 in number, concluded their meeting in Taibei with a joint statement. Among other things, the statement finds that it could be pastorally appropriate to incorporate into the funeral liturgy some local burial customs, such as the color of the vestments, specific gestures, traditional songs, instruments and symbols, etc. As part of the process of inculturation, the statement recommends serious study of indigenous practices and traditional burial rites. The forum stresses the importance of instruction in the Christian teaching regarding death and resurrection. According to the statement, the catechesis should also speak about reincarnation and superstitious beliefs which are not compatible with the Christian faith (*UCAN* Oct. 21; see the link http://asianliturgyforum.blogspot.com/2011/10/15th-asian-liturgy-forum-statement.html for the full text of the statement).



Tachih Catholic Cemetery in Taibei. Photo: *UCAN*.

October 18, 2011:

CPC Central Committee adopts new guidelines for cultural development

According to press reports from China, the "Decision of the Central Committee on some important issues concerning the stimulation of a major cultural development and prosperity" (中央关于推动文

化大发展大繁荣若干重大问题决定) aims at strengthening China's "Soft Power" and at preserving the country's "cultural security." The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China wants to build up and promote a "system of socialist core values" and improve the Party's leadership in cultural affairs. It also wants to develop the culture industry more rapidly and plans that by 2016 that sector will account for 5% of gross domestic product. According to *Xinhua*, this was the first time in 15 years that a session of the Party's Central Committee dealt mainly with culture.
On November 1, 2011, the Ministry of Finance announced that in future it intends to allocate more tax money for museums, cinemas, music companies, publishers and other cultural institutions (*Global Times Online* Nov. 1; *Xinhua* Oct. 25; Nov. 1).

October 19, 2011:

Declaration of the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) on the situation in Tibet

The Indian-registered NGO, which has headquarters in Dharamsala and operates under the patronage of the Dalai Lama, has issued a statement which also refers to the recent series of self-immolations. The statement describes the situation in Tibet as "extremely grave," and concludes that the human rights situation in Tibet is deteriorating sharply. TCHRD estimates that in 2011 alone, 200 known Tibetans have been arrested and 50 Tibetans have been sentenced. According to the statement, there are around 980 known political prisoners of whom 415 have been sentenced. The center estimates that since 2008, more than 170 Tibetans have died as a result of abusive treatment while in the hands of Chinese authorities (www.tchrd.org Oct. 19).

October 19, 2011:

Cardinal Zen begins a three-day fast for the freedom of Hong Kong schools

With this dramatic gesture, the retired Bishop of Hong Kong is protesting against an October 13, 2011 ruling by the Supreme Court of Hong Kong by which the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong finally lost its challenge to the "Education (Amendment) Ordinance" of 2004. The law requires that those private schools subsidized by the state must form incorporated school management committees by July 2011, which are to consist of at least 40% of elected representatives of parents, teachers and alumni and which are to be legally responsible for the management of the schools. The diocese sees this as a definite risk to the Catholic identity of its schools. The Catholic Church is responsible for 111 of Hong Kong's 572 primary schools and 87 of its 533 secondary schools. The Anglicans and Methodists, who also operate schools in Hong Kong, also fear that this new law will bring about an erosion of the authority of their school boards.



Two priests and a journalist from Macau visit Cardinal Zen during his fast. Photo: *UCAN*.

For three days and three nights, Cardinal Zen took only water and daily Holy Communion. Before beginning the fast, he addressed himself to the media in a long statement. The cardinal spent the three

days out in the open, in a small tent in the grounds of the Salesian religious community where he normally lives. On the last evening, more than 300 people gathered to pray in solidarity with Cardinal Zen. Among the visitors were Martin Lee Chu-ming, founder of the Democratic Party and the Diocese's lawyer throughout the whole process, as well as media tycoon Jimmy Lai Chee-ying, both of whom are Catholics. At the beginning of the fast, the media reported that in recent years Lai had given Cardinal Zen HK $ 20 million (€ 2 million). Cardinal Zen confirmed these reports, but stressed that the donation was not subject to any conditions and that the money had been used on the Mainland for charitable purposes and to provide assistance to both the official as well as to the underground Church (*AsiaNews* Oct. 22, 25; *South China Morning Post* Nov. 7; *UCAN* Oct. 13;. www.katholisches.info Oct. 19). *Katharina Feith*

October 21, 2011:

UCAN reports the suspension of Bishop Pei Junmin from his official positions

Citing a church source, the Catholic news agency *UCAN* reported that in mid-August, Bishop Pei Junmin of Liaoning (Shenyang) was suspended from his position as vice chairman of the official Chinese Bishops' Conference (not recognized by Rome) and as chairman of the Catholic Patriotic Association and of the Church Affairs Commission of Liaoning. According to *UCAN*, the move was a disciplinary action on the part of the government after the 42-year-old bishop failed to preside over the illicit episcopal consecration in Shantou on July 14 of this year as the government required. According to the source, Bishop Pei is now confined to his house. Yang Yu, a spokesman for the Patriotic Association and for the Bishops' Conference, denied that the suspension had occurred.
Earlier in the year *UCAN* reported that Bishop Li Liangui of Xianxian had been stripped of his membership in the Political Consultative Conference of Hebei Province as a punishment for his failure to attend the 8th National Assembly of Representatives of the Catholic Church in China in December of 2010. The two bishops are recognized by both Rome and Beijing (*UCAN* Oct. 21[also photo]; cf. *RCTC* 2011, No. 2, p. 99).

October 23–25, 2011:

International Forum on Daoism meets in Hunan to promote Daoist influence abroad



Discussion among Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism at the International Forum on Daoism. Photo: www.sara.gov.cn

With 500 participants from 21 countries, the forum took place in the Nanyue District of Hengyang City in Hunan Province. It was organized by the Chinese Daoist Association and the China Religious Culture Communication Association. The topics on the conference agenda included environmental protection, sustainable development, inter-religious harmony, world peace and the possible role of Daoism in these areas. The "Nanyue Declaration," a resolution adopted at the end of the conference, sees unbridled desires and the self-indulgent pursuit of profit as causes of the disorder in nature and of conflicts among

peoples. The declaration calls for a return to the Dao and to Virtue (*de*) (see the report *China heute* 2011, No. 4, pp. 208-209 [in German] and the text of the declaration at www.china.com.cn/policy/txt/2011-10/26/content_23732663.htm).

October 26, 2011:

Explosion in government building in Chamdo (Tibet Autonomous Region) triggers repressive measures against the Karma Gon monastery

According to a report on *Radio Free Asia*, notes demanding independence for Tibet were found at the site of the government building damaged in a bomb attack on October 26; authorities suspected that monks were involved in the attack. The Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy reported in early December that armed police units had taken control of the nearby Karma Gon monastery and that the monastery continues to be subjected to severe repressive measures. Many monks were arrested; others have been expelled from the monastery, it said. A former monk of the monastery burned himself to death on December 3. The Karma Gon monastery is the cradle of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism (*Radio Free Asia* Oct. 30; www.tchrd.org Dec. 12).

October 27, 2011:

Bishop of Haimen ordains priests for Diocese of Shantou – consent presumed

Bishop Shen Bin of Haimen (Jiangsu) and Bishop Li Shan of Beijing have ordained five deacons to the priesthood in Nantong, three of whom are for the Diocese of Shantou. Both Bishops are recognized by the Pope. Huang Bingzhang who was consecrated Bishop of Shantou on July 14, 2011, without papal appointment, and for whom the Vatican had declared automatic excommunication on July 16, did not make an appearance at the ordination. An unnamed church source speculated to *UCAN* that Huang had agreed with the new priests on this way of doing things in order to reduce the psychological pressure that would have been put on them [through ordination by an excommunicated bishop]. The source said that he found it sad that some Catholics still verbally abused the new priests and their families. According to the *UCAN* report, the former Bishop of Shantou, Cai Tiyuan, himself not recognized by Rome, did not personally ordain any of the 20 diocesan priests ordained for Shantou during his time in office from 1981 to 1997 (*UCAN* Nov. 2; cf. *RCTC* 2011, No. 2, pp. 99, 114-118).



Photo of the first Mass of the three new priests in Shantou on Oct. 27 – this time with the illicit Bishop Huang (center). Photo: www.catholicchurchinchina.org

October 30, 2011:

"Project 1 Million Dutiful Children" unleashes debate

A five-year plan stipulates that each county should select 30–60 children between the ages of four to six years who are to receive 100 days of special lessons in etiquette and morality. Children who complete this course successfully will continue to be educated in this way for three more years, at the end of which they will receive the title of "dutiful children." According to the *South China Morning Post*, the sponsor of "Project 1 Million Dutiful Children" (*baiwan xiaozi gongcheng* 百万孝子工程) is the "state-sanctioned" China National Association for Ethical Studies (Zhongguo lunli xuehui 中国伦理学会). The paper said that the campaign has been the subject of numerous critical comments on the Chinese Internet. However, one comment on the website of the *Xinhua News Agency* argued that the project should be looked upon as a useful test, despite some flaws in its reasoning, since respect for old age is disappearing from Chinese society and the traditional Chinese value of filial piety is a foundation for the healthy development of a harmonious society (*South China Morning Post* Nov. 1; comments on www.people.com.cn Nov. 1 and www.xinhuanet.com Nov. 2).

October 30, 2011:

Communist Party Committee of Tibet Autonomous Region adopts program to reward "harmonious model monasteries"

Reporting on a meeting of the Communist Party Committee, the government-run website www.chinatibetnews.com said that in this campaign, activities are being planned to strengthen awareness among the monks and nuns in the Autonomous Region that they belong to the Chinese nation (*Zhonghua minzu* 中华民族) so that they consciously draw a clear line between themselves and the separatist forces. In the "Opinions on the development of activities for the building and selection of harmonious model monasteries and on the selection of monks and nuns advanced in patriotism and in compliance with the law (for trial implementation)" 关于开展谐模范寺庙暨爱国守法先进僧尼创建评选活动的意见 (试行) adopted at the meeting, it is stipulated that such selection processes would be held every six months at the local level and once a year throughout the Autonomous Region. According to the report, Party and government leadership at the respective levels of government will present the monasteries chosen with a certificate and prize money. They will also present awards to selected individual monks and nuns. In addition, each monastery selected as a "harmonious model monastery" will also receive a commemorative plaque (www.chinatibetnews.com Nov. 1).

November 7, 2011:

Muslims in China Celebrate Id al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice) – *Xinhua* reports

The state news agency, *Xinhua*, reported that government employees in Xinjiang were given a day off to celebrate the annual Feast of Sacrifice (Corban, Id al-Adha, Chinese *zaishengjie* 宰牲节). Muslims of different nationalities who are celebrating Corban were allowed three days off. At a reception of the China Islamic Association on November 6, the Association's chairman, Grand-Imam Chen Guangyuan, addressed greetings and best wishes to Muslims throughout China and around the world (*Xinhua* Nov. 7).

November 9, 2011:

The Karmapa appeals to Tibetans not to burn themselves to death

In a written appeal, the Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, head of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, who fled from China to India in 1999, pleaded: "I request the people of Tibet to preserve their lives and find other, constructive ways to work for the cause of Tibet." He called the self-immolations that have taken place "desperate acts" of brave people with pure motivation. "Most of those who have died have been very young. They had a long future ahead of them [...] We Tibetans are few in number, [...] we need to live long and stay strong without losing sight of our long-term goals." The Karmapa wrote that he agrees with the Dalai Lama that the Chinese leadership needs to face up to the true causes of these tragic incidents and seriously revise its policy towards Tibetans and other minorities. He appealed to the world to empathize with the suppression of the monasteries, especially in the Tibetan part of Sichuan, and at the same time appealed to the Chinese leaders to pursue genuine dialogue with the Tibetan people.

According to one comment on *TibetInfoNet*, the Karmapa was the first Tibetan leader who unambiguously called on Tibetans not to end their lives, but to find other avenues of protest (the text of his statement can be found at www.kagyuoffice.org/HHKarmapaStatement; *TibetInfoNet Update* Nov. 10. See entries from Oct. 3 and 11).

