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Upon the Map of China
Rests the Shrine and Our Lady of She-Shan
Through Whom We Pray
There may be one fold and One Shepherd

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary 2023
67th Anniversary of the arrest of Bishop Kung Pin Mei

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In Memoriam

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Dear Friends of the Roman Catholic Church in China,

Recently, people around the world closely followed the historic Papal visit to Mongolia. Pope Francis visited this small diocese of less than 2000 Catholics in a population of over 3 million. That was a loving, pastoral event. Due to Mongolia's proximity to China, one hoped that China would respond positively and considered this a sincere outreach from the Pontiff.

The media reported that Pope Francis wanted to send a warm greeting to the noble Chinese people. He said off-the cuff, "To the entire Chinese people I wish the best, go forward, always progress. And to the Chinese Catholics, I ask you to be **good Christians and good citizens.**"

These few words brought back a lot of memories. In the condolences sent by **Saint Pope John Paul II** at Cardinal Kung's Funeral (2000), the Pope called Cardinal Kung "**The noble son of China and of the Church.**" The Pope was referring to Cardinal Kung who for 50 years refused to join the government-established, Independent Patriotic church. Bishop Kung knew the serious consequence for refusing the government's offer. Instead of immediate freedom, a comfortable life in his old age and leadership in the new government's Independent church, Bishop Kung could be executed summarily, or sentence to a life of hard labor. Bishop was 54-year-old.

Statement from the Patriotic Association. At Cardinal Kung's death, The President of the Patriotic Association of Shanghai, **Bishop Aloysius JIN, S.J.** also issued its official statement, "**Cardinal Kung is a criminal of China, He has caused great harm to the country and split the church in Shanghai. History will judge him.**"

Saint Pope John Paul II, The Supreme Pontiff of the Church and Bishop JIN, SJ an important trusted leader of the Independent Patriotic Association had very different opinion of Cardinal Kung's life and Ministry.

Who was Bishop JIN, S.J.? He condemned this 98-year-old Cardinal with such vigor. In the early 1950s, he was the Rector of the Seminary (Father JIN, SJ). In the evening of September 8, 1955. the government arrested some 200 leaders of the Shanghai diocese including Bishop Kung, Father JIN, Pastors of the major parishes, and lay leaders. Five years later in 1960, Bishop Kung was put on trial together with Bishop Walsh, MM, Father JIN and few other senior priests of the Diocese. JIN was sentenced to

Established in 1991 to assist the persecuted Roman Catholic Church in China

to 18 years of jail time. The government cited his cooperation for leniency. After years of jail time, JIN worked as a translator in a high security unit of the military, a comfortable job to serve the rest of his sentence. Bishop Walsh, MM, was given 20 years although he was a foreign national. **Bishop Kung was sentenced to life imprisonment.**

JIN earned the trust of the government. Once the government sent JIN to visit Bishop Kung in prison, to persuade him to join the Patriotic Church. Many years later, a Chinese Cardinal while visiting Bishop Kung asked him the most difficult moment in his 32 years in jail. Bishop Kung said, JIN's visit was the most painful moment of my long imprisonment. For 32 years, Kung received no visitors, letters, parcels, no sacrament, no reading materials except communist books. He was placed in many long periods of isolation.

Soon after the sentence, Father **Chang Chia-Shu, S.J.** of the Shanghai Diocese accepted the appointment as the Patriotic Bishop of Shanghai. He said at his consecration, "*to lead the diocese to be independent of Rome and to restore the church in China to the people.*" In 1985, a few years after JIN's release, he accepted consecration as an **Auxiliary Patriotic Bishop of Shanghai without papal mandate and as the assistant to Patriotic Bishop Chang, S.J.,** while his own legitimately appointed Ordinary, Bishop Kung remained a prisoner for Christ. **Thus, Shanghai Patriotic Church was led by 2 Jesuit bishops consecrated without Papal mandate.**

