

2012 Statistical Update on Religions and Churches in the People's Republic of China and in Taiwan

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Translated by David Streit

Numerically measurable developments in the religions of China found their reflection in religious and secular media and in scientific publications also in the year 2012, both in and outside the People's Republic of China. The following is a presentation of such data as refer to the year 2012 or which were published or made available in 2012. This data is occasionally supplemented by older data.

Due to a number of variables, the figures and estimates of religious affiliation and beliefs of the population in the People's Republic of China can turn out to differ greatly. A look at recent statistics from Taiwan shows that also here it is not easy to ascertain the number of religious adherents, and one can come to very different results depending on the method and criteria of the survey.

People's Republic of China

Buddhism, Daoism and Popular Religion

For this largest sector of religious life in China there are no new statistics for 2012. Older surveys, conducted in 2007, such as the Chinese Spiritual Life Survey (CSLS), provide some orientation. Among other things, it gives the following results:

185 million consider themselves Buddhists, i.e. 18% of the population over 16 years.

17.3 million have taken the triple refuge (in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), i.e. have formalized their adherence to Buddhism through ritual.

12 million of the adult population clearly identify with Daoism.

173 million have exercised some Daoist practices or participated in them, but these are difficult to distinguish from popular religion.¹

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¹ For the CSLS, from May to July 2007, a sample of 7,021 individuals aged 16 to 75 years was interviewed in 56 selected sites of different size as to their religious self-identification. In July 2010, Yang Fenggang from the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University (West Lafayette, USA) presented the results of the study in Beijing. The CSLS study was referred to several times in the Blue Book of Religion of 2011 and 2012. For CSLS see also Wenzel-Teuber 2012, pp. 30-36.

The number of Daoist temples is declining; only a few were re-opened in 2011. This was observed in the 2012 Blue Book of Religions (henceforth BB) published by the state-run Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. According to the BB, about 2,600 Taoist temples were re-opened in all of Mainland China by the end of 2001 (*sic*), which the report called a small number compared to the more than 9,000 Daoist temples in Taiwan.²

Apart from that, the BB does not contain any other statistical material on Buddhism and Daoism. As in previous years, the current edition has a separate chapter on traditional folk beliefs, which (apart from some exceptions) are not yet formally recognized by the Chinese government as a religion.

Islam

23 million is the number of Muslims in Mainland China according to the official Chinese Islamic Association (CIA).³

Religious Studies Abroad by Muslims from the People's Republic of China

The website of CIA, newly designed in 2012, has an article which gives information on studies abroad from the beginning of the 20th century. For the period following the end of the Cultural Revolution, it gives the following figures:

Table 1: Students Sent for Studies Abroad by the Chinese Islamic Association (1982–2010)⁴

| | Number of students |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Total, of whom to | 387 |
| – Egypt (Al Azhar University) | 318 |
| – Pakistan | 26 |
| – Oman | 5 |
| – Libya | 3 |

Additionally, according to the article, since the 1980s a growing number of Muslim students have been going abroad to study at their own expense or have been sent abroad by universities and research institutions.

Islam in Northwest China's Gansu Province

In the BB, Liu Chengyou offers the following numbers on this subject:

The northwestern Chinese Province of Gansu is the province with the third largest Muslim population in China. The 1.76 million Muslims make up 6.73% of the popula-

2 Chen Wenlong – Li Zhihong 2012, p. 38.

3 See, among others, “Chen Guangyuan dangxuan xin Zhongguo yijie yisilanjiao xiehui huizhang” 陈广元当选新一届中国伊斯兰教协会会长 (Chen Guangyuan Elected Chairman of the Chinese Islamic Association for the New Term), *Xinhua* Sept. 15, 2011.