November 10, 2011:

Vietnamese Falungong followers convicted for broadcasts to China

Vu Duc Trung and his brother-in-law Le Van Thanh were found guilty in Hanoi of illegal radio broadcasts to China and were sentenced to 3 and 2 years in prison respectively. According to the Falun Dafa Information Center in New York, the two had been sending shortwave programs to China regarding human rights violations, corruption and oppression of the Falungong movement since 2009. A group of Falungong practitioners protesting against the trial outside the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi was briefly detained.

According to Falun Dafa, in Vietnam, there are several hundred Falungong adherents who, due to pressure from the Chinese Communist Party, are increasingly subject to acts of harassment (even though the organization is apparently not prohibited by law). The arrest of Vu Duc Trung and Le Van Thanh followed on the heels of a May 30, 2010 diplomatic memorandum from the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi, Falun Dafa said.

The group Reporters Without Borders condemned the verdict and expressed concern about the influence exercised in the case by the Chinese Government (*AFP* Nov. 10; en.rsf.org Nov. 10; www.faluninfo.net Nov. 7, 8 and 10).

November 14, 2011:

Amnesty International calls for release of two Falungong followers, reports of unusual petition

According to Amnesty International (AI), Falungong member Zhou Xiangyang was released from prison in 2009 after serving six years of a nine-year sentence, but he was arrested once again in March

2011. He is at present in Ganbei prison in Tianjin, where he has allegedly been tortured, AI reported. According to the same report, his wife, Li Shanshan, who spent 15 months in a labor camp in 2006–2007, has described both of their situations in an open letter and after that was arrested once again on October 29, 2011 in Tangshan (Hebei Province) and sentenced to two years of "reeducation through labor." Between September and mid-November of 2011, some 2,300 people in Zhou's hometown in Changli County (Hebei Province) have signed a petition for his release, thus the AI report. Another petition for Li Shanshan had already been signed by 500 people before Nov. 15.

On October 31 the Falun Dafa Information Center in New York announced that a Buddhist temple registered with the Religious Affairs Bureau of Sichuan Province has been converted since mid-2010 into a "brainwashing center" for Falungong adherents. According to the report, the temple involved is the Sansheng Temple in Fenglechang in Guihua Township, Pengzhou City. Falungong spokesperson Zhang Erping said that over the past 12 years, tens of thousands of such centers had been set up in China, but that it was particularly chilling when a Buddhist temple is used as the site of coercive measures against followers of a Buddhist group (www.amnesty.org Nov. 14; www.amnesty.de Nov. 18 [*UA*-335/2011, *ASA* 17/047/2011]; www.faluninfo.net Oct. 31).

Mid-November 2011:

Major Seminary of Shanxi resumes normal classes

According to *UCAN*, at a meeting in late October the seminary board members refused once again to reinstate Fr. Chang Tongxi, who had been dismissed as rector of the Montecorvino Seminary in Taiyuan last June on charges of embezzlement. The religious affairs authorities of Shanxi Province had made his reinstatement a condition for the resumption of classes and had even threatened to remove the 85 year old chairman of the board, Bishop Huo Cheng of Fenyang, from his position as chairman. In early November the seminary board called the seminarians back to the seminary and lessons resumed in mid-November, without further intervention by the authorities (*UCAN* Nov. 17; cf. *RCTC*, 2011, No. 2, p. 110).



Newly returned seminarians tidy up the seminary's vegetable garden. Photo: *UCAN*.

November 16–18, 2011:

Forum on Liturgy and Inculturation in Shijiazhuang

The forum was organized by the Catholic Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (Shijiazhuang) in cooperation with the ten [official] major seminaries of mainland China. The 59 participants included academics (from the Church, universities and colleges), priests, nuns and lay people as well as experts from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Belgium, France and Germany. According to Fr. Zhang Shijiang, head of the Faith Institute, since 1991, 21 Chinese priests and only one sister (no laity) have either studied liturgy abroad or are still studying now. These include 7 in the U.S., 4 in Italy, 4 in Germany, 3 in the Philippines, 1 in Switzerland and 3 whose place of studies is not specified. Eleven have since returned

to China, where some of them are teaching in the seminaries. In addition, over the last 20 years, 128 liturgical publications of various kinds have appeared in mainland China, as well as the 70–100 song books produced locally by various dioceses and parishes.



View of the podium at the Forum. Photo: Martin Welling.

Within the framework of the main theme, the forum's 40 or so presentations dealt with, among other things, issues of church interior design, liturgical gestures and symbols, language, ancestor worship and traditional Chinese festivals in the liturgy, church music (also in connection with Chinese musical tradition), liturgy and evangelization (*Fides* Nov. 17; www.xinde.org Nov. 18; for the conference program see www.xinde.org/feature/liyi_2011/conference%20program).

November 22, 2011:

Coadjutor Bishop of Kaifeng dies in the "underground"

Bishop Anthony Zong Changfeng was born in 1932 and entered the seminary at the age of 12, but could only be ordained a priest following the Cultural Revolution in 1979. Following his ordination, he worked as a chaplain in the Diocese of Zhouzhi (Shaanxi Province). In 1998 Bishop Liang of Kaifeng in the neighboring province of Henan secretly consecrated him as his coadjutor (auxiliary bishop with the right to succession). The authorities, however, prevented Bishop Zong from ever exercising his episcopal ministry in Kaifeng, so he continued his pastoral ministry as a priest in the underground in Zhouzhi Diocese. About 3,000 faithful, three bishops and 40 priests attended Bishop Zong's funeral on November 29 in the village of Nanyu (*UCAN* Dec. 1).

November 24, 2011:

Xinhua: Tibet Autonomous Region adopts rules for social security coverage of Tibetan monks and nuns

According to the state news agency *Xinhua*, the recently adopted measures provide that all registered monks and nuns in the Tibet Autonomous Region who are over 18 years of age can apply to join health insurance and the old age pension scheme. They will also be able to apply to the State for a subsidy to help cover the costs of the annual premiums. Monks over the age of 60 can apply for a basic monthly pension of 120 Yuan without having paid premiums. *Xinhua* said that the new measures will solve the problem caused by the fact that many monks and nuns do not have their household registration (*hukou*) where their monasteries are located and therefore could not be included in local social security benefits. According to the document, local governments may grant monasteries and monks additional aid as a reward for being law-abiding and patriotic. *Xinhua* quoted one monk as saying that this clause is an important stimulus for monasteries to comply with the laws and to maintain social stability. The "Interim Measures of the Tibet Autonomous Region for Buddhist monks and nuns in monasteries to participate in the Social Security Program" 西藏自治区寺庙僧尼参加社会保险暂行办法 went into effect on Jan. 1, 2012 (*Xinhua* Nov. 24; www.fjnet.com Dec. 8). – For more on the general problem of social security for religious personnel see *China heute* 2010, No. 3, pp. 140-142 [in German].

November 25, 2011:

Henan Province to allow a second child to parents coming from one-child families

According to a decision of the Standing Committee of the Henan Provincial People's Congress, couples where both partners are only children may have two children in the future. Henan Province is the latest province to decide on this relaxing of family policy, said *Xinhua*. According to the news agency, the one-child policy has prevented 33 million births in population rich Henan Province over the past 30 years (*Xinhua* Nov. 25).

November 27–30, 2011:

Global Buddhist Assembly in New Delhi – China protests against the participation of the Dalai Lama

Some 900 Buddhists of different traditions and from 46 different countries participated in an international Buddhist assembly organized by the New Delhi based Asoka Mission. The assembly was called to celebrate the 2,600th anniversary of the Enlightenment of the Buddha. Indian media reported that in the run-up to the meeting China is said to have protested against the Dalai Lama taking part and to have urged India to cancel the gathering. Since India refused to do so, China reportedly has postponed Sino-Indian border talks that had been scheduled for the same period, and of the 40 Chinese Buddhist scholars expected for the meeting only 8 were able to come. The Karmapa Lama, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, head of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism and currently living in exile in India, delivered the opening address to the sub-forum on environment and nature. Participants decided to establish an International Buddhist Confederation, which will serve as a platform for Buddhists worldwide. According to the 2001 census, almost 8 million Buddhists live in India (*IANS* Nov. 27; *PTI* Nov. 26; www.asokamission.in; www.kagyuoffice.org Nov. 28).

November 30, 2011:

Episcopal consecration in Yibin (Sichuan) – with Papal mandate, but with an excommunicated bishop taking part

The 95 year old Ordinary of Yibin, Bishop Chen Shizhong, has ordained 50 year old Fr. Peter Luo Xuegang as his coadjutor bishop (with the right of succession). The co-consecrators were Bishops He Zeqing of Wanzhou, Li Jing of Ningxia, Yang Xiaoting of Yulin, Coadjutor Bishop Xiao Zejiang von Guiyang as well as Lei Shiyin (Leshan). With the exception of Lei Shiyin, who was excommunicated for his episcopal ordination without Papal mandate on June 29, 2011, all of the other consecrating bishops are recognized by both Rome and Beijing. According to local sources cited by *UCAN*, the consecration took place amid rigid security measures, with round-the-clock "security protection" for the participating clergy the day prior to the ceremony and the presence of many police officers and police dogs in the area; cell phones, cameras and liquids were banned from the ordination site.

Newly consecrated Bishop Luo originally belonged to the Diocese of Leshan. In May of 2009 he was transferred to Yibin Diocese and in January of 2010 was elected coadjutor bishop candidate of Yibin. He was ordained a priest in Leshan on November 30, 1991 together with Fr. Lei Shiyin. The Diocese of Yibin has 30,000 Catholics. (*UCAN* Nov. 24, 28, 29, 30; Dec. 1; www.catholicchurchinchina.org Nov. 30; www.xinde.org Dec. 1).

November 29 and 30, 2011:

Vatican spokesman Lombardi, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei on the episcopal consecration of Yibin

On November 29, the day before the episcopal consecration in Yibin (see above), Vatican spokesman Fr. Federico Lombardi confirmed that the candidate for ordination was recognized by Rome, and expressed the hope that the standards of the Church regarding the ordination of bishops would be respected. The same day, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said in answer to journalists' questions on the upcoming consecration that China has always been sincere in its desire to improve relations with the Vatican.

In comments on the evening of November 30 following the consecration, Lombardi said that the Holy See welcomed the consecration of Bishop Luo. "After the recent episcopal ordination without papal mandate, the fact of having a new bishop in communion with the Pope and all the Catholic bishops of the world is certainly positive." However, the participation of the [excommunicated] Bishop Lei Shiyin in the consecration "gives rise to disagreement and confusion among the faithful," the Vatican spokesman said. Under normal circumstances, he concluded, Lei's presence "should have been entirely excluded, and would entail canonical consequences for the other participating bishops." Under the circumstances, however, "it is likely that they were unable to prevent it without great inconvenience." According to Lombardi, the Holy See will be able to judge this question better when it has more precise information (*Fides* Nov. 29; *Reuters*, Nov. 29.; *Vatican Radio* as found at www.news.va Dec. 1).

November 30, 2011:

Bishop not recognized by Rome ordains six deacons

According to information from the news service *Eglise d'Asie* (*EDA*), the official Bishop of Kunming (Yunnan Province) Ma Yinglin, who was consecrated in 2006 without papal mandate and who in 2010 was elected chairman of the Chinese Bishops' Conference (not recognized by Rome), has ordained six seminarians to the diaconate in the village of Lunmeiyi. Citing local Church sources, *EDA* reported that the candidates had been placed under considerable pressure. Five of them come from the Yunnan dioceses of Kunming, Dali and Zhaotong and belong to various ethnic groups (two Tibetans, one Miao, one Yi, and one Jingpo). The sixth candidate was a Han Chinese from Shanxi Province. All six had studied at the major seminary in Chengdu. According to *EDA*, in recent years seminarians from Yunnan have either left the country or have gone to other provinces so as to be ordained by bishops other than Ma. Ordination at the hands of an illegitimate bishop creates not only a problem for the deacons under Church law but also a very real pastoral problem since they risk being rejected by a large part of the faithful, *EDA* commented (*EDA* Dec. 2).