Years later, JIN asked for recognition by Vatican and was **recognized as the auxiliary bishop to the underground Coadjutor Bishop, Joseph Fan, S.J.** Thus, JIN successfully earned the government's protection and financial support on one hand and the Pope's blessings on their other. His *dual loyalties* made his overseas trips more fruitful. He continued his position as Patriotic Bishop of Shanghai until his death in 2013. JIN was remembered by many prominent priests in the universal church and China watchers for having rebuilt the church in China (Independent Patriotic Church). These priests and China watchers enjoyed JIN's personal friendship during their frequent visits to China. The Chinese government confiscated Kung's Chinese passport at when he was 97 to prevent him from ever returning to China. **Bishop Kung remained the Vatican named Bishop of Shanghai until he died in exile in 2000.**

From Cardinal Kung's perspective. At his arrest, Bishop Kung told the government that he was **born in China, bought up and educated in China. He had never been overseas, and he wanted to die in his homeland. I am a good son of China. My relationship with the Pope is religious.**

He further explained to the Chief Prosecutor: **I am a Roman Catholic Bishop. If I denounce the Holy Father, not only would I not be a Bishop, but I would not even be a Catholic. You can cut off my head, but you can never take away my duties."**

Refusing to make a deal In 1970s, the government required a letter of appeal annually from prisoners, probably hoping to receive confessions. Bishop Kung wrote an appeal letter in 1979 at the age of 78 after he already had served 24 years of a life sentence. Here is a small section of the appeal letter.

"The day before my trial (1960), the Chief Prosecutor of the Shanghai City, Lu Ming, came to the prison to urge me to consider gaining freedom and happiness in my old age in return for severing my religious relations with the Pope.....I replied, I absolutely will not consider this deal of monetary comforts of life by apostatizing my religion."

" By human nature, we prefer to live rather than to die. However, there is something that is even preferable to life. To a man of virtue, they are integrity, righteousness, and morals. To the faithful, it is the integrity of faith. There is something even more detestable than death. To a loyal patriot, it is the betrayal of the ruler and the nation. To a Christian, it is the betrayal of God and Jesus. To separate from the sole representative of Jesus Christ on earth, the Roman Pontiff, is to make myself lose the most basic Catholic faith, becoming a heretic without the Pope..... This is a serious issue in the history of the Holy Catholic Church for which millions of people have fought by shedding their blood and sacrificing their lives."

Diocese of Shanghai under Bishop (active ministry 1950 -1955)

For the Faithful. Arrests had been ongoing in Shanghai and throughout China since 1950. Bishop Kung instructed the whole diocese to vigorously strengthen themselves in prayers, knowledge in faith and doctrine so that they can defend their faith in the inevitable. Besides Sunday Masses, there were numerous devotions, recitations of the rosary,

Stations of the Cross, Benedictions and Holy Hours during the week. Confession is available every day. **1952** was a **Marian Year** in Shanghai. There were continuous 24-hour recitation of the rosary in the Diocese. **1953** was a **Year of the Sacred Heart**. There were year-round special sermons and catechism training. The sermons were hand copied by the youth groups to be carried from one parish to another. Bishop Kung knew that soon there would be no priests and nuns available. The Catholic faith in China must be passed down by the faithful from generation to generation. Everyone realized that each day could be the last day of freedom for anyone in the diocese.

One evening, Bishop Kung led the Station of the Cross in the packed Cathedral. At the end of the devotion, Bishop prayed aloud, ***“Holy Mother, we do not ask you for a miracle to stop the persecution. We beg you to bless us because we are very weak.”***

For the clergy. During a semi-annual retreat for the diocesan clergy, Bishop addressed them. ***“What are you afraid of. You will be arrested. This is your destiny. Jesus prepared this for you because he loves you.... If you die for Christ, you will have resurrection. “***

For the Seminarians Bishop Kung attended a Mass for the new school year at the Basilica of Sheshan with all seminarians, Rector and Instructors. After Mass, in front of the statue of Our Lady of Sheshan, ***everyone pledged to be faithful to their Catholic faith and never to betray the Church.*** They also agreed that it would be wrong to betray their faith even if they were under pressure.

Face persecution heads-on Every Catholic in Shanghai has prepared for arrests, individually or in group. They prepared spiritually and practically. Typically, one would pack a small bundle of minimum necessities to grab on the way out when arrested, day or night. This bundle would serve as a pillow sleeping on the floor.

