



## THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION, Inc.

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### May the Peace and Joy of Christmas Be with You!

Dear Friends,

While we are preparing to welcome the *Prince of Peace* at the end of a very difficult pandemic year, the underground church is giving thanks to Holy Mother for her protection, the blessings of faith, courage and health to survive Covid-19 amidst intensified religious persecution.

Let me share with you a few major, recent attacks on the Chinese underground dioceses:

**Zhending Diocese, Hebei, July 11, 2020** *"This is a Catholic Church. All Catholics may come to this church, even under age 18,"* declared its Bishop, Msgr. Jia Zhiguo. The government demanded this compliance in exchange for a "reopen permit" for his church after it had been locked down due to the pandemic. This is another weapon used by the government against the Church.

*"... For all these years, I did not sign the agreement to join the Chinese Patriotic Association, and I will not sign now. I will not support an independent church. I am eighty-five years old walking towards my grave. What will I tell Jesus when I see Him?"* These words of faith were Bishop Jia's response to the government officials threatened to seize his beloved orphans if he refused to register with the Catholic Patriotic Association. This registration would include Bishop's pledge to support the independent church, obey the Patriotic Association, promote Sinicization, reject foreign influence and use religion to advance the goals of the communist party. His refusal resulted in officials forcibly removed many orphans. It was reported that the orphans cried hysterically, hiding under furniture, beds, closets and bathrooms. The guards finally gave up but removed about 60 or 2/3 of the orphans, those physically unable to escape and hide. Disabled infants had been left at the bishop's doorstep over the past 25 years. They were baptized and lovingly cared for by nuns. These nuns were also pressured to join the Hebei Patriotic Diocese and were offered physical and financial security with the independent church. The nuns refused and were sent home. Now, many have gone in hiding to continue serving the diocese.

**Mindong Diocese, Fujian, October 2020** *"...I am aware of my own inability to follow the new development in the Church. To avoid being the stumbling block in the progress of the Church, I must voluntarily resign to a life of prayers. This is my last public Mass....Dear Faithful, please firmly remember. Your faith is in the Church of God, not in a church of man. Man changes, God will never change. This is my last advice to you. In whatever situation, no matter*

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"

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\* In Memoriam

*what changes, you must not forget God. Do not take lightly God's commandment. Do not allow the fullness of faith to be harmed. Do not ignore the importance of saving your soul...May the kind and loving God be with you always to the end of time.*

I am, an unworthy laborer, Vincent Guo Xijing  
Bishop of Mindong Diocese, Fujian

Before the Provisional Vatican-China Agreement was signed in 2018, Vatican requested Bishop Guo Xijing to step down in order to offer the formerly excommunicated Bishop Zhan Silu a position as the Ordinary Bishop of Mindong. In obedience, Bishop Guo agreed. He was reassigned as the auxiliary Bishop to Bishop Zhan. He humbly served as an auxiliary but would not accept the membership of the independent Patriotic Association. Most clergy and faithful continue to follow Bishop Guo, the faithful shepherd in their eyes.

The government applied further pressure on him. In January 2020, Bishop Guo was evicted from his home based on a false building code violation. Since this generated huge negative reaction, Bishop Guo was allowed to return to his home, but without water and electricity. Bishop Guo courageously lived in this inhumane condition to serve his diocese.

In September 2020, there was widespread belief that Vatican would renew this Provisional Agreement for another two years in spite of the widely known increased persecution on the underground church. A week prior to the renewal, Bishop Guo wrote the above resignation announcement to his faithful, urging them to keep their fullness of faith and not place their faith in a church of man.

Bishop Guo, like other underground bishops accepted the humiliation and intensified suffering after the Agreement was signed. These post agreement persecutions throughout the underground church did not result in compassion and realistic expectation from the Vatican diplomats to change its China policy. Rather than violating his conscience, Bishop Guo resigned in October 2020.

**Baoding Diocese, Hebei, November 2, 2020** Only a few weeks after the renewal of the Vatican-China Agreement, government guards invaded the Baoding *Junior Seminary* and the *Baoding Seminary*. They seized equipment, books, and records. They arrested 14 priests, seminarians and a few nuns who were attending classes from other dioceses.

At the same time, another crackdown took place at The Administrator Office of the Diocese. Fr. Lu Gen Jun, the Administrator was arrested. The computers, cell phones, and all diocesan records were taken away. This was a coordinated assault on one of the major dioceses in the underground church.