December 2, 2011:

Holy See and Taiwan conclude agreement on academic cooperation and mutual recognition of university degrees

With this agreement, Taiwan now recognizes the degrees of ecclesiastical universities around the world. Conversely, degrees issued by colleges and universities in Taiwan will now be recognized by all ecclesiastical universities worldwide. As *AsiaNews* reported, the agreement has consequences in Taiwan itself: the degrees of the Jesuit-led Theological Faculty of Fu Jen Catholic University will also be recognized

by the government. This was not the case in the past. Graduates of the Faculty will finally have a degree which will enable them to find employment in Taiwanese society, said the Faculty's dean, Fr. Augustine Tsang, SJ. The Theological Faculty of Fu Jen has 174 students in its regular day program and 64 who are taking evening classes. Among them are many foreign religious and one Russian Orthodox student who is preparing himself for future ministry among Chinese communities in Heilongjiang and in Siberia (*AsiaNews* Dec. 2; *CathNews China* Dec. 2).

December 3, 2011:

China Daily: Trafficking in women is on the increase in China

According to the government newspaper, the number of women from Vietnam, Laos and Burma, who are smuggled illegally into China is on the increase. Once in China, they are either sold for between 20,000 and 50,000 Yuan as brides for men living in rural areas or they are forced into prostitution. According to information from the Chinese Ministry of Public Security, between July and September of 2011, 52 Vietnamese women and 13 children were rescued in raids carried out along the border with Vietnam. 53 suspected traffickers were arrested (*Xinhua* Dec. 3).

December 4, 2011:

Last Chinese pilgrims return home from Mecca after this year's pilgrimage

Statistics provided by the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), indicate that 13,700 Muslims from the PR China have taken part in the 2011 Hajj to Mecca. The last of the 41 charter flights to return touched down in Beijing on December 4. As in recent years, the pilgrimage was centrally organized by both the SARA and the Chinese Islamic Association (CIA). The CIA concluded that the goal of providing a decent, civilized and peaceful pilgrimage was achieved and that pilgrims this year enjoyed the best level of service and organization of any Hajj in many years. According to official figures, more than 13,000 Muslims from the PR China took part in the Hajj in 2010 (www.sara.gov.cn Dec. 04).





Top: Pilgrims check-in for the pilgrimage to Mecca.
Left: Welcome ceremony for the Hajjis returning from Mecca.
Photos: www.sara.gov.cn

Collaboration: Katharina Feith (item indicated)

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"Transcendent and Secular at the Same Time" News from the Field of the Religious Media

Katharina Wenzel-Teuber
Translated by Jacqueline Mulberge

Over a year ago, from December 2–3, 2010, a **Conference on the "Position and Responsibility of the Religious Media Today"** was held at the Jade Buddha Temple of Shanghai. The convention, attended by 600 participants, was hosted by the journal *Zhongguo zongjiao* 中国宗教 (*China Religion*), which is published by the State Administration for Religious Affairs. Co-organizers were the organs of the official governing bodies of the five major religions: the journals *Zhongguo daojiao* 中国道教 (*China Taoism*), the Buddhist journal *Fayin* 法音 (*Voice of Dharma*), *Zhongguo musilin* 中国穆斯林 (*China Muslim*), the Protestant periodical *Tianfeng* 天风, and *Zhongguo tianzhujiao* 中国天主教 (*Catholic Church in China*). According to *Fayin* – which also reported on the event, as well as *Zhongguo zongjiao* – it was the first conference on this topic since the beginning of the opening-up policy.

The distinctive feature of religious media, according to the conference, is that it has to be both "transcendent and secular" at the same time. Its double responsibility – to the adherents of religion and also to society as a whole – was stressed time and again. Zhuo Xinping, Director of the Institute for World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, stated that many problems in society were caused or made worse by irresponsible media reporting. He asked the religious media not to follow this trend but rather to contribute to harmony within and between the religions, as well as between the religions and society.

Interestingly enough, it was stated that the "traditional religious media" are experiencing new competition from other mass media in China, which are increasingly reporting on religion. Religious topics "are now a focal point of public opinion and give rise to hot debate in society. That is a new challenge to the discursive power of the religious media and their ability to form public opinion," according to the *Zhongguo zongjiao* report on the conference.

In addition, the traditional religious media are under great pressure due to the rapid development of the new forms of media (Internet, mobile phone) which have fundamentally changed reporting and reading habits, the report explained, adding that digitalization of the traditional religious media is unavoidable. Participants agreed that the printed journals with their commitment and dependability ought to complement the virtual character and arbitrariness of the Internet. During the conference it was pointed out that through

the Internet, the religious media become a source of attraction which extends beyond the circle of adherents of religions to the broader society. This certainly applies to China more than elsewhere because the printed matter of religious groups can only appear internally, whereas their websites are openly accessible.

The digitalization of the traditional religious publications demanded by the media conference made further progress in summer 2011. On August 1, 2011, an online edition of the official Protestant journal *Tianfeng* made its debut. The printed issues will still continue. The online and printed journals are identical. With this, wrote the *Tianfeng* editors, the Protestant church in China has taken a great step forward. The online issue, which must be paid for, can be accessed on the joint Internet portal of the Protestant Three-Self-Movement and the Chinese Christian Council at http://tianfeng.ccctspm.org/tianfeng/ which has already been in existence for a number of years.

The Catholic equivalent of *Tianfeng*, *Zhongguo tianzhujiao*, also went online in summer (probably July) 2011. The new website www.catholicchurchinchina.org is, however, not identical to the printed issue but functions as a new, joint Internet portal of the official, State sanctioned Catholic governing bodies, the Patriotic Association and the Chinese Bishops' Conference. Up till then the official church leadership had no Internet presence, a fact that the researcher of Catholicism Wang Meixiu regretted in her "Observations on Chinese Catholicism in 2009" in the *Annual Report on China's Religions (2010)* published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. At the same time, however, Wang also demanded a clear separation of these two bodies; the new website does just the opposite. It has a very extensive layout. Alongside Church news (China and Universal Church) and a few other topics, the navigation pane provides especially for subpages regarding Church institutions in China: on the dioceses (with a further 98 pages on the official dioceses in China, which, however, apart from one address per diocese contain nothing more as yet), on the major seminaries, religious congregations, Church welfare organizations, and publications. Up till now the majority of the subpages have very little content. On the other hand, the subpages concerning *yi hui yi tuan* 一会一团, as the Patriotic Association and the Chinese Bishops' Conference are summarily named, are well equipped with information; we find there their statutes, committees and commissions, as well as information on the current office holders, and reports of meetings. Chairman of the Commission for Media and Publications is Bishop Lei Shiyin who was consecrated without a papal mandate on June 29 last year.

The website is still in a process of development but clearly shows the efforts of the two Catholic governing bodies, which are supported by the Chinese Government but not recognized by Rome, to portray fully from now on the Catholic Church in China with all its institutions. Up till now a leading role with regard to the interregional reporting from the various dioceses has been played by the journal *Xinde* (currently with 50,000 subscribers) which appears in Shijiazhuang, together with its website www.chinacatholic.org. In this connection it is interesting to note that the newly launched website of the official Catholic governing bodies has a twin, with the address www.chinacatholic.cn which is almost identical to *Xinde*'s "traditional" web address, while *Xinde*'s website has recently adopted

a second web address, www.xinde.org, to which all subpages from www.chinacatholic.org are linked automatically.

The journal *Xinde* 信德 (*Faith*) celebrated its 20th anniversary on September 1, 2011, with its number 456. Simultaneously it changed from a ten-day to a weekly publication. The concept was also changed and from now on will place the main focus on in-depth reporting and commenting on social issues from the point of view of religious ethics. The multitude of news from the life of the dioceses and parishes which was formerly to be found on the first pages of the newspaper now have to be looked for on its website. The jubilee issue leader called for continued support for the paper by submitting news and articles, as well as subscribing.

The jubilee number also presented some data on the history of *Xinde*. Twice, namely in 1997 and 2000, publication of the paper was temporarily halted. *Xinde* reached a low in the year 2000 with 22,000 subscriptions and the highest circulation to date with 61,000 subscriptions in 2008. Speaking to the news agency *UCAN* in November 2011, the editor-in-chief, Father John Baptist Zhang Shijang, and the newly appointed director of Faith Press, Father Joseph Li Rongpin, noted that the number of subscribers was strongly influenced by the fluctuations of Sino-Vatican relations. Moreover, according to Li Rongpin, the increasing number of diocesan newspapers, which are mainly gratis and bring local news that is more relevant to the immediate environment of the readers, is drawing subscribers away from *Xinde*. This is one reason for changing the concept of the paper.

A few statistics. In Mainland China there are more than 130 Buddhist newspapers and 147 Buddhist websites. This number was quoted by *Fayin* in December 2010. In the *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (March 2010) Wai Yip Ho observed that in mid-2008 there were 50 to 60 "active, stable and reliable Chinese Islamic websites." As his article deals with the Hong Kong website "Light of Islam" (*Yisilan zhi guang*, www.islam.org.hk or www.norislam.com), this number probably also includes websites outside Mainland China. Regarding the Catholic Church in China, in November 2011 *UCAN* estimated more than 30 newspapers and a dozen journals.

Social media. Microblogging is becoming increasingly important in the area of religion as well. One example of this was named by the State news agency *Xinhua* on March 7, 2011: Master Xuecheng, one of the vice-chairmen of the Chinese Buddhist Association and editor-in-chief of *Fayin*, publishes microblogs in 8 languages – alongside Chinese also in English, French, Russian, Japanese, German, Spanish, and Korean (to be found at http://longquanzs.org/eng/ – the entries do not have much of a personal nature but feature more of a chronicle of the activities of Master Xuecheng and of the Longquan monastery). The Protestant Chongwenmen Church in Beijing, for example, has its own microblog (http://weibo.com/chwmch) on Sina Weibo, the leading Chinese microblogging service (a kind of cross between Facebook and Twitter, both of which are blocked in China). The religious microblogging scene is far more difficult to measure than the Internet sites. Its increasing significance, however, was taken into account also by the Federation of Asian

Bishops Conferences (FABC) as the following example shows: during the meeting of their Office of Social Communications in Taiwan from November 14–19, 2011, they offered the participating Asian bishops, priests, religious, and lay persons a two-day workshop on the use of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other branches of the social or rather multi-media communication.

Sources: *Fayin* 2010, No. 12, pp. 60-61 and 12-13 (Report on the Conference "Position and Responsibility of the Religious Media Today" and the conference report of Master Xuecheng); *UCAN* November 18 and 25, 2011; Wai-Yip Ho, "Islam, China and the Internet: Negotiating Residual Cyberspace between Hegemonic Patriotism and Connectivity to the Ummah," in: *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 30 (2010) 1, pp. 63-79; Wang Meixiu 王美秀, "Observations on Chinese Catholicism in 2009" (in Chinese), in: *Zhongguo zongjiao baogao* 中国宗教报告 (2010). *Annual Report on China's Religions*, Beijing 2010, pp. 89-110, here pp. 106 and 109 ; *Xinde* September 1, 2011; *Xinhua* March 7, 2011; *Zhongguo zongjiao* 2010, No. 12, pp. 27-32 (Report on the Conference "Position and Responsibility of the Religious Media Today" and the conference report of Fang Litian); 2011, No. 1, pp. 34-35 (Conference report of Zhuo Xinping); www.catholicchurchinchina.org July 2, 2011; www.ccctspm.org August 1, 2011; cf. *RCTC* 2011, No. 2, pp. 92-93 and 103-104.

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中国宗教评论

The Chinese Church's Response to Migration within Mainland China (Part I)

John B. Zhang

Every year on December 18, the United Nations observes an "International Migrants Day". In a written statement for the "98th World Day of Migrants and Refugees" on January 15, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI emphasized that the Church has to attach importance to evangelization among the floating population of migrants, "The phenomenon of migration today is also a providential opportunity for the proclamation of the Gospel in the contemporary world." Now, fairly soon after the migrants day, the author wishes to remind everybody to pay close attention to the problems of migration and to increase the vigor and dynamic of the pastoral and missionary work among the migrants.

