



THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION
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Christmas 2023

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

*The Underground Bishop, Clergy and Sisters together with the
Directors and Advisors of the Foundation wish you and your family,
Peace, Joy and God's blessings.*

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May the Holy Family be generous to you as you have been so generous and kind to the Underground church. *"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."* (Matthew 25:41)

One may indeed refer to the Underground church 'as the least of my brothers.' The faithful of the Roman Catholic Church has endured brutal persecution, jail and hard labor since 1950 and kept their faith. The atheist communists have always regarded religion as the opium of the people and must be eliminated. To overcome what hunger, beating and long jail sentences could not accomplish, these atheists turned to starting a new religion for China in 1957, offering a lookalike Catholic Church, an Independent Patriotic Association. This is not a conversion of the communists. As annihilation of Christianity was not successful, government changed to replacement. For many generations, missionaries had taught by example and great sacrifice to maintain the fidelity of the true faith. Many offered their lives for the Catholic faith in China. Therefore, most faithful would not accept this mock church. As required by the government and Patriotic Bishops Conference, bishops and clergy in China were and still are required to promote communism and government policies at the pulpit rather than preach Christ's gospel. In the 1950's 1960's and 1970, the blood of the martyrs flowed freely in order to give the faithful sacraments and Holy Mass. Thousands of Roman Catholics labored 13 hours a day for 5, 15, 30 years in the labor camps hidden away from the eyes of the world. These faithful nuns and clergy *"have given witness by word and deed, through long suffering and trials, to what constitutes the essence of life in the Church; participation in the divine life through the apostolic faith and evangelical love."* (St. Pope John Paul II, 1991.) **One of the heroic clergy was Ignatius Cardinal Kung.**

The communist government never would have thought that they would find a willing partner in 2018. In just one night, 100% of the Independent Association bishops were legitimized by Pope Francis including eight bishops declared illegitimate by Pope Benedict XVI. All have been given the governance of the dioceses as Ordinary. When a newly legitimized bishop did not have a diocese, the Vatican would remove an Underground bishop or demote an Ordinary to be an axillary bishop, an assistant to the previously illegitimate P.A. bishop to satisfy the government and the Patriotic bishops.

Recently, Catholics in American and around the world were alarmed that an American Bishop was released of his duty at Pope Francis' decision. While everyone recognized that the Pope has the authority to assign or release a bishop, we expect our Supreme Pontiff to explain his decision that has such a wide-ranging effect on tens of thousands of priests and faithful directly and indirectly. We expect this particularly from a Holy Father that is famously for preaches compassion and mercy. It is compassion and love to point out the error of this bishop from the civil or canon law perspective.

Unfortunately, there were few occasions when underground bishops were regarded as stumbling block to the progress of the Vatican policy of unity of two churches in China: Roman Catholic and the Independent Patriotic Association. The Underground bishops were conveniently released to help the Vatican negotiators. When it happened in China, there were little outcry, just a headline on a human right organization newsletter for a week. Nothing that would have bother the Vatican or Beijing. These underground bishops have no support from the Chinese government, neither any concrete support from the Vatican nor Pope Francis. In the current tragic situation of Bishop Strickland, maybe I can offer His Excellency a small comfort. The former diocese that he loved will be shepherd by another Roman Catholic Bishop, unlike the situation in China. It will not be placed under another Independent church bishop as in China or another Christian bishop.

Vatican-China Agreement

The Negotiation. According to the Vatican, the negotiation has been going on for many, many years before Pope Francis. Critics of the underground church often dismisses this loyal faithful as a small group of old, small group of ineffective elderly clergy and faithful who could not forget their past suffering. It is fair to say that if the Underground church is weak, with no leadership or pastoral life, the Vatican would have nothing to offer in the negotiation. The government would not care for a small group of believers, remnant of the old Catholic Church.

Appointments of bishops For about 20 years, The Vatican has not consecrated underground bishops to replace underground bishops who had died. Sometime an apostolic administrator may be appointed. This made it very difficult for the underground church to carry on pastoral duties. Even to this date, Vatican has not appointed any Roman Catholic Bishops.