**Bishop Su Zhimin**, Bishop of Baoding has been jailed for over 20 years and has not been seen. His only so-called crime was loyalty to the Pope as an appointed Bishop of the Holy See. Since the Vatican-China Agreement, Pope Francis has proudly announced that for the first time the Pope is the head of 'all bishops' in China. Does "ALL bishops" exclude the approximately 30 bishops consecrated by the Pope? Why, then, does the Holy See not insist on the freedom of its own legitimate bishop jailed for no internationally acceptable crime? Vatican released the excommunication of 8 Patriotic Bishops, could Vatican not exchange at that time the physical release of 2 Vatican appointed bishops? Could this not be a condition of the renewal of this Agreement?

**Post Vatican-China Agreement and Its Renewal** According to Vatican, The purpose of the Agreement was to offer a more normal life in the church in China with ALL bishops under Pope Francis. The above three well planned major attacks on the underground Church happened around the time of the renewal of this Agreement. These are only three of the many attacks throughout China. These are not the actions of some over-zealous local officials as all approved religions are now strictly control by United Front Work Department, an agency of the Military. Patriotic Bishops are totally submissive to this atheist government. Underground Bishops and clergy have no freedom and frequently are arrested or subjected to re-education. Many are under house arrest. Numerous churches and prayer rooms have been closed or destroyed. Holy Crosses are always in danger of being removed. In direct contradiction to Vatican's Youth Ministry, China makes it illegal for children under age 18 to be baptized, to attend

Mass or be given religious instruction even at home. A hot line has been set up in many areas for reporting such violations. Vatican has raised no objection to China intentionally bringing up a generation of atheists.

**Cardinal Zen** Cardinal Zen, 86, retired Cardinal of Hongkong, is a vocal critic of this secretive Vatican-China Provisional Agreement. Wearing a mask in this pandemic crisis, he took a 13-hour trip to Rome in late October. He requested to meet with the Pope, to present his case against the renewal of this Agreement and also to advise Vatican not to appoint a “China-approved” new bishop for Hongkong. As one of the two Chinese Cardinals in the universal Church, he said that he has the right to have a copy of this secretive provisional Agreement which affects 6 millions Catholics. It is also his responsibility to advise the Pope on the best candidate for the bishop of Hongkong. Sadly, Pope Francis refused to see him. After waiting for three days in the hotel in Rome, Cardinal Zen left with a deep sorrow and disappointment. Upon returning to Hongkong, Cardinal Zen told reporters that he was not going to fight with the Pope. He put all the blame on the Secretary of State, Cardinal Parolin, for misinforming Pope Francis and lying that Pope Emeritus Benedict had seen and approved this Agreement.

**Support the Underground Bishops** Unlike their counterparts in the universal church, underground bishops have no annual bishop appeals or financial collection. They rely on their faithful to voluntarily offer financial help, and most dioceses are in very poor areas. During recent years, underground bishops have been subjected to frequent arrests or house arrests. Government also put heavy punishment for any assistant offered to an illegal bishop. Thus the bishops are having financial difficulties in carrying out their ministries. The confiscation of their properties is expensive to replace. On the Foundation’s online donation page, we have added a special item to “**Support the underground Bishops**”. In sending your Bishop annual Appeal, please remember also the underground bishops.

**Spiritually Adopt a Diocese** If you are a Pastor or a member of a parish group, please consider *spiritually* adopting a Chinese Diocese. In your meeting/functions or after a Mass, offer a prayer for your adopted diocese. You can also leave prayer cards for China in the church or in the 24-hour adoration chapel. We will be happy to work with you to bring awareness to the religious persecution in China. Praying for the persecuted will also bless the countries in the ‘Free World’.

**Saint Joseph** Pope Francis has designated 2021 the **Year of St. Joseph**. In 1924, at the first Chinese Bishops Conference, St. Joseph was proclaimed the Patron of China. Therefore, Chinese are very devoted to St. Joseph, praying to him in family prayers and churches. As St. Joseph has protected the Holy Family against persecution and suffering, we place the persecuted Roman Catholic Church in China with our Patron. Please pray that China will be blessed with fidelity to keep the fullness of faith and continue to preach Christ’s gospel. The Chinese government has started to review and rewrite the gospel to ensure that it serve the government’s agenda. Please add ‘*Bless the Catholics in China*’ at the end of your prayers to St. Joseph.

***We are grateful to our donors who continued to help China during their own Covid-19 struggles. For those who are blessed with financial ability, I plead with you to continue and to increase your donations. The underground church cannot rely on its government or the church for help. They rely on you to assist the needy seminarians, nuns, clergy and the orphans. Please pray for the 60 baptized orphans now in the hands of the atheist government.***

**During Christmas week, 3 special Masses will be offered for our donors & families. The Board of Directors joins me in wishing you God’s special peace and blessings.**

Agnes Kung, Director of Programs