Eyewitness’s account of one arrest. One seminarian recalled the arrest of his Rector, Father JIN, S.J. in 1955. This eyewitness himself eventually was arrested and endured 22 years of jail and Labor camp. He was 18 years old. One evening, the police busted into the seminary and into the Rector’s room. All seminarians were assembled in the hall. Very frightened, they saw their beloved Rector being led away in handcuffs. Before leaving the Hall, the Rector unexpectedly turned around and told us, a group of young men whose spiritual lives and vocations were placed in his charge, ***“Obey the law.”*** Then he disappeared into the street of police cars.

This witness was shocked, frightened, disappointed, and heart-broken for years. He knew clearly that his Rector’s faith and spirit was broken immediately under pressure. ***“Obey the law!!”*** Did Father Rector or the seminarians break any law? The only laws they would not obey was ***“to report on the bishop and priests and to join the Patriotic Association.”*** Did the Rector forget his pledge to Our Lady’s Sheshan?

Mao Zedong’s Thought ***Religion is the opium of the people. Catholic faith must be eliminated.*** To its surprise, the government Shanghai Diocese vibrant, active, determined, and united after 5 years of arrests and executions. The arrests only encouraged attendance at the churches.

The Central Government decided to change its tactic from **eliminating the Catholic faith to replacing the faith** with a look-alike church that would be totally under government control. For an atheist government to engage in the business of religion and evangelization ought to sound a loud signal to anyone. To start this new policy, the government targeted Shanghai Diocese. This diocese and its bishop enjoyed the total trust of its faithful and clergy. Bishop Kung also was trusted by bishops throughout China.

This September 8 mass arrests

If there were massive betrayals among the priests and faithful of Shanghai during the initial 5 years of intense persecution that the government hoped for, September 8 mass arrest would not be needed. As the Catholic youth said in their New Year greeting to their beloved Bishop Kung, ***“The battle demands sacrifice, the victory claims its prize. The defense of the faith demands blood and tears. Even if the battle and the sacrifice were painful, the depth of the heart is filled with joy.”*** The students told Bishop Kung at another meeting, ***“The Cross is crushing; but it is the Cross alone that one can safeguard the faith and strengthen the rhythm of our steps; it is only by the Cross that the flowers of victory can bloom.”*** **9/8 mass arrest was a clear victory of the Holy Spirit who protected the church and the true faith even under the most gruesome, inhuman persecution.**

Between 1955 and continued to mid 1980, thousands of martyrs and dry martyrs proudly called themselves faithful sons of China and of the Church. Persecution has not stopped, with today being the 74th years of continued persecution. The Chinese Government has learned the public relations skills from the west and presented a more friendly image when dealing internationally. **Please pray for the Catholic Church in China.**

Recent good news from China 2023

This year, **1 priest and 1 nun graduated with Doctor Degrees** in 2 European Universities. They have since returned to China to serve the underground dioceses. One seminarian graduated and was **ordained in Europe as a priest of the underground diocese**. He will continue to study a master's degree. **Another nun** has completed a Master's in Ministry and will work on a Doctor in Family Counselling which is a much-needed skills in China. **China has ordained 10 transitional deacons**. What a blessing. Your donations helped to make these miracles.

News on some Foundation's programs

Mass stipends We continue to transfer Mass stipends to help the underground clergy to support their living and pastoral expanses. An underground priest has no salary, no Sunday collection, and benefits as in the West. In view of the high inflation in China and the frequent fines from the government, we recommend a stipend of at least \$12 for each Mass. Many donors have generously offered more. The Foundation does not use any part of the stipend to manage this program. 100% of the stipend goes to the priest that offer your Holy Mass.

Orphanage The famous disabled orphanage of Bishop Jai in Hubei has been closed by the Chinese government over 18 months ago. This is to punish Bishop for his refusal to join the Patriotic Church and to prevent Catholics below age 18 to enter the Cathedral. No one under 18 may attend church services, religious instruction or be baptized. This is a national law passed while the Vatican-China Agreement was in placed. We know of no objection from the Patriotic Church or from Vatican.

Government closed the orphanage and took all babies to the government orphanage. They disregarded older disabled orphans. Without the government support, these older orphans continued to bag help from the villagers and nuns. Some orphans though physically disabled can attend schools. The Foundation supported them. There were two high school graduates this summer. Both were able to find jobs after graduation.