Patriotic Association Bishops. In the meantime, many Patriotic Association bishops were appointed by the Patriotic Association under the approval of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). These appointments would be approved by Pope Francis. It is obvious that the Holy See has decided to throw its support behind the Independent Church and deprived its own Roman Catholic Diocese the basic support to manage a diocese. If that is the case, Vatican should be straight forward to tell the Chinese Roman Catholic bishops to go home to till the land and let the whole church know that it has released all Roman Catholic Bishops in China and the Church in China is the Independent Patriotic Church.

Bishop Kung, Archbishop Tang In the 1950's, Father Ignatius Kung and Father Dominic Tang, S.J., were requested to accept the position of bishop of Shanghai and Bishop of Canton respectively after the communist had started persecution throughout China. They accepted the positions in obedience to the Pope. They knew that without a bishop, the diocese will be deprived of its episcopal life. Now 70 years later, the Holy See would purposely deprive its own Roman Catholic priests and faithful in China to face brutal persecution without its leadership. As Cardinal Shan, President of the Bishop Conference of Taiwan said, by accepting a bishop's positions in a communist China, that bishop started their journey to Calvary. How does Vatican justify leaving its own priests and faithful in the battlefield without a general.

Bishop Ma Daqin. 12 years ago, Bishop Ma was consecrated as the Auxiliary bishop of Shanghai, and expected to succeed the elderly Patriotic Bishop Jin of Shanghai when he passed away. Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin was elected by the Patriotic Association and approved by the Pope. At the end of the consecration Mass, he announced that he would resign his Officer's positions at the Patriotic Association to focus on his new pastoral ministry as auxiliary Bishop of Shanghai. He was immediately put under house arrest, now in its 11 years. Bishop Ma has since been demoted to be Father Ma.

All Patriotic bishops are straightly controlled by the Independent Patriotic Association. Even today, they cannot accept overseas invitation without Beijing's approval. They must not be allowed to be too close to Vatican.

PA Bishops attending the Synod of Bishops. Until the last minute, Beijing approved 2 bishops to attend the Synod of Bishops a couple of months ago in Rome. Everyone was surprised that after 2 days of meeting, these two bishops announced they must return to China for some pastoral duties. Beijing needs to place tight

control over its bishops even though the Pope consider himself head of all Bishops in China. In practice, Pope is the Head after Beijing.

Unilateral Appointments of Bishops. In 2018, Pope Francis referred to this historic Agreement as “*a dialogue started with trust*” that gradually it will unite the two communities together (two churches, Roman Catholic, and Independent Patriotic church). After two renewals, 2020 & 2022, there continued cases of China consecrating bishops unilaterally, leaving this Pope out of the picture entirely, even a consecration in a major diocese as Shanghai was done unilaterally. Shanghai has had no bishop for 10 years. This decision could not have been made in haste, but on purpose.

Prediction of the Vatican-China Agreement The Vatican’s prediction came true in one count only. The Vatican predicted that “The Underground church would suffer.” It did suffer tremendously since 2016 with no intervention from the Holy See. The Underground bishops and clergy accepted persecution to live their true faith. Knowing that the negotiation would have such a tragic result on the Roman Catholic Church, is it fair for the Vatican to assign certain group of clergy, Roman Catholic to accept persecution?

Vatican instruction on clergy registration. The Vatican claimed that China has religious freedom guaranteed by the government. The religious freedom in the constitution is not new. Then why the persecution? Sinicization is not to make the art, music or other aspects of life in China more Chinese. It directly requires everyone to support China’s political position, President Xi policy and the communist Party’s policy. It is easy to see that there could be many conflicts between Roman Catholic Church practices and an atheist government’s policy.

In the West, registration is routine, e.g. driver’s license. voting card, library card, etc. The registration for the minister certificate in China requires a solemn pledge to support and promote an Independent Church and place the ministry and the clergy himself under the Patriotic Association, which is controlled by the Chinese communis.

Respect one’s conscience, negotiate suitable terms with the government.

In the guideline issued by the Vatican to the Underground church regarding registration for a Chinese minister’s license with the government, the Vatican said that an Underground bishop/priest may act according to their own conscience and may negotiate changes in terms in the registration form.

If the Cardinal and negotiation team who spoke on behalf of the Pope were not successful in seeking terms that fall in line with Roman Catholic practices, it is not likely that a citizen may successfully negotiate with the government. The Vatican indicated that freedom of religion is guaranteed by China’s constitution. This term, ‘Freedom of Religion’ has been in the Chinese constitution while the religious persecution was going on for decades. Was this another part of the agreement that proved to be just wishful thinking of the Vatican-seasoned diplomats?