Preface

Ever since China began to open up in the late 1970s, many Chinese have moved abroad to study, work, do business, live with relatives, and the like. And as China developed rapidly, some overseas friends – including those who live in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan – moved to the Mainland to study, teach, work, etc.

But the greatest migration movement has been within the Mainland itself – either directed by the government or undertaken voluntarily. During the past 30 years of China's open-door policy, with the transformation from planned economy to market economy and the transition from rural to urban areas, from small to big cities, and from remote areas to special administrative regions, this enormous relocation of people has become the country's greatest migration pattern.

Never before has the connection among citizens of the global village been so intense. Many of those taking part in this irreversible migration trend on both international and domestic levels are Christians who need the Church's care and attention. These migration dynamics, of course, also have a tremendous impact on the pastoral service, the evangelization, and the development of the Catholic Church in China.

This article is Part I of a public lecture delivered by John B. Zhang (Faith Institute for Cultural Studies – Jinde Charities, Shijiazhuang) on June 30, 2011 at the China-Zentrum in Sankt Augustin. The contribution has been translated from Chinese into English by Paul Han and proofread by Robert Astorino. The German translation of the lecture has been published in *China heute* 2011, No. 3, pp. 166-177 (Part I) and No. 4, pp. 225-236 (Part II). The English version is slightly expanded by the author with one more case study and a short summary. For the Chinese version of Part I, see Zhang Shijiang 张士江, "Zhongguo jiaohui huiying yimin wenti (shang) 中国教会回应移民问题 (上)," in: *Tianzhujiao yanjiu ziliao huibian* 天主教研究资料汇编 2011, No. 115, pp. 99-137.

This paper focuses on the phenomenon of Catholic migration and aims to offer an analysis of the impact of migration within China on the pastoral and social works of the Church.

Data collection and studies: To enhance the content and layout of *Faith Newspaper*,[1] in the winter of 2010, I requested the editorial department to pay more attention to some obvious social issues, so as to promote timely responses of Church communities and to offer insightful reports for the newspaper readers. After discussion and planning, the editorial department decided to make people who had left their hometowns and moved elsewhere to work one of the special topics. When Ms. Song Mingyan of the editorial department took up this task in December 2010, she began by interviewing various people and collecting data concerning this subject.

In May 2011, Father Anton Weber of the China-Zentrum invited me to deliver a talk in Sankt Augustin. In connection with the main topic of this lecture, we have undertaken several different tasks concerning the migration issues:

- The editorial department of *Faith Newspaper* conducted interviews and collected data concerning the number of migrant workers and how the Church has responded to them. Ms. Song completed the interviews in late May and produced a comprehensive report that was published on pp. 2-4 in the June 1 issue of *Faith Newspaper* (No. 16 [447], June 1, 2011). Her report, "Survey on Catholic Migrant Workers: Don't Let the Flock Become Lost," included an appeal for special attention to this phenomenon.
- The Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (FICS) designed the "Survey Form for Migrant Workers and Home-bound Catholics in a Catholic Village." For its case studies, the survey focused on two such villages (Zhangzhuang Village of Weixian County and Erquanjing Township of Zhangbei County in Hebei Province), as well as two domestic migrant Catholic communities (House for Companions on the Same Journey in Beijing and Yongnian Catholic Base Community in Shanghai) and two foreign language speaking Communities in China (German Speaking Community and Korean Speaking Community). Thus, we not only looked closely at the migration phenomenon, but also studied the experiences with pastoral and social services which the Church provided for Catholic migrants and highlighted some successful models.
- Jinde Charities contacted some Church-run social service centers in China and probed their activities in response to the migration situation.
- While paying attention to Catholic migrants within Mainland China, this paper also takes a special look at the pastoral care and evangelization of both the overseas Chinese and the Church in China as one topic (Part V). After taking part in three international conferences on the 400th death anniversary of Father Matteo Ricci last year (in Taipei, Vienna, and Frankfurt), I began paying increased attention to the relationship between the pastoral care and evangelization of overseas Chinese and the Church in China. Before long, I came to realize that these concerns are not separate but interrelated, and they influence each other.

1 The original Chinese title of this Catholic newspaper with the widest circulation in China is *Xinde* 信德. It has been published since 1991 in Shijiazhuang (Hebei Province). Its website can be reached under www.chinacatholic.org and www.xinde.org (Editor's remark).

I. The Greatest Government-led Migrations in Chinese History

Since the PRC was established in 1949, government-led migrations have taken place mainly as part of major water and electricity projects, such as construction of water reservoirs and power plants, and a massive infrastructure project called the South-to-North water diversion. These migrations also were designed to fortify the border areas and promote migration out of poor areas and places that are often struck by natural disasters or are otherwise uninhabitable. Among the major migration flows are those involving the Three Gorges region and the South-to-North water diversion, as well as relocations in southern Shaanxi Province, northwestern China, and the Inner Mongolia area.

A. Three Gorges Migration

Begun in 1992–1993, this relocation was once considered the "greatest government-led migration project in contemporary China."[2] The Three Gorges reservoir submerged 270 townships in 20 counties and districts, more than 1,500 enterprises, as well as houses in 34 million square-kilometers of Hubei Province and Chongqing City. About 1.3 million people were forced to relocate to other provinces and regions, or at least to higher ground.

About 50,000 of those affected were Catholics from Wanzhou Diocese of Chongqing. Most moved from lower to higher ground, but about 2,000 were relocated to the suburbs of Chongqing and Shanghai. In Yichang Diocese of Hubei Province, about 500 Catholics were shifted to Shanghai City and Jiangsu Province, and became immigrants to those respective areas.

B. Henan Danjiangkou Section of South-to-North Water Diversion Project Migration

The Danjiangkou section lies in the middle of the South-to-North water diversion project. The people relocated, coming from 176 administrative villages in 11 townships of Xichuan County in Henan province, numbered about 162,000 persons. The first batch of 75,800 people was relocated in 2009–2010. The second group of 86,000 was moved within four months of 2011 to 116 places in 20 counties and areas of six cities, such as Zhengzhou, Xinxiang, Xuchang, etc.[3]

Other statistics show that migrants into and out of Henan are indeed many. Since 1949, water project-related migrations in Henan have taken place 2,300 times and involved 1.968 million people. They include 1,705,000 major water reservoir migrants, 152,000 minor water reservoir migrants, 56,000 migrants into Henan from water reservoir projects

2 In April 1992, the fifth session of the seventh People's Congress passed the "Resolution on Building the Three Gorges Project." In August 1993, the State Council issued the "Regulations on the Three-Gorges Project Related Migration," which set up the categories on migrant relocation, management of relocation and submersion areas, migration-related funds management, etc. See Liu Gang 刘刚, "Sanxia yimin xiang huijia" 三峡移民想回家 (The Three Gorges Migrants Want to Go Home), Zhongguo xinwen wang 中国新闻网 (accessed on December 25, 2009).

3 Li Zhiquan 李志全, "Nan shui bei diao Henan 8.6 wan yimin jiang zai 3 ge yue nei qianyi" 南水北调河南 8.6 万移民将在 3 个月内迁移 (86 thousand people will be relocated within three months in Henan for the South-to-North water diversion project), www.china.com (accessed May 6, 2011).

in other provinces, and 55,000 others forced to move to free land for the middle section of the South-to-North water diversion project.[4] We still lack data on whether they include Catholics, or if Catholic migrants are in these areas.

C. Mass Migration from South Shaanxi and Northwest Shaanxi

Due to poor living conditions and uninhabitable situations in some parts of Shaanxi Province, and the frequent natural disasters responsible for great losses of people and property, in 2011 the Shaanxi provincial government decided to shift 2.4 million people from South Shaanxi in the period 2011–2020. In the first phase (2011–2015) 380,000 households will be relocated, involving about 1.4 million people. In the second phase (2016–2020) 220,000 households will be moved, involving about 1 million people.[5]

At the same time, some of the mainly mountainous parts of Northwest Shaanxi, which are considered "uninhabitable" and which are prone to frequent natural disasters, need to relocate their residents.

The anti-poverty-related migration project in South Shaanxi and Northwest Shaanxi, accounting for 2.792 million migrants in all, is regarded as China's largest. These migrants will far outnumber the 1.3 million to 1.5 million people forced to relocate for the Three Gorges project.

Hengkou Township of Hanbing District of Ankang City in South Shaanxi will be a model for this project. According to Father Wang Xiaoxun, Hengkou township has more than 200 Catholics; 100 of them who live in the mountainous area will be moved.

However, the Church has no statistics on how many Catholics in Shaanxi Province will eventually be relocated.

According to some sources, economic development since the PRC was established has resulted in 70 million involuntary migrants. Taking into account just migrations linked to reservoir construction, 19.3 million people were moved directly from their hometowns between 1949 and 2008.[6]

II. China's Greatest Voluntary Migration and Population Movement

Population movement and urbanization were both strictly limited in the planned economy era before 1980, due to the huge gap between urban and rural areas and the need for social stability. As the open-door policy took hold, the population movement increased

4 "Nan shui bei diao zhongxian Zhengzhou de shui zui duo, Nanyang 16 dian 2 wan ren yimin" 南水北调中线郑州得水最多, 南阳16 点 2 万人移民 (Zhengzhou gets most of the water in the middle section of the South-to-North water diversion project, Nanyang has 162 thousand people relocated), www.huanqiu.com (accessed on June 19, 2010).

5 "Shaanxi qidong sheji 240 wan ren yimin gongcheng, guimo chao Sanxia yimin" 陕西启动涉及 240 万人移民工程, 规模超三峡移民 (2.4 million people relocation project launched in Shaanxi, more than that of the three-gorges), Jingji guancha wang 经济观察网 (accessed on May 10, 2011).

6 "Shaanxi ni shi nian yimin jin 280 wan ren, fupin banqian zijin cheng nandian" 陕西拟十年移民近 280 万人, 扶贫搬迁资金成难点 (2,8 million people in Shaanxi are to be relocated, funds have become a hindrance), Xinlangwang 新浪网 (accessed on May 26, 2011).

rapidly. Several hundred millions of Chinese people return home for the annual Lunar New Year celebration so that it has become the world's "largest short-term voluntary mass movement flow," a truly unique human occurrence.

For example, within the 40-day period surrounding Lunar New Year's Day in 2010, about 2.541 billion journeys took place in the nation-wide great mass movement.[7] This spectacular mass migration phenomenon also signals the massive scope of this nation's migrant population.

A. Ever Increasing Migrant Scale

"Population migration" (*liudong renkou* 流动人口) is no longer considered a sensitive term in China, nor is it restricted to just short-term migration. For the first time in modern Chinese history, the 1990 national population census paid attention to migration. By 2010, the census tallied more than 200 million migrants. This shows the speed and scale of China's expanding migrant population.

Since the PRC was founded, a nation-wide census has been conducted roughly every 10 years: 1953, 1964, 1982, 1990, 2000, and 2010. The first three made no reference to the migrant population issue, because both population and migration were restricted in the planned economy era. However, items on migrant population were included in the last three censuses.

Material on the migrant population was added for the fourth census (1990). "The census content added two more items on the basis of the previous one: one's permanent residence status five years earlier and the reason for moving to the current residence."[8] For the fifth census (2000), more attention was given to migrants by attaching a "Temporary Resident Form." According to data collected in the sixth census (launched on 1 November, 2010), China now has 1,339,724,852 people, among whom migrants account for more than 260 million.