4 Table compiled according to figures in “Zhongguo musulin xuesheng haiwai liuxue.”



One of several new mosques on the banks of the Yellow River in Lanzhou, capital of Gansu Province.
Photo: Christian Klyma 2007.

tion, and 62% of the religious believers of Gansu.⁵ They belong to a multitude of different Islamic schools and groups:

Table 2: Muslims in Gansu⁶

| | Believers | Religious sites | Religious personnel |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Islam as a whole, including: | 1,763,205 | 3,984 | 16,859 |
| [Non-Sufi] Schools | | | |
| 1. Gedimu | 431,791 | 929 | 4,682 |
| 2. Yihewani | 486,191 | 1,123 | 5,135 |
| 3. Salafiyya | 14,295 | 43 | 320 |
| 4. Xidaotang | 7,405 | 13 | 65 |
| <i>menhuan</i> (Sufi Orders) | | | |
| 1. Khufiyya | 435,787 | 918 | 2,667 |
| 2. Qadariyya | 99,004 | 305 | 1,530 |
| 3. Jahriyya | 238,165 | 441 | 1,741 |
| 4. Kubrawiyya | 43,916 | 181 | 343 |

5 See Liu Chengyou 2012, p 246. Liu's report was developed as part of a project of the Central University for Nationalities.

6 Table compiled according to figures in Liu Chengyou 2012, pp. 246-247. – Gedimu 格地目 (Qadim) is the oldest school of Islam in China and has incorporated many elements of Chinese culture, in contrast to the Yihewani 伊赫瓦尼 (Ikhwani) movement, which originated in China at the end of the 19th century. On the Islamic groups in China, see among others Wang Jianping, "Einheit in Vielfalt. Wiederaufleben des Islam im heutigen China" (Unity in Diversity. Resurgence of Islam in Today's China), in: *China heute* 2003, No. 6, pp. 227-234.

The four major Sufi *menhuan* have about 30 sub-groups. According to Liu, most Islamic schools and Sufi *menhuan* have either spread from Gansu or originated there. Sufi groups have a tendency to split up into new groups. The splitting up of Islamic groups and transfers from one group to another are currently a major source of tension between and within the Islamic groups in Gansu.⁷

Christianity

In December 2011, the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (PFRPL, Washington, DC), in its report titled *Global Christianity. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population*, published the results of its attempt to create an overall picture from the different data sources published in recent years (including various surveys such as CASS 2010 and CSLS, figures of the official Chinese church bodies and other church groups, of the Chinese government, etc.). It arrived at a total of 67.07 million Christians in China, or 5% of China's total population. Thus, China is, according to PFRPL, in 7th place worldwide in the number of its Christian population. In detail, the number of Christians in China as estimated by PFRPL is composed as follows:

Table 3: Christians in China [without Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan] according to the estimate of the PFRPL, December 2011⁸

| | Estimated number | Percentage of the population |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Protestant | 58,040,000 | 4.3% |
| – Independent | 35,040,000 | 2.6% |
| – Other[*] | 23,000,000 | 1.7% |
| – Anglican | < 1,000 | < 0.1% |
| Orthodox | 20,000 | < 0.1% |
| Catholic | 9,000,000 | 0.7% |
| Other Christians | < 10,000 | < 0.1% |
| Total number of Christians | 67,070,000 | 5.0% |

[* This includes communities aligned with the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Christian Council.]

Protestantism

20 million Protestant Christians, of whom 70% are in rural areas, and 53,000 Protestant churches and meeting places – according to the official Protestant bodies (Three-Self Patriotic Movement and Chinese Christian Council).⁹

23.05 million Chinese, of whom 67.5% are baptized, consider themselves Protestant Christians (regardless of membership in formal or informal groups) –

7 Liu Chengyou 2012, pp. 249-253.

8 Table taken from PFRPL, 2011, "Appendix C: Methodology for China," p. 97.

9 These figures were found in March 2013 on the website of the official Protestant bodies at www.ccctspm.org/quanguolianghui/lianghuijianjie.html.

according to a 2008/2009 household survey conducted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS 2010). This number has since been repeated in many Chinese publications.¹⁰

There are significantly higher estimates from different sources, one of which is the above PFRPL estimate. Its conclusion of 58.04 million Protestants lies in mid-field.

