



# THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



## The Cardinal Kung Foundation

Press Release – October 13, 1998

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### Arrest of Underground Catholic Priests and Laity in Hebei China



*Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A.* - The Cardinal Kung Foundation, an advocate of the underground Roman Catholic Church in China, reports the following arrests on August 15, 1998, the Feast of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary which is one of the most important feast days in the Catholic Church calendar:

1) Father WEI Jingkun, an underground Roman Catholic priest of the Diocese of Baoding in Hebei Province, was arrested while he was celebrating the Holy Mass in his home at Nansongcun village. He is now at the detention center of Qingyuan County. Arrested with Father WEI were six other underground Roman Catholics who were either detained or fined. Nansongcun is four kilometers south of Dong LU. No further details.

2) Another underground Roman Catholic priest (name withheld for security reasons) escaped when the Chinese security personnel came to a pear orchard in Dong Lu village in time to stop a Holy Mass that was just about to begin for about a thousand families. However, several organizers were arrested. Details unknown. Dong Lu village was the home of a Marian Shrine. In 1996, the Chinese government destroyed this Shrine by mobilizing about 5000 solidiers.

3) At about 4 o'clock in the morning on their way to attend another underground Mass at Quankun Village in Hebei Province, about 100 Roman Catholics were intercepted by the Chinese government security bureau and were ordered to turn back. Eleven of them, most are women, were arrested and detained for 15 days. Each person was fined for JMP 800 - 1000 (US\$ 100 - 125) which is equivalent to 3-4 months income for peasant villagers. Among those arrested were CAI Jingxia, Zhang Yuying, SU Yuzhuo, ZHAO Huizhen, and ZHANG Yajuan. No other names are available. Quankun village is four kilometers southwest of Dong Lu.

4) Sister ZHANG Yanzhi, an underground Catholic nun, was arrested and detained for 15 days for teaching catechism to children. XIE Suqian, the lady who opened her home for catechism class was arrested and is still in the detention center of Qingyuan County. Those children who received catechism instruction were punished by having to stand every day while attending their classes at school. We are not sure if this punishment is still ongoing.

Joseph Kung, the President of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, commented: "The Chinese government deems those who refuse to register with the Patriotic Association and those orthodox religious activities without prior approval from the government as illegal, unauthorized, subversive and punishable by exorbitant fines, detention, house arrests, jail or labor camp. For China to have any credibility of the signing of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, one of the requirements should be that the aforementioned Chinese policy must end."