Of all the people counted in the November 2010 census, 261,390,000 persons were living in places other than the township neighborhood of household registration (*hukou* 户口) that they had left more than six months earlier. Compared with the 2000 census, this category of the population grew by 117,000,000 persons – a rise of 81.03 percent. The rapid shift of rural labor to non-agricultural activities and the rapid economic development contributed to the expansion of the migrant population.[9]

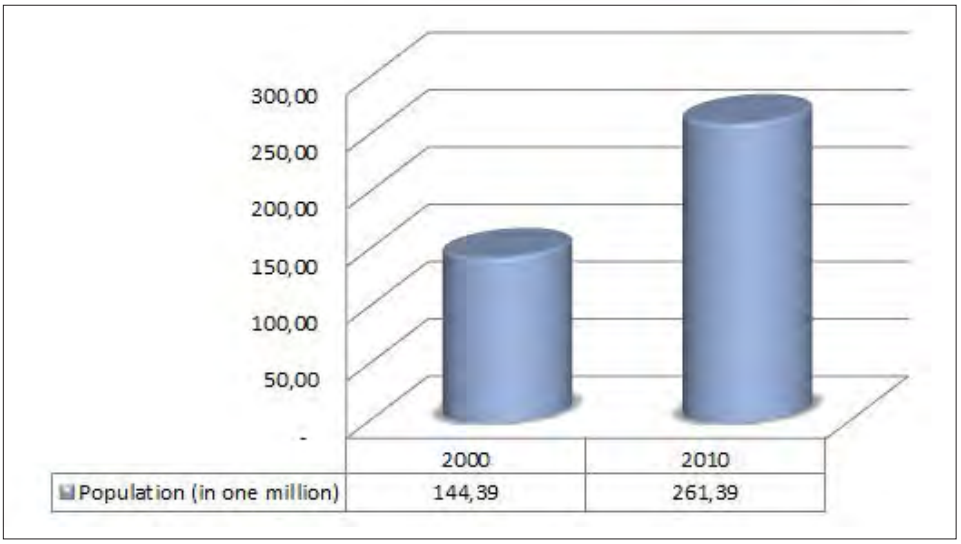
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7 "Guanzhu chun yun: 25 yi ci renkou daqianyi" 关注春运： 25 亿次人口大迁移 (Focus on the Lunar New Year's transportations: 2.5 billion person-time migration), Beijing dianshitai 北京电视台 (Beijing TV), February 22, 2010.

8 "Renkou pucha ji nian jinxing yi ci, wo guo gong jinxing guo ji ci renkou pucha" 人口普查几年进行一次，我国共进行过几次人口普查 (How often is the population census carried out? How many censuses have been conducted in our country?", in: Diaocha shuju 普查数据 (Data on the census), Guojia tongjiju wang 国家统计局网 (Website of the National Bureau of Statistics) (accessed on April 19, 2010).

9 Zhonghua renmin gongheguo guojia tongjiju: "Di liu ci quanguo renkou pucha zhuyao shuju fabu" 中华人民共和国国家统计局:《第六次全国人口普查主要数据发布》 (National Bureau of Statistics of China: Report on the sixth nation-wide population census), Guojia tongjiju wang 国家统计局网 (accessed on April 28, 2011).

Diagram 1: Population of migration in 2000 and 2010



Increase of 117 million persons (81.03 percent)

Table 1: Urban and rural population in 2000 and 2010

	Total Population	Urban Residents	Percentage	Rural Residents	Percentage
2000	1,265,830,000	455,940,000	36.09%	807,390,000	63.91%
2010	1,339,724,852	665,570,000	49.68%	674,150,000	50.32%

B. Gradually Decreasing Rural Population, Ever Increasing Urban Population

As the surplus rural labor force gradually moved into cities, the rural population decreased and the urban population kept growing. Comparing the 2000 and 2010 figures is revealing. In 2000, the country had about 1,265,830,000 people, among whom 455.94 million were urban residents (36.09%) and 807.39 million rural residents (63.91%).[10] But in 2010, China had 665.57 million urban residents (49.68%) and 674.15 million rural residents (50.32%).

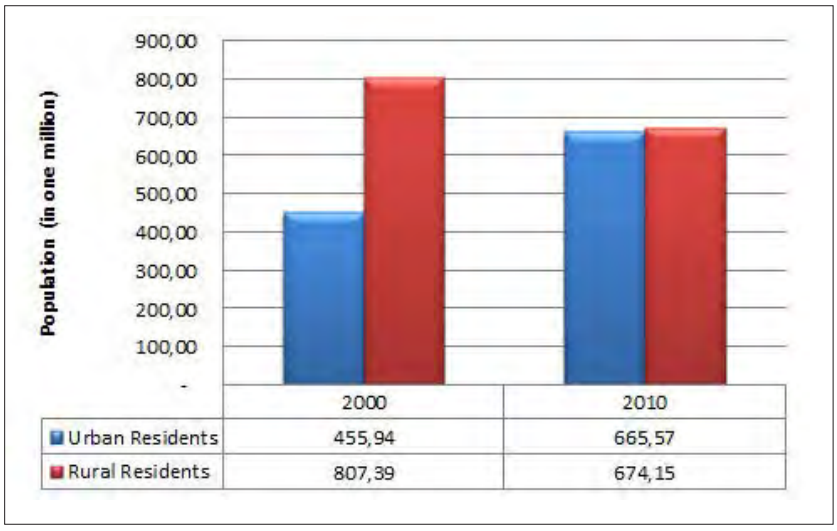
The developing trend can be directly seen in table 1 above and diagram 2 (see next page).

According to data collected in the fifth and sixth censuses, urban residents increased by 210 million (13.46 percent) and rural residents decreased by 130 million from 2000 to 2010.[11] Thus, for the first time, urban residents nearly equaled the number of rural residents in the Mainland.

10 See "Di wu ci quanguo renkou pucha gongbao (di 1 hao)" 第五次全国人口普查公报 (第 1 号), (Public report on the fifth nation-wide population census, No. 1), Guojia tongjiju wang 国家统计局 (accessed on April 19, 2010).

11 "Zhongguo neidi zong renkou 13.39 yi – 10 nian zengzhang 7,000 yu wan, cheng xiang renkou jiejin chiping" 中国内地总人口 13.39 亿 — 10 年增长 7000 余万, 城乡人口接近持平 (The total population in China is 1.339 billion – increased more than 70 million in 10 years, the urban and the rural residents are nearly equal), in: *Jinghua shibao* 京华时报, April 29, 2011, AO4.

Diagram 2: Urban and rural population in 2000 and 2010



This changing trend for urban and rural areas of China continues. The gap between urban and rural populations will grow larger in the next decade. The ever increasing number of urban residents and ever expanding migrant population bring new challenges not just to society and families, but also to the pastoral care and evangelization activities of the Church – and these trends are also expected to bring about long-lasting consequences.

III. Pastoral Care for Migrants and People on the Move in China

While *Faith Newspaper* was interviewing people in local parishes about their pastoral care services for migrants and people on the move, FICS also was giving attention to the migration situation in some Catholic villages and examining them as case studies. FICS found that nearly all inhabitants of some traditional fishing villages in Pudong (Shanghai) have completely moved to the urban districts of Shanghai and very few people remain in the villages. Erquanjing Township of Zhangbei County in Zhangjiakou City area, located near the border of Hebei and Inner Mongolia provinces, is also a typical migration case of a Catholic village.

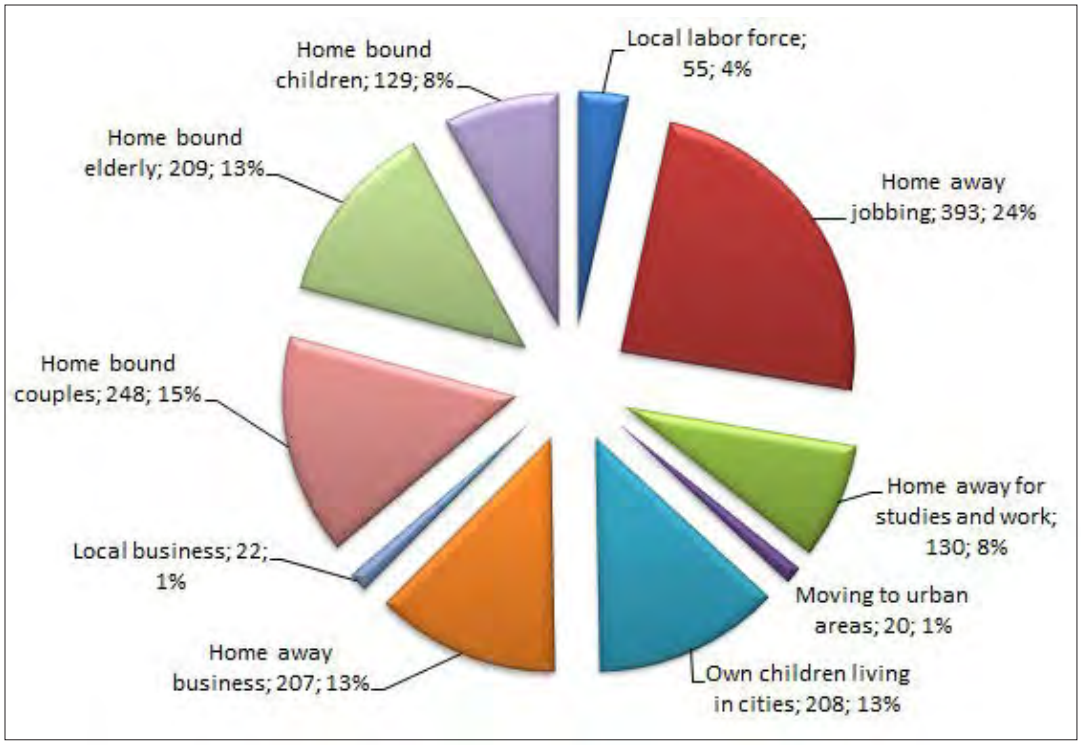
A. The Phenomenon of Catholic Migration

The Church, as one community in Chinese society, also faces the challenges of migration, even though Catholics are only a very small part of the mass migration flow. In May 2011, FICS surveyed the situation of home-away and home-bound people in certain Catholic villages. By the end of May, FICS received detailed data from Zhangzhuang Village of Weixian County in Hebei. This material can be regarded as a typical case for study and analysis.

Case 1: Home-away people outnumber home-bound in a village of Weixian County.

In South Hebei lies Zhangzhuang, a typical Catholic village in Weixian County. As of 31 May, 2011, there were 1,620 people of 329 households in this village. Except for 11 families

Diagram 3: General situation of home-away and home-bound villagers in Zhangzhuang (May 31, 2011)



of the Li, Tian, Guan, Yue and Jiang clans that had migrated to Zhangzhuang for family reasons, all other villagers are surnamed Zhang and belong to the same Zhang clan.

Almost all the villagers (98.77%) have been Catholics since generations. The only exceptions are three brothers and their families, about 20 people in all.

Over the past 30 years, as China changed from planned economy to market economy, this ordinary Catholic village was also undergoing a major transformation. More and more villagers were moving away from the village, and ever fewer people stayed behind to take care of the households. This phenomenon has been affecting the pastoral care and evangelization of the local Church, as well as the faith life of both home-away and home-bound Catholics.

This survey covers the period from 1977 to the end of May 2011. People who had passed away and women who left the village to marry elsewhere were not counted, but all who had migrated from the village and women who came to the village to live with their husbands were included.

The survey revealed that about 3/5 of the people had left the village and become migrants. The main reasons cited for relocation were: jobbing, studies and work,[12] moving to urban areas, own children living in cities, and doing business. These 958 people account for 59.10% of the whole village population. The other 2/5 of villagers who remained in the village are persons described as: home-bound husband and wife, elderly, children, local labor force, and local business people. These 663 people account for about 40.90% of the surveyed population.

12 This refers to those studying in colleges and vocational schools. After graduation, they are expected to work in state-run institutes and agencies, or be officially employed by enterprises.

