



THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



The Cardinal Kung Foundation

Press Release – July 26, 2002

Contact: Joseph Kung

PO Box 8086, Stamford, CT 06905, U.S.A

Tel: 203-329-9712 Fax: 203-329-8415 E-Mail: jmkung@aol.com

3 Underground Catholic Priests Sentenced To Three Years Of Labor Camp Under Cult Law In China



Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A. - Father PANG Yongxing, 30 years of age, was arrested in his home by the Chinese security police eight months ago in December 2001. Father MA Shunbao, 50 years of age, was arrested on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2002, while he was offering Holy Mass. Father WANG Limao, 32 years of age, was arrested on Palm Sunday, March 24, 2002, also while offering Holy Mass. All three priests belong to the underground Roman Catholic Church in Baoding, Hebei. They had all been detained at the detention center of Qingyuan in the past. On July 7, 2002, all three priests were sentenced to three years of labor camp for "disturbing the peace of society" under the "cult" law. They have been transferred to the Balizhuang labor camp in Baoding, Hebei.

Six Roman Catholics from Wenzhou, Zhejiang went to DongLu in Baoding, Hebei for a pilgrimage in May 2002 and were arrested by the authorities. They were fined a total of JMP 30,800 (US \$ 3,850) for "illegal pilgrimage." The fine and the arrest were coordinated by LI Xinwei, who is a religious bureau officer at the security bureau in Qingyuan. The six Roman Catholics were released soon after the fine was paid. However, no receipt was issued for payment of the fine. Moreover, there are approximately a dozen people still being detained in DongLu because they can not afford to pay their fine.

Joseph Kung, the president of the Cardinal Kung Foundation, said: "The Roman Catholic Church is a recognized religion all over the world for 2,000 years with approximately one billion faithful. To sentence these Roman Catholics clergies under the "cult" law and to punish them for this in labor camps is a transparent example that there is no religious freedom in China. It makes a mockery of the 'religious freedom' clause in the Chinese constitution."