Theological Seminaries and Studies Abroad

On this topic, the CASS researcher Duan Qi stated the following in her contribution on Protestantism in the BB:

There are 21 theological seminaries across the country, under the aegis of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the Christian Council. Three of them were built in recent years, the most recent – the Theological Seminary of Jilin Province – in 2011.

The 18 “old” seminaries have been or are now in the process of being expanded so that in future they will be able to handle a considerably larger number of students. According to Duan Qi’s estimates, up to now the number of graduates – around 10,000 in the years from the beginning of the opening-up policy until 2010 – is far from being sufficient to meet the needs of the more than 23 million faithful.

In 2011 the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the Christian Council sent 15 people to study in the United States and Hong Kong, two of whom were sent for doctorates. Twenty-six seminary lecturers were sent to Singapore and Hong Kong for shorter training courses. Seven others were sent to England, Hong Kong and Switzerland. According to Duan Qi, these figures are by no means high, but they represent a very big step forward compared to the past. The selection of the right candidate is not easy for the Chinese church, because they have experienced the fact that a considerable percentage of the students does not return after completion of their studies abroad, she wrote.¹¹

Duan Qi feels that the biggest problem of the theological seminaries is the lack of academically qualified theologians and a consequent low level of theological education. For this reason it is nearly impossible to reach the urban intellectual elite, who currently associate themselves more with the self-organized independent churches than with the “system church,”¹² Duan argued. She added that in Beijing there are reportedly many theological seminaries that do not belong to the Three-Self system, including some whose lecturers all have foreign degrees and are capable of meeting the high intellectual demands. Since these informal seminaries are not dependent on approvals from the authorities, they can freely invite foreign theologians to lecture. Duan explained that the theology students of these seminaries tend to come to the seminary bringing with them a higher level of education and they reach the level of a Master’s degree in theology, while the students of the official

10 The results of the CASS study were presented in Malek 2011, pp. 32 and 51-53. For the resulting discussion, see Wenzel-Teuber 2012, pp. 30-32.

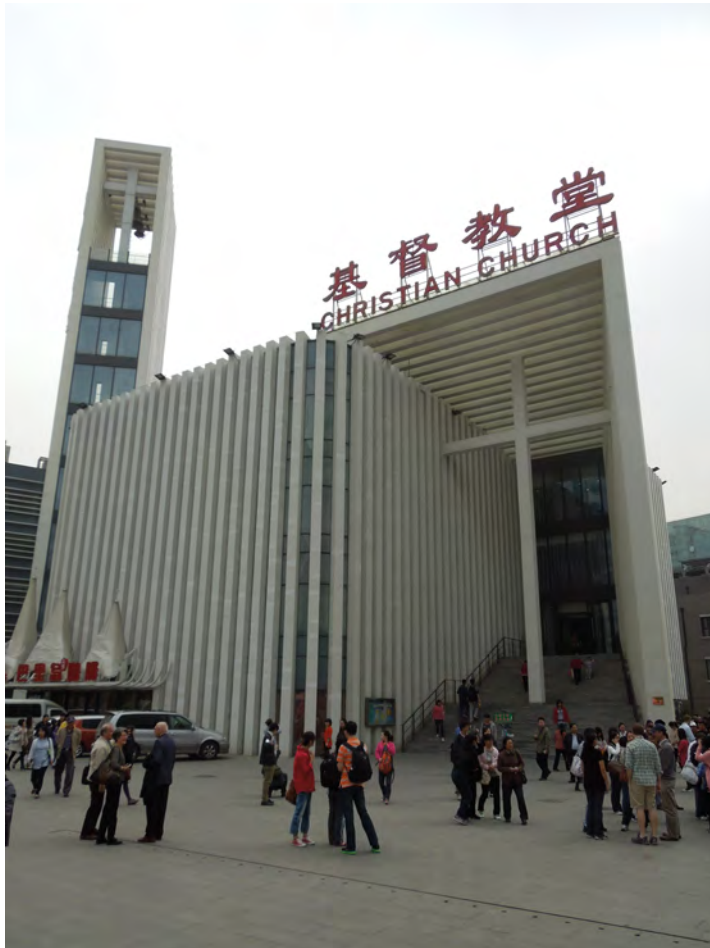
11 Duan Qi 2012, pp. 81-82.