The ultimate purpose of the Vatican-China agreement According to Vatican, it was to offer Chinese Catholic unity and a normal religious life. We pray that this will happen soon, and that the Holy Spirit will guide the diplomats to give equal consideration to the Underground church as it gave to the Independent Patriotic Association.

The anniversary of the death of Cardinal Kung

**A solemn High Mass will be celebrated.
on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at 10 AM,
in the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist**

279 Atlantic Street, Stamford CT 06901

Mass will be livestream - <https://boxcast.tv/channel/ppcsuohvx2la96vu23yv>

At the church hall immediately after the Mass -

Display – Information on the underground church & Foundation’s program

Light refreshment offered- Registration required by February 9, 2024.

Cause of Cardinal Kung.

I recalled when Cardinal Kung Died in year 2000, the Patriotic Association issued a statement, "**Cardinal Kung is a criminal of China...**" Cardinal Kung's crime was that he lived his faith according to the Bible that handed down by the Apostle. At an interrogation session, He definitively replied to the prosecutor when he was offered the leadership in the independent church, "*if I leave the Holy Father, not only would I not be a bishop, I would not even be a Catholic*". The Prosecutor asked Bishop to reconsider, Bishop said, "If I reconsider, it means that this would be a possibility. It would never be a possibility to leave the Pope." Pointing the gun to Bishop Kung, the prosecutor said, "do you not know that I can shoot you immediately?" Bishop Kung said, "I will be in heaven this evening."

Has the cause been open? Sadly, no. It does not seem to be the Vatican's priority. Anything that will make Beijing uncomfortable will NOT be the Vatican's priority. The Vatican did not have the courage to object to Cardinal Zen's arrest or ask for mercy for Jimmy Lai's now that Lai has suffered 1,000 days of imprisonment. (The trial has just begun. If found guilty, it may be life imprisonment.)

Cardinal Kung's heroic Life.

- *He accepted the consecration to Bishop when the persecution in China had already begun.
- * HE was a good shepherd; he chose to remain in China with his flock and turn down offer to leave China."
- * He refused to negotiate for his own freedom and comfort.
- *He became one of the longest-held prisoners of conscience in the world, suffering 32 years of imprisonment, hunger and isolation, deprived of all sacraments.
- * He refused the leadership in the Independent Patriotic church that is now fully supported by the current Pontificate. His fidelity and heroic life inspired thousands in China to remain faithful to the Catholic Church.

To promote prayers for the cause of Cardinal Kung, we invite you to join the **Friends of Cardinal Kung. Please read the attached announcement for more details.**



Friends of Cardinal Kung

We invite you to join
Friends of Cardinal Kung
to storm heaven praying our
rosaries for *the opening of his*
cause of sainthood.

One Hail Mary Daily
One decade of the rosary once a
week
Promote Cardinal's cause to your
friends.

***Please read the attached flyer**

Friends of Cardinal Kung will receive the package shown above: A booklet on Cardinal, Prayer card of Cardinal, an **Oliver wood rosary from the Holy Land made specially for Friends of Cardinal Kung, a **2nd Class relic of Cardinal Kung** for your intercession.**

Fr. James McCurry, O.F.M. Conv. a Director of the Foundation who has known Cardinal Kung personally for over 30 years. He was previously the ex-Minister Provincial of The Province of the Angeles. We are grateful that he shared with us his reflection on Cardinal Kung.

**Cardinal Kung:
The “Shepherd of Shanghai” Defied Mediocrity
by Fr. James McCurry, O.F.M. Conv.**

For His Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin-Mei, mediocrity held no sway. Appointed by Rome in 1950 as the first Chinese Bishop of Shanghai, China, his initial five years of active episcopal ministry faced the growing brutality of Communist persecution in the Catholic Church, and the imminent threat of arrest. Anticipating his eventual arrest and the imprisonment awaiting him, he even had all his teeth removed, lest he capitulate to coercive tortures. Mindful of human weakness, he fortified himself to resist any temptation of compromise with the Communist strategy of establishing a counterpoint “Patriotic Association,” which would later dispatch to the Holy See its formal announcement of separation from the Pope and the Church of Rome. I once heard the definition of mediocrity as “compromise worked out into a system.” This small frail (hardly five-foot-tall) Bishop Kung would never brook compromise. He stands high today, amidst a world of compromise and mediocrity, as a towering Catholic churchman of the purest integrity.