Mass at Parishes in USA. The Mass request book for 2024 is now open in most parishes. Please request a Mass in any weekend in 2024 stating its intention as **for the persecuted Catholic Church in China**. (\$10 donation) You may be surprised how many in your parish do not know that there is still persecution in China.

Obituary

Joseph Ming-Chuan Kung

March 12, 1932 – February 14, 2023

Founder and President, Cardinal Kung Foundation

With gratitude to Our Lord, we wish to share with you the story of Joseph.

'Joe,' the Kung family stalwart and an ardent advocate for the underground Roman Catholic Church in China, passed away in the early morning hours of February 14, 2023. He was one month shy of his 91st birthday. Born in Shanghai, China to a distinguished 6th generation Catholic family, he was the second of eight children of Dr. Vincent Hai-Mei Kung, a surgeon, and Theresa Yao, a homemaker.

He lived a life of faith, courage, and principle. Always taking the long view, he fought for what was right and for both his family and so many others. In 1950 soon after the Communist took over, Joe was sent by his mother to join his Dad in Hong Kong who fled to Hong Kong months earlier. The border closed soon after. Joe could not see his family again for 30 years.

His father died two years later, leaving him penniless and alone at age 19.



Joe is a proud beneficiary of the USA Refugee Relief Act of 1953. As a recipient of one of 2,000 visas granted to Chinese refugees, he relocated in 1955 to Ohio and enrolled at John Carroll University. He worked full time throughout his entire four years to put himself through school, graduating in 1959. He continued his education culminating with 2 MBAs – one each from (Case) Western Reserve University and Wayne State University. He was a CPA by profession.

Eventually, he was sent by an international corporation to Hong Kong where he married his future wife, Agnes, in 1968. Bishop Francis Hsu, the first native Chinese Bishop in Hong Kong officiated their engagement and Marriage. They were blessed with the birth of his four surviving children. A lifelong fervent American patriot, Joe is forever grateful to the United States for his many opportunities including the relocation of his young family to Stamford, Connecticut in 1979 to the home that he lived in for the remainder of his life.

Aside from his four children, Joe is most proud of three accomplishments. First, the joy of sponsoring the immigration of his mother and six siblings along with their immediate families to the United States over a 6-year period. Seeing them happily retired and the next generation blossoming in the land of freedom was one of his greatest pride and joys.

Second, keeping alive the memory of then Bishop (now Cardinal) Kung. He lobbied the US Congress and worked with international Human Rights organizations advocating for Bishop's release. Joe Kung testified to Congress on multiple occasions, convinced 54 members of Congress to sign a letter to China's Premier pleading for Cardinal Kung's release. Their effort resulted in Kung's release in 1987 after 32 years of incarceration in China for his religious beliefs and leadership. Bishop Kung was elevated a Cardinal in 1991 by Saint Pope John Paul II.

Third, establishing in 1992 the Cardinal Kung Foundation at the request of Cardinal Kung to promote the persecuted Roman Catholic Church in China. Joe served as an expert witness to gain asylum for over 30 individuals or families of verified persecuted underground Catholics, and supported hundreds of underground clergy and nuns in renowned European seminaries and universities. His dedication, supported by his Board of Directors, resulted in both awards and condemnation including the Cardinal Mindszenty Award and being named as the biggest enemy of the Chinese government approved Patriotic catholic church by one director of a major religious community.

Cardinal Kung remained the Bishop of Shanghai until his death in 2000. After Cardinal's death, Joseph and the Cardinal Kung Foundation champion the cause for Cardinal Kung's canonization.

Joe was a lifelong lover of classical music, a connoisseur of sweets, and above all, a loving dedicated family man.

Joe was predeceased by his older sister Ming Zhu, his beloved parents Dr. Vincent Kung and Theresa Yao Kung, as well as his cherished uncle Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin Mei. He is survived by his wife of 54 years (Agnes), four children and their spouses, and a granddaughter Thea Kung; six siblings and their spouses; nine nephews and nieces and their spouses, and eight grand nephews and nieces.

**Please pray for the eternal rest of Joseph Kung and
The Cardinal Kung Foundation, promoting religious freedom in China.**



Agnes (Mrs. Joseph Kung), and The Board of Directors