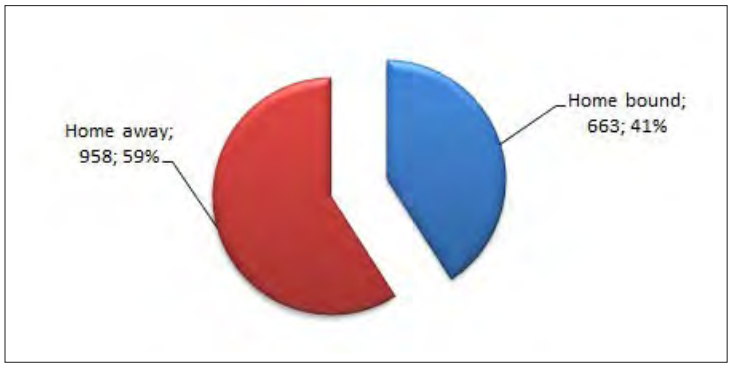
Table 2: The home-away villagers of Zhangzhuang and their reasons for leaving (May 31, 2011)

Total	Jobbing	Studies and Work	Moving to Urban Areas	Own Childen Living in Cities	Doing Business
958	393	130	20	208	207

Table 3: Home-bound villagers in Zhangzhuang (May 31, 2011)

Total	Local business	Couples	Elderly	Children	Local labor force
663	22	248	209	129	55

Diagram 4: Home-away and home-bound in Zhangzhuang village (May 31, 2011)



The survey shows that the villagers who migrated are now mainly in Shijiazhuang and Xingtai in Hebei Province, as well as in Beijing and Tianjin, and in Jinan (Shandong Province) and Xi'an (Shaanxi Province). It also reveals that they have been joining local Church communities. For example, about 400 people in some 70 households are now living and working in Shijiazhuang, the capital of Hebei Province. Together with Catholics from other parishes of Weixian County, they are now actively involved in two big parishes of Shijiazhuang: the Cathedral and Dongjiao parish and four of these migrant Catholics are parish council presidents. This has effectively strengthened the local Church communities. More than 2/3 of the people attending Mass every Sunday in the Cathedral are from Weixian and Nangong of Xingtai Diocese, many of them from Zhangzhuang village.

Meanwhile, the population in Zhangzhuang village itself has dropped by more than half. The faith life and pastoral care of the remaining villagers, mainly the elderly and children, have been greatly affected.

In the past, with the church bell ringing almost every morning, most Catholics in the village would get up early for morning prayers and Eucharistic celebration. Every evening after work, they would come to the church to recite the Rosary and evening prayers. Sometimes, the parish would also organize training activities. During Lent, they would have the Stations of the Cross. Now, however, only 70 elderly people still go to church each morning and about 400 people come for the Eucharist on Sundays. Parish activities have been largely curtailed and lack vitality.

Acknowledging this reality, the parish priest says pastoral work now in Zhangzhuang is very unlike before and it faces many new challenges. For example, it is difficult to organize



The effect on the Church community in Zhangzhuang village of migration for work purposes: now only a few, mostly elderly people are attending Masses on weekdays. Photo: Zhangzhuang parish.

training activities in the parish due to the shortage of enthusiastic youth and energetic middle-aged people.

Data also show that those who migrated from the village for reasons of casual employment/jobbing, doing business elsewhere or joining their children in cities far outnumber those in the village. The trend of migration from the village seems likely to increase. The elderly and children represent a very great percentage of those staying in the village. Given the considerable number of elderly and children remaining in the village, most Catholics still return to visit family members and relatives whenever a festival comes along. These occasions create certain opportunities for the pastoral activities of the parish.

On the other hand, only a few of the many Catholics who moved away from the village can go to church every day. Most can go to church only for Sunday Mass, due to their limited time and the long distance they must travel to the church. The faith life of the second generation of these migrants faces many challenges.



For major feast days Zhangzhuang's Catholics still return to their home village. Photo: Zhangzhuang parish.

Those who migrated as an entire family and were surrounded by a faith-community with people from the same village would live a stable faith-life. But those who migrated alone and have not yet entered into a local faith-community would live in a vacillating faith-life and it would become easy to leave the Church. They should be a focus of special concern.

One Zhangzhuang Catholic named Joseph Zhang, born in 1973, studied medical science from 1989–1992 in Shijiazhuang and then went on to work at a hospital in Zhengding from 1993–1999. Since 2000, he has been running a private clinic near a university. In 1995 he married a Catholic colleague and the next year they had their first daughter Maria, who now attends a vocational school. Their second daughter Theresa was born in 2009. According to Joseph, both he and his wife have always been busy, so they can take Maria to church only on Sundays. They also admit that they have neither the time nor energy to guide their daughter's faith life. As a result, Maria still has not received First Communion. "If she were living in our village parish, she would have received her First Communion long ago," the busy father acknowledged. He is somewhat concerned that he has not given the child timely religious education, and he hopes his hometown church can offer some help. (Note: Some sisters who contacted Joseph said they would help Maria receive her First Communion during the school break this summer.)

Case 2: Zhangbei County Church community that moved from a rural to an urban area.

In 2008, the population of Zhangbei County in Hebei's Zhangjiakou City was 70,000. In 2009, it was 100,000, and by 2010 it was 150,000. Migrants now account for nearly 50% of the population. Some of these migrants are Catholics from Erquanjing Township of Zhangbei County.

Erquanjing Township is the seat of the township government. Among its 2,200 residents, 2,000 are Catholics – 500 belonging to the open community and 1.500 to the underground community. Catholics account for 91% of all township people. In step with the market economy trend, the Hebei Provincial government launched a "three-year transformation" project that led to a rapid drop of parishioners. Most Catholic families moved into Zhangbei County City to take advantage of better life and job opportunities, while some Catholics moved to big cities such as Beijing, Tianjin, Datong, Hohhot, Xilinhot, and Zhangjiakou to take up jobs, do business, and accompany their children going to school.

Traditionally, whenever there was a major feast, especially the four major Church feasts and during the Spring Festival (Lunar New Year) period, Catholics who had moved away would bring their children to their hometown to visit their parents and reunite with friends and relatives. These days, many families do not return to their hometown for several years, even for more than a decade. This is because their entire families have moved away. Since neither relatives nor friends are still there, there is no longer a need for home visits and reunions.

Population migration has created new challenges for the parish. Erquanjing Township now has only 200 Catholics, including both open and underground communities. Only a few Catholics come to the church on weekdays, no more than 50 people on Sundays and



Township church of Erquanjing: Women and children are left, while men migrate for work purposes. Photo: Erquanjing parish.

no more than 200 on big feast days. Thus, the migration phenomenon has rendered the village church almost empty.[13]

The Catholics who migrated to Zhangbei County City from Erquanjing number nearly 800. Given the comparable economic situation and similar cultural practices, dialects, and traditions between city and surrounding rural areas, the Catholics from the township very easily entered the Church community of Zhangbei and were warmly welcomed by the city's Catholics. The newly arrived Catholics not only brought new blood to the city community, but also enabled its quick expansion. Zhangbei County now has 18,000 Catholics. Not long ago, the city had only several hundred Catholics, but now there are more than 3,000. To meet this developing community's needs, the city parish is raising funds to build a new church that can accommodate 3,000 people.



The new church in Zhangbei under construction. Photo: Zhangbei parish.

13 See Mingyan 明艳, "Waichu wu gong jiaoyou xinyang shenghuo diaocha: mo rang 'qunyang' cheng 'wangyang' 外出务工教友信仰生活调查: 莫让 "群羊" 成 "亡羊" (Survey on Migrant Catholic Workers: Don't Let the Flocks Become the Lost), in: *Xindebao* 信德报, January 16, 2011.

Imitating some big cities where Church squares have been constructed, the Zhangbei County government is providing 13 *mu* of land (almost one hectare) to construct a church square along the main road in the newly developed district in order to create a multi-cultural city. Besides setting aside the land, which is worth 600,000 RMB, another 1 million RMB have been allotted for this project.

According to the latest five-year plan, in 2015 Zhangbei County City's residents are expected to number 300,000, including even more Catholic migrants from rural areas. By then, regardless of how many Catholics actually move in, the local Church community must make a timely response. The tendency for churches in the urban area should be toward small and medium size churches in the residential areas. There is no need for large size because the development trend of Church life will be that of small and medium-sized communities. However, the location of more churches must go through a more difficult scrutiny process, and they will also need more clergy to provide pastoral services.

B. Church Care for Migrant Catholics

If one searches *dagong* 打工 (casual employment/jobbing) on the Faith website, 233 reports on Church pastoral activities for migrant workers will show up on 24 web pages. More than 20 of these reports are on the spiritual and religious help offered to migrant workers by the Catholic Church in China, and more than 10 others concern material help offered to migrant workers by local Church communities. These reports show that the Church in China has not only paid due attention to the issues related to migrant workers, but has taken certain actions as well.

According to telephone interviews that Faith Newspaper conducted in May 2011, the help offered to migrant workers by various local Church communities can be categorized as follows:[14]

a. Material help for migrant Catholic workers from other places

In May 2010, the clergy and Catholics of Haibowan parish in Wuhai City, Inner Mongolia, visited a Catholic couple severely burned by boiling water while working in a private factory. Besides giving them a 1,000 RMB donation, the parish priest and members of the Loving-heart Association offered them other care and assistance in their life.

b. Table fellowship with migrant Catholic workers on feast days, providing them spiritual support and sense of belonging

In early 2008, an – since 54 years – unprecedented snowstorm hampered almost all of South China. After learning that 13 migrant Catholic workers from Zhouzhi Diocese of Shaanxi Province could not travel home for the Lunar New Year celebrations, the parish priest of Our Lady of Langshan in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, invited them to his parish for the New Year's Eve gathering. Parishioner Ding Fuqing then invited the migrant Catholics to his daughter's restaurant for a party. Though they could not go home for their family reunions, these Catholics did enjoy reunions with other Catholics.

14 See Mingyan, "Waichu wu gong jiaoyou xinyang shenghuo diaocha."

The same happened when a snow storm hampered Shanghai. The priests, sisters, and Catholics of some parishes warmly invited the stranded Catholic migrant workers to their parishes or to join their families for the New Year's Eve gathering and meal. Catholic families like those of Zhang Jiazuo, Li Shiwan, Mi Chunhong, and Zhu Guodong enthusiastically took part. When offering the delicious food to the migrants, they said they were sincerely doing so "because you are our brothers and sisters!" What a marvelous way to witness the spirit of Christian love!

c. Creating jobs and business opportunities for Catholic migrant workers and entrepreneurs

Ms. Gao Anna, a Catholic in Hebei, once advertised in Faith Newspaper to recruit Catholics to work in her restaurant. She frankly told *Faith Newspaper*, "I feel good having Catholic faithful working in my restaurant." According to Ms. Anna Gao, more than a dozen young Catholics are working for her, and their faith life is very active. Every weekend, so long as they wish, she sets time aside for them to go to church for Mass and faith-sharing. She also hopes that by having these young people working together, she can reassure their families that their children are in a safe environment that preserves their faith.

When asked if setting time aside for the young people to go to church affects her business, she replied that she is happy to see her employees actually praying for her and her restaurant.

In Tianjin City, many Catholics from Shandong work in construction, restaurants, and home services, while those from Henan are mainly involved in hospital nursing and cleaning services, and others from northeastern China are concentrating on cosmetology, food, and entertainment. Taking their different employment characteristics into consideration, Tianjin's Xikai parish set up a special group to collect employment opportunity information, acting as a go-between to help migrant Catholics find suitable jobs in Catholic-run factories, shops, and even in Catholic households. This helps the migrants secure their income as well as a safe faith atmosphere.

d. Forming support groups, arranging training and leisure activities for migrant Catholic workers

Base Communities and Fellowship Associations have been set up to help migrant Catholics in various cities meet regularly for mutual support and sharing their common faith life. The parish pastors from their own hometowns can visit them regularly. These Base Communities and Fellowship Associations deepen a sense of belonging in the hearts of the migrant Catholic workers and strengthen their enthusiasm for the faith.

Since 2008, the Cathedral parish in Shijiazhuang has organized a youth community and "loving-service group" for young migrant students and workers. This enables them not only to help the parish grow, but also to serve needy people.