Rather than leaving the fate of the Church in China to the “diplomatic skills” of the Holy See, Bishop Kung sought the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by dedicating himself, his episcopal ministry, and the Shanghai Diocese to Our Lady and the Holy Rosary. To encourage the true Catholic steadfastness of his diocesan clergy and faithful laity, he wrote: *“Neither fire nor sword can take away my faith in God.”* Because Bishop Kung invoked the special intercession of the Mother of God, it was not surprising that the date of his arrest would happen on the 8th of September 1955 – the Catholic Church’s liturgical feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s “birthday.” As Bishop Kung suffered the indignity of being taken prisoner, he invoked Our Lady’s special protection for himself and the other 200 faithful Catholic clergy and laity who were arrested with him.

A few eyewitnesses to that shocking drama of Bishop Kung’s arrest in Shanghai still survive, including a former seminarian (also named Ignatius) who weeps with sorrow at the contrast that day between the uncompromising Bishop Kung and the formerly esteemed rector of the Catholic seminary. The latter, while being arrested, scandalously compromised, capitulating to the Communist authorities, and forever sully his reputation among the faithful remnant of China’s Catholic underground. Bishop Kung’s heroic defiance of *“fire and sword”* offset the scandal of those who embraced the “Patriotic Association.”

After his arrest, Bishop Kung was subjected both to merciless interrogation and temptations of security and power. A few months later, the Communist government was confident that they had finally coerced the frail Bishop to see the benefits of yielding to their authority. They eventually paraded Bishop Kung before the multitude. Students and workers were forced into Shanghai’s old Dog Racing stadium to see a seemingly broken clergyman confess “his crimes.” With hands tied behind his back, and wearing only a black pajama suit, the fragile Bishop was pushed forward to the microphone to “confess” before thousands of his beloved faithful. Instead, mustering indomitable spiritual courage and energy, Bishop Kung loudly affirmed: *“Long live Christ the King. Long live the Pope.”* In spite of hundreds of soldiers with machine guns throughout the stadium, the Catholics at the stadium emotionally responded: *“Long live the Pope. Long live Bishop Kung.”*

Failing completely in their attempt to convert Bishop Kung into an instrument of the Communist government and “Patriotic Association,” the authorities sentenced him to life imprisonment in 1960. Bishop Kung disappeared from public view for decades – his fate unknown to family and faithful. After

spending 30 solitary years in jail, he was transferred to an ignominious “house arrest” under the “supervision” of two compromised “Patriotic Association” bishops who had betrayed him.

In the 1980s, the Chinese government began to warm up to some foreign governments and the Catholic Church in those countries, hoping to improve its public image. However, even then, Bishop Kung’s persecutors, in league with the Communist government, allowed him no contact with any representatives of the one true Roman Catholic Church. When the Archbishop of Manila, His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, visited China, these two faithful Catholic bishops were kept separate at the formal reception. Ever the wise “shepherd,” Bishop Kung nonetheless conveyed a “coded” message to his Philippine counterpart – “coded” as evident as a blazing neon light! – that neither compromise nor mediocrity of faith had corrupted him throughout his captivity. During the dinner reception, Bishop Kung looked directly at Cardinal Sin and sang with great dignity the Latin hymn: *“Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam”* (“You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church”). Silenced for over 30 years, his changeless and uncompromising fidelity to Rome rang out loud and clear to the entire world.

Shortly after, when another faithful Catholic survivor of Communism, Pope Saint John Paul II, became the Roman Pontiff, one of the Polish Pope’s first acts, at his first Consistory, was to name the imprisoned Bishop Kung a “Cardinal” of the Roman Church *in pectore* (secretly) in 1979. That attestation of the esteem in which the Roman Catholic Church held (and continues to hold over the next four decades) the faithful “Shepherd of Shanghai” bespeaks volumes. At age 87, and after 33 years of jail and house arrest, Bishop Kung was released to his family in the U.S.A. for medical reasons, ostensibly to show the “beneficence” of his Communist captors. The Cardinalate news would become public in 1991.

Fast forward to the days before Sister Death came calling for the ever-faithful Cardinal Kung in the year 2000. I had the privilege of journeying to Cardinal Kung’s bedside in the family home at Stamford, Connecticut, where – assisted by Ignatius (the faithful eyewitness to Bishop Kung’s arrest in 1955) – I administered in Latin the “Last Rites” of the Roman Catholic Church to the dying warrior. I told him that I would be going to the Holy Land immediately afterwards as pilgrim guide to the Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist. Our pilgrimage would actually coincide with that of the Cardinal’s papal patron, Pope Saint John Paul II. Cardinal Kung raised his hand to give me his last blessing. He handed to me one of his altar linen “purificators,” that I could carry with me and use in his name at the Masses which I would be offering in Jerusalem and Galilee.

I regard that “purificator” as a symbol of the holy mettle underlying Cardinal Kung’s steadfast, tenacious, unflagging fidelity. Forbidden to offer Holy Mass throughout 30 years of imprisonment, Cardinal Kung recited daily the entire Mass in his heart, as he cleaved in spirit to the Altars of the world wherever the faithful Catholic sacrifice of Eternal Love was being offered in the purity of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Cardinal Kung’s uncompromising faith radiated pure love. Oh how he loved the Catholic Church! Providentially, the Cardinal’s mortal remains would be interred in his tomb at Santa Clara Mission in California on the very same day when I used his “purificator” at Mass on the Tomb of our Saviour in Jerusalem’s Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Love without compromise – unto Eternity!

Cardinal Kung Defender of the Faith Scholarships

Last year, the Foundation was given a grant to start a scholarship program to promote Cardinal Kung a Defender of Faith among youth. This scholarship introduced youth in America to the value of fidelity, the persecution in China, and the importance of praying and making sacrifice for countries suffering religious persecution. We received many excellent applications. **www.cardinalkungfoundation.org**.

The Foundation is now receiving applications for 2024 scholarships: one \$2000 scholarship and one or more \$1000 award. Please visit our website for more detail. **New in 2024** are awards in the **amount of \$500 for students in Grade 9, 10 & 11** who has demonstrated the leadership in the Catholic Communities. Qualified students include Home School students. Please see the attachment or the detail requirements on our website.

Many effective ways to help the Underground church.

The mission of the Cardinal Kung Foundation is to assist financially the Underground church and to promote the legacy of Cardinal Kung. The Foundation receives no assistance from the church or from major grants. Many major grants are related to China trade, helping the Underground church will place them at a disadvantaged position. We are only supported by individual benefactors like yourself.

Required Minimum Distribution. You may be able to directly transfer a 'Required Minimum Distribution' from your IRA to a qualified charity without paying taxes on this distribution. The Cardinal Kung Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charity. Donations to CKF are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Please consult with your IRA administrator or your financial consultant. The Foundation's EIN number is 06-06-133 4853.

Company Matching Program. Most corporations match up to 100% of an employee's donation to a 'qualified charity.' Please check with your company on this program. Your donation to the Cardinal Kung Foundation may have double effect. Many major corporations support social values that are different from your Catholic values. Your hard work contributed to the profit of your employer, it is a good feeling to see your employer supporting your charity and your Catholic values.

Charity Mobile is a pro-life phone company. It sends 5% of the monthly plan to a charity of your choice. The Foundation is on its list of charities.

Amazon.com donation **Amazon has terminated this program.** The proceeds for your Amazon purchases are no longer donated to charity.

Your Donations at work

During 2023, a few dioceses were able to conduct programs for few hundred children to prepare for First Holy Communion, for Confirmation and general catechism. We continue to take care of orphans. Some were able to attend schools.

There were three graduates (1 priest and 2 nuns) at the renown Universities In Europe: one completed the Masters and two doctorates including a PhD in Canon Law.. They are now assisting in China.

The underground church has four new deacons and 2 ordinations to priesthood that we are aware of.

The underground church could not have achieved these without your prayers, charity and sacrifices.

About 100 masses each year were offered by the underground clergy for our benefactors' intention. All the religious sisters pray daily for our benefactors.

*Joining with the Board of Directors, I wish you
health, peace and blessings of the Holy Family in 2024.*

Three Holy Masses

*will be offered during the Holy Seasons of Christmas
by an underground clergy for you and your family.*

Agnes Kung
President