The "Catholic's Family" in Cixi of Zhejiang Province is also a self-organized community for migrant Catholic workers. Many local Catholics regard them as members of their own families in offering care and service. For example, there are separate schools for migrant workers' children and for local children, but the living and education conditions of

the former are much poorer than those of the latter. Local Catholics often help migrant Catholic workers to transfer their children to local children's schools. If their work units or employers do not pay them on time or cut their just wages for whatever reason, local Catholics help the migrant Catholic workers to contact legal services or government labor agencies to resolve such issues. Many times, local Catholics also actively offer help whenever the newly arrived migrant Catholic workers encounter difficulties in looking for apartments or taking care of their children and elderly family members.

e. Services for Migrants Provided by Church-run Social Service Organizations

Social service organizations run by the Chinese Church presently offer very limited services for migrant workers. According to data collected from several social service centers in Beijing, Shanghai, Jilin, Xi'an, Lanzhou, and Hebei, their main services include the following:

- training for young migrant workers and fellowship activities;
- tuition fees, tutoring, and accompanying children who are left behind;
- forming service groups of young migrants to care for others and enrich their own lives;
- providing goods and psycho-social service for migrants in disaster areas.

Social service organizations run by the Chinese Church obviously should pay greater attention and offer more help and service to migrant workers. (Please see more from the website of Jinde Charities.)

C. Self-organized Base Communities and Other Types of Communities

At present, some migrant Catholic workers and university students have set up small communities on their own so as to communicate, cooperate and serve the migrant Catholic communities, including many diocesan and regional youth communities such as Chengdu Catholic Youth Fellowship, the Heart of St. Paul Community in Hangzhou, and many diocesan level youth communities in some cities and universities, etc. The "House of Companions on the Same Journey" in Beijing and "Wenzhou Catholic Association and Yongnian Christian Base Communities" in Shanghai are quite typical examples in China.

Case 3: "House for Companions on the Same Journey" in Beijing.

On New Year's Day 2008, heeding the advice of a St. Joseph's Congregation nun in Beijing, some young migrant Catholic workers in Beijing organized the "House for Companions on the Same Journey." It is under the umbrella of the Beijing Diocese and supervised by St. Joseph's Congregation. Its members are mainly young migrant Catholics from outside Beijing who have gone there to work or study, but it welcomes anyone to join this community for the future of people on the same journey.[15]

15 "Tonglu ren zhi jia zhangcheng" 同路人之家章程 (Regulation of the "House for Companions on the Same Journey"), Paragraph 5.

Once the House was set up, the young people designed a logo for the House, developed its organizational structure and articulated 39 regulations for its operations. They also set forth its vision as follows:

> *Through various community activities, the House is dedicated to: promoting communion among its members and enhancing their understanding of faith, helping them to solve the practical difficulties they encounter in daily life, and to live out their spiritual and religious lives. Thus, the House aims to transform its social character into a family environment and enable its members to enjoy a real and stable family atmosphere.*[16]

Structurally, the House has an advisor, a monitor and groups divided into residential zones. Before every community activity, a priest or sister is invited in to give advice or share reflections with the members. The Beijing Diocese, Beijing Seminary, St. Joseph's Congregation and various parishes have all offered their help in this way, and several activities have been organized at Beijing's South Cathedral and North Church as well as at the seminary.

At the start, the main activities were: practicing sacred music, Bible study under the guidance of a sister or priest, group sharing, and playing games that reflect the Sunday liturgical readings. Later on, pilgrimages were also introduced and activities were developed to celebrate a feast or festival, such as New Year, Christmas, and the Mid-Autumn Festival. On September 13, 2008, Bishop Li Shan of Beijing Diocese visited the House members engaged in activities at the seminary and gave them "moon cakes," a special treat for the Mid-Autumn Festival. He also helped them make dumplings and joined them in praying and sharing. The House organized activities for Christmas in 2008 and New Year celebrations in 2009. On May 16, 2009, the members visited Jingxian parish in Hengshui Diocese, Hebei Province, and organized a sharing session there.

According to Tony Gao, an IT engineer who helped launch the House, the House organized activities once or twice a month after it was established. Only about 20 people were involved at first, but this gradually increased to 50–60, and nearly 100 were engaged at one point. The participants are young migrant Catholic workers from all walks of work and life in Beijing. Tony Gao himself is an example. He went to Beijing for studies in 2003, and took up an IT job four years later. Mary Wang, a young woman from Shijiazhuang's Xinji County in Hebei who also was there from the start, now works in finance in Beijing. The House regulations were drafted by Francis Guo, a media professional from Beijing. Paul Du, who is a designer of animation, designed the logo. Mary Ye, a young woman who has been in charge of activity planning, now is working for the website.

Unfortunately, the House has not organized any activities since mid-2009 mainly because it could not secure proper venues for its activities, or else House leaders were unavailable (away on business trips), or inadequate care and support were forthcoming from the local Church.

The community organized by Catholics themselves has been a good development, one that can help Catholics offer care and support for each other. The local Church should give

16 "Tonglu ren zhi jia zhangcheng," Paragraph 6.

more care and assistance to such initiatives. At present, the leaders of "House on the Same Journey" are receiving training in spirituality and leadership skills. After a brief break, the House can hopefully renew its vigor and enthusiasm, and also train its next generation of qualified leaders.

Case 4. Wenzhou Catholic Association and Yongnian Christian Base Community in Shanghai.

a. The Fellowship Association of Wenzhou Catholics in Shanghai

"The Fellowship Association of Wenzhou Catholics in Shanghai" (also known as: "Pasture of the Flock") is a quite well established group of Catholic migrants from outside. At the beginning of 2011, in his New Year pastoral letter "Keeping up with the Times", the Bishop of Shanghai, Jin Luxian mentioned that this group of mainly Wenzhou Catholics numbers approximately 1,500 members. According to most recent statistics, there are about 2,000 Catholics from Wenzhou in Shanghai. When fervent Catholics from Wenzhou arrived in this unfamiliar territory, they spontaneously got in touch with each other and organized themselves, in order to strengthen their friendship by holding group activities and thus boost their spiritual lives, too. A similar, very lively community of the faithful exists in the St. Peter's Church in Shanghai´s Chongqing South Road.

- Established 2005.
- Members: people from Wenzhou (90%) as well as some people from other areas doing business, working, living, or studying in Shanghai.
- Affiliations: The members belong to the Diocese of Shanghai where they have moved to, on Sundays they go to the churches in their vicinity to attend Mass and other activities and serve the local Church.
- Priest: Rev. Tian Yuanxiang of the Diocese of Shanghai.
- Number of members: on ordinary Sundays: 30 to 40, on high feasts and main gatherings: from 500 to 600.
- Time: at weekends: 30 Minutes practicing church songs, members accompany the songs with instruments, 90 minutes of Bible study and Bible sharing.
- Location: St. Peter's Church on Chongqing South Road, Song Jiang.
- Activities: at weekends: Bible studies, singing, sports, charitable activities, pilgrimages, retreats, common celebrations, and meals.

Biannually the Association organizes pilgrimages and retreats, with 60 to 70 people attending each of these activities. Almost all the faithful have participated in one of the pilgrimages either to Sheshan in Songjiang, Shanghai, or to Zhoushan or Ningbo in Zhejiang, or to Qingyang or Taicang in Jiangsu, or to the Rosary House in Fuzhou. One group of Catholics went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and other places. Retreats are usually held for two days as a preparation for Easter and Christmas. Twice they celebrated Easter in the seminary of Sheshan, once walking 10 km distance to Sheshan on Holy Saturday to celebrate Easter there. Some parents brought their children along to visit the seminary and to make contact with the seminarians, to pray with them, and play basketball with them. The purpose was to get the children acquainted with seminary life at a very early stage and thus possibly sow the seeds of vocations.

Since people are usually quite busy before Christmas, the Association conducts evening Christmas celebrations after Christmas. On the Dragon boat festival and the Mid-Autumn festival activities are held with sharing, exchanging gifts, giving testimony or eating together and sharing the costs. Besides mutually sharing the faith, they also swap experiences concerning business administration and trading issues, thereby letting everyone benefit from these sharings and all somehow help each other. The community is also trying to do some charity work and care for sick people by helping them to get into hospital when necessary, pray with them and comfort them, offer financial assistance and even donate blood or blood platelets. They also visit the elderly people in the Diocese of Shanghai's old folks' home.

In the afternoons of weekends, some of the faithful will play ball together or do some physical exercise. In the evenings children will accompany their parents to the St. Peter's Church for Bible sharing and Sunday school. Seminarians on parish regency and experts from other groups are responsible for taking care of the children and youth.

Although most members of the Association come from the Cangnan and Pinyang districts in Wenzhou, the Association also attracts Catholics from other areas, not only from Wenzhou, but also from Shanxi, Shandong, Jiangsu, Hebei, Taiwan and Shanghai, especially to attend their Bible studies and other activities.

According to the recollection of one founding member of this group, Mathew Xue Jifu, he always felt as if there was something missing when he simply went home after every Sunday Mass during the first period after he came from Wenzhou to Shanghai for business purposes in 2004. Prior to that, regardless whether it was in his hometown in Cangnan, Longgang, or in Wenzhou City, the young faithful would stay at church for half a day on Sundays after Mass, sharing and chatting, studying the Bible, cleaning the church, practicing church songs, visiting the sick and those who would not come to church. During these busy activities, people would find the chance to communicate, to establish friendships and develop a feeling of belonging to the Church. Many migrants coming to a new place find it difficult to get used to the habit of everyone going home immediately after attending holy Mass.

In order to find this warmth and feeling of belonging to the home of the Church, some business people and workers from Wenzhou who knew each other well started to get in touch with each other, came together for meetings and sharings. This Catholic businessman said that although the Wenzhou business association and the Wenzhou Hometown Association in Shanghai invited him to join their respective groups, he rather preferred to stay in the church and communicate with his sisters and brothers in Christ and so he started with the fellowship activities of the Wenzhou Faithful.

One other founding member of the Association, Dominic Huang Ren thinks that the difference between people from Wenzhou and other people lies in the following facts:

1. Difference in dialect: the Wenzhou dialect has, like all dialects, its uniqueness.
2. The way of living the faith is different: already during the 1960s and 1970s the elderly priests in the Church of Wenzhou-Cangnan trained a group of missionary catechists and this laid a very good foundation for the development and growth of the Catholic Church there. Therefore, during the ten years of turmoil in the Church of Wenzhou,

the catechists bravely led their faithful in learning the catechism and praying all along, and their faith life did not come to a halt. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Church in Wenzhou and its various groups revived very quickly. One after another, the Bible study group, the group of altar boys, the charitable groups, choirs, rosary groups, and all kind of small groups of base communities were re-established and became the main force for the recovery and development of the local Church.

3. The way of doing business is different: The people of Wenzhou are called the "Jews of China," holding the business tightly in their hands, thus making it easy for people from Wenzhou to contact each other and to organize themselves.
4. Being the first generation to migrate and coming to an unfamiliar environment, being a stranger to the local area, and not having started to integrate themselves into the new surroundings, having a group consisting of people from their own home area to rely on is very important. The meetings help to combat home sickness, it feels good to have cordial encounters with fellow countrymen, and it makes the distance to home somehow shorter. That makes the existence of the Wenzhou Catholic Association so valuable and important.

This founding member of the Association came to Shanghai to do business in 2002. Already in his old home in Wenzhou he used to be a very fervent Catholic. He emphasized: "We are all human beings, we all face apathy and laziness, especially being a migrant. In the vast ocean of an exploding Chinese economy we might become indifferent if we do not get mutual caring, encouragement, and the opportunity to attend meaningful activities. However, having this Association, this kind of community, helps us all to walk together in this home away from home and urges us to become even more faithful, more fervent. For example, some Catholics who originally did not go to church very often come regularly now after attending the various activities of our community. Others come regularly to the Bible study groups after joining our charity teams first, for example doing errands for needy people, etc. This shows the real fruits of all the promotion and efforts of everyone in this Association."

The priest in charge of the Wenzhou Catholics' Association in Shanghai, Fr. Tian Yuanxiang, recalls: "At the beginning of its foundation, the Wenzhou Catholics' Association in Shanghai did not have a priest to lead them. In 2006 I was transferred to work with the Guangqi Press. At that time the Guangqi Press had its offices right at the St. Peter's Church in Chongqing South Road. Since the second half of 2006, I have accepted their invitation to help with the Bible study groups and with preparing various activities. Before every activity the core of the group wanted to discuss everything with the priest." Fr. Tian pointed out: "By promoting communication and interaction between the local Church and the faithful, the group recreated the basic nature of the catholicity of the Church. Through all these activities, everybody raised his or her awareness of what it means to be a Christian and thus enhanced the missionary spirit to spread the gospel. Of course, the nature of this group of Catholics coming from outside is that of a group or association, not that of a parish. Therefore I always encourage the people to go to the parishes in their vicinity, attend the Masses there, and take part in their activities."

The Bishop of Shanghai, Jin Luxian, supports the efforts of Fr. Tian to take care of these migrants. The old Bishop sees the migration issue as very important, therefore he requires the priests in the Shanghai Diocese not only to take good care of the "old" Shanghai Catholics in their parishes, but also to show concern for the faithful among the people on the move and the migrant workers in Shanghai. "Let them experience that the Catholic Church is truly one big family, that Christians are truly sisters and brothers." That's how the Bishop expressed his concern in the New Year's pastoral letter 2011.

The parish priest of the St. Paul's parish in Shanghai, Fr. Gong Tiande, welcomes and supports the weekend Bible study and all the other activities of the Wenzhou Catholics' Association in his parish very much. Fr. Gong even hopes that this group of migrant Catholics will enrich and continue the pastoral and missionary work of his parish.

Thanks to the support of the priests in Shanghai and the hometown Wenzhou and because of the great effort of the faithful, this Fellowship Association of Catholics in Shanghai is developing very well. In order to take care of the faithful living in different districts of Shanghai, as of October 22, 2011 an independent location was set up in Songjiang and another one will soon be set up in Pudong.

On February 6, 2011 (4th of the first month of the lunar calendar) the "Association of the Cangnan Deanery of Wenzhou Catholics living away from home" was founded in Longgang. Leading members of the Shanghai, Hangzhou, Yiwu, and Chengdu associations of Wenzhou (Cangnan) Catholics as well as persons in charge of other groups took part.

Fr. Chen Shiyu of the Cangnan deanary of Wenzhou emphazised: "The Wenzhou Catholics' Association of Shanghai, a very mature association, has urged the home Church to establish an association for Wenzhou Catholics who live away from Wenzhou: the "Association of Catholics of the deanery Cangnan in Wenzhou living away from home". The various associations of Catholics from Wenzhou living away from home do not have formal connections or relations to each other. Therefore the most important reason for establishing this association is to create a network to help the Catholics from Wenzhou living away from home to unite in order to keep their enthusiasm for the faith, their piety alive, and not to become luke warm in their spiritual life, just because they are far away from home. I hope that those faithful thus organized will contribute to the pastoral and evangelization efforts in the local parishes of their guest area."

At present, this newly established association has not yet set up a clearly organized system regulated by written statutes, and is even cautiously deliberating and searching for its status. But since the founding members and most attendees are successful business people, as well as mature faithful, and they surely have experience in business administration, the association is nevertheless operating very well under their guidance. For example, the team is implementing a system of cooperation by sharing the work. Presently there are five teams: the catechetical team, the charity team, the team of women's affairs, a logistics team, and a team of commercial advisors, with an active team leader or group leader in each group.

Looking at the perspective of the long-term developments of domestic or international Catholic Communities, establishing a democratic system of an alternating leadership and

a standardization of the regulation system of such communities seems to be useful for a steady development of these newly developing communities.

b. Yongnian Christian Base Community in Shanghai.

To care for Catholic faithful who moved elsewhere for business, jobbing/casual employment, work, and permanent residence, the hometown clergy often visited them and provided encouragement and guidance to help them set up Christian Base Communities (CBC) in their respective cities. The CBC have effectively made connections among the migrant Catholic faithful and organized them for various activities. With the care and support of their hometown Church community and their newly-found one, the CBC have strengthened friendship and a sense of belonging among fellow Chinese Catholics from the same place, and also promoted the pastoral care and evangelization of both communities. The several CBCs formed in various big cities by Yongnian Parish of Handan Diocese in Hebei Province have been playing a vital role in making connections and strengthening faith life among the Catholic faithful. They can be considered a success.

Yongnian is a big traditional Catholic county, with more than 30,000 Catholics. More than 10 years ago, some priests from abroad brought the CBC idea to Yongnian. Since then, the CBC have been growing and spreading in Yongnian Church communities.

When the open-door policy started, many Yongnian people began to produce fasteners. To sell these products, some Catholics moved to big cities and became the first-generation of migrant Catholics. Though they had left their hometown, their hometown Church did not forget them, nor did the Catholic migrants forget their hometown Church. Fathers Sun Jigeng and Wang Luming [from Yongnian], respectively parish priest and associate parish priest, visited the migrant Catholics regularly every year and took care of them. The priests also encouraged them to continue to form CBCs in various cities so that the Catholic migrants could be united and stay together.[17]

The Yongnian CBC in Shanghai, which was established much earlier, has developed a certain maturity and become quite influential.

When Chinese people migrated abroad or to big cities in the past, communities like a "hometown association," "business association," "fellowship association," or the like would be organized. One of the first migrant Catholics from Yongnian is Mr. Li Shibin. After he had made certain progress in doing business, he hoped to establish a "fellowship association of Yongnian Catholics" so as to better organize and connect the Catholic faithful. After consulting Father Sun Jigen, his parish priest at home, he helped start the Yongnian CBC in Shanghai on December 9, 2005. All members are Catholics who migrated from Yongnian to Shanghai. Through democratic election, the community leaders were chosen and regulations were set up. The main regulation elements are: Bible study, evangeliza-

17 The number of CBCs from Yongnian varies from place to place. The number of members and establishment dates are: Shanghai: 100 (December 9, 2005), Yangquan: 60 (December 13, 2006), Changsha: 100 (January 9, 2007), Taiyan: 60 (November 26, 2007), Lüliang area: 40 (November 22, 2007), Datong: 50 (November 28, 2007), Fushun 50 (June 16, 2008), Shenyang: 100 (June 18, 2008), Tianjin: 150 (April 19, 2008), Yinchuan: 50 (April 24, 2009).

tion, faith practice, mutual help, and service to society. The CBC thus became the spiritual home for Yongnian Catholics in Shanghai.[18]

Once the CBC was established, small gatherings were held weekly and big gatherings once a month. All members now get together for an annual assembly. The chairperson, vice-chairperson, consultants, and board members hold regular planning meetings and study sessions. Their activities include Eucharistic celebrations, Bible study, catechism classes, and learning sacred songs. There also are youth summer catechism classes, pilgrimages, and charitable activities.

The CBC encountered big challenges at first. Fortunately, at its lowest point, the CBC got steady care and support from both communities of the hometown Church as well as of Shanghai Church. For example, there was a period when the activities became few and participants were just six. Even so, Father Li Xiaowei of Jinjiaxiang parish continued to provide an air-conditioned conference room for their gatherings. But these Catholics felt too embarrassed to use those facilities and instead stayed outside for meetings and Bible study. And at the same time, Fathers Sun Jigen and Wang Luming of Yongnian parish kept visiting them and sent experienced teachers to Shanghai to provide training courses for the CBC members.[19]

For the development of a CBC mainly composed of migrants from outside, the acceptance and support of the local Church community is essential. Father Gong Tiande of Zhangjialou parish and Father Li Xiaowei of Jinjiaxiang parish have been giving steady support and help to this new-born community. Since Father Li was transferred to Jinjiaxiang from Zhangjialou, he invited the CBC to have gatherings and carry out their activities in Jinjiaxiang. While the migrant Catholics were receiving the fine help they needed, they in turn also brought vigor and vitality to the local parish.

On March 17, 2007, the CBC went to visit the old folks at Zhangjiang Home for the Elderly in the new district of Pudong. On May 5, Father Li Xiaowei took all CBC members on a pilgrimage to Sheshan. On August 2, he took the summer catechism class students and some CBC members, about 100 people in all, on pilgrimage to Suzhou and Kunshan. On August 4, the CBC carried out charitable donation activities in Zhangjialou parish. In 2008, the Yongnian CBC organized the Youth Summer Catechism Class (July 10–27) together with Jinjiaxiang parish. At Jinjiaxiang parish on December 11, 2010, with gratitude and joy the representatives of Yongnian CBC from Yongnian, Changsha, and Changzhi joined with the Yongnian CBC in Shanghai and the local Catholics to celebrate the "Fifth anniversary ceremony of Yongnian CBC's establishment in Shanghai."[20] In addition, for three consecutive years, the Yongnian CBC in Shanghai has organized blood donation campaigns at Jinjiaxiang parish.

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18 "Ling juli jiechu Yongnian jiaoyou Shanghai jijituan" 零距离接触永年教友上海基基团 (In close contact with the Yongnian CBC in Shanghai), in: *Xindebao* 信德报, August 10, 2007. The Regulation may be found on www.xinde.org.

19 "Ling juli jiechu Yongnian jiaoyou Shanghai jijituan."

20 "Shanghai: (Yongnian) jijituan juxing 5 zhounian qingdian" 上海：（永年）基基团举行 5 周年庆典 (Shanghai: The CBC of Yongnian in Shanghai Celebrates its Fifth Anniversary), www.xinde.org (accessed on December 17, 2010).

As it developed during the past six years, the Yongnian CBC in Shanghai has provided rich experiences in service to migrant Catholics through local Church communities in China. No matter if it is the Yongnian CBC in Shanghai or CBC elsewhere or other types of communities in other places, their establishment, development and success in overcoming hardships and challenges all result from the participation and cooperation of the communities themselves, as well as the help of the hometown and local Church communities in Shanghai. Their experiences can be summed up as follows:

1. Dedicated and unselfish lay faithful take the initiative and take turns to lead.
2. The migrant Catholics gain a certain economic strength and develop a stable work foundation.
3. The number (size) of CBC is not too big, but their activities are attractive and benefit the members' faith life and that of their children.
4. CBC benefit from the understanding, care, and support provided by their hometown Church communities and those of the cities to which they had moved.

Short summary

Facing the fact of international migration, as early as 1912 the Church established a pontifical office to deal with migrant affairs; in 1914 a national day of migrants in Italy was instituted; in 2004 an international day of migrants was held; in 1951 the International Catholic Migrant Commission was founded; in 1970 the "Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People" was established.[21] During the last 100 years, facing the problems of migration, all reigning popes have almost annually issued statements regarding questions concerning migrants and refugees. For example, the present Pope Benedict XVI saw migration as "a sign of the times" (2006 Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, "Migration: a sign of the times"). He suggested a "right of every human person, in its dual aspect of the possibility to leave one's country and the possibility to enter another country to look for better conditions of life …" (citing John Paul VI. 2001), therefore society has an obligation to care for the religious life of migrants. "Immigrants, moreover, have the duty to integrate into the host country, respecting its laws and its national identity" (2011 Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees).

The United Nations also sees the importance of the issue of migrants. On December 5, 1951, the United Nations convened an "International Conference on Migration" for the first time and subsequently established an "International Organization for Migration" with its headquarters in Geneva. On December 18, 1990, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the "International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families". In 2000, the United Nations decided to proclaim December 18 as the "International Migrants Day".[22]

21 See John Paul II's Message for the 87th World Day of Migrants and Refugees and Benedict XVI's encyclica "Caritas in veritate." Comment in Chinese in Agenzia Fides of July 11, 2009, http://www.fides.org/aree/news/newsdet.php?idnews=4325&lan=chi

22 See the homepage of the United Nations http://www.un.org/; and the Online Version of People's Daily http://www.people.com.cn/GB/guoji/209/1998/index.html. (At present China has not yet established an official connection with the International Organization for Migrants, but since 2001 it has been an observer of this organization.

In the face of the current irreversible tide of migration in China and the phenomenon of an increasing number of people on the move, the efforts of some local Churches to pay attention to the migrant workers, to show concern and care, and to take action, deserves approval and has to be further promoted. Actually, while the elite of faithful migrants who bravely wander the world and break new ground make great contributions to the local society and Church, they have at the same time to gradually integrate themselves into the local society. Sooner or later they have to become "local citizens" and "local Church members" of the places they have moved to, bring new blood to the communities of faithful, and become a new source of life for the local Church.

The Holy See has been a member country of the "International Organization for Migrants" of the United Nations since 2011.)

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