12 “System church” is the literal translation of the Chinese *tizhi jiaohui* 体制教会 which Duan Qi uses here. In a recent essay, the Chinese Protestant theologian Wang Aiming explained *tizhi jiaohui* with the English expression “magisterial churches”; see Wang Aiming, “Magisteriale Kirchen und Freikirchen: Problematik, Krisen und mögliche Lösungswege [Auszug]” (Magisterial Churches and Free Churches: Problems, Crises and Possible Solutions), in: *Duihua* No. 17, April 2013, pp. 1-5.

seminaries often have no university entrance level qualifications and usually reach at most the level of a Bachelor's degree. If no significant change occurs in the level of education, the impact of the Three-Self Church on the intellectual elite will remain limited, Duan Qi concluded.¹³

Urban Congregations and Urbanization – the Example of Beijing

The strong trend toward urbanization is changing the size and composition of congregations in the cities. Duan Qi illustrated this with some figures on the Haidian Church in Beijing. In 2001 its congregation numbered only 850 members. By 2008 it had grown to 6,500–7,000 members, and in 2011 to over 10,000. Of these 10,000, the senior pastor estimates that about 90% are either migrants (“mobile population”) or people who have moved into the area since the 1990s. Due to this influx urban congregations are evidently becoming younger. Thus, for example, of the 129 people baptized in the Haidian Church during the summer of 2010, 70 were migrants, 59 of whom were born after 1970.¹⁴



The Haidian Church in Beijing's university quarter has a modern design and is technically well equipped inside.

Photo: Martin Welling 2012.

Due to the large number of internal migrants from rural areas, the number of churches and pastors in the cities is no longer sufficient, as the example of Beijing shows:

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

Before 1958, the city of Beijing had 64 churches, but after the introduction of the “united worship” that year, their number was reduced to four. Although Beijing has grown rapidly in recent decades, today the city still has only nine Protestant churches, five in the city itself and four on the urban fringe. Because the construction of new churches is difficult (due to the necessary permits, etc.), the congregations are adapting by erecting more meeting places. Thus, for example, in Beijing in 2011, 79 meeting places were affiliated with the Pingtan Church, while more than 50 belonged to the Haidian Church. The problem is that not all of these meeting points can be served by the existing pastors (9 at the Pingtan Church and 15 at the Haidian Church).¹⁵

Generally, according to Duan Qi, in the cities there are new groups of believers, especially “boss Christians” (*laoban jidutu* 老板基督徒), intellectuals and migrant workers. Particularly in the newly formed urban “intellectual” churches, one can also find civil rights defenders (*weiquanren* 维权人), who tend to have a network of connections abroad.¹⁶

Catholic Church

The following figures for the Catholic Church in Mainland China in 2012 are based on information provided by the Holy Spirit Study Centre (HSSC)¹⁷ of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong and of the governing bodies of China’s official Catholic Church (Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and Chinese Catholic Bishops’ Conference, PA-BiCo). Other important sources are the reports of the Shijiazhuang based Catholic newspaper *Xinde* 信德 (*Faith*) (*xdb*), its website www.xinde.org (*xdo*), and the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (FICS), working under the same roof, as well as the Vatican news agency *Fides* (*fi*) and the Catholic news agency *UCAN* (Hong Kong / Bangkok).

- 12 million number of Catholics, according to estimates of the HSSC, including both the official part of the church and the Catholics in the underground.
- 6 million number of Catholics, according to information from the official Catholic governing bodies (PA-BiCo)

Dioceses

- 138 of which 116 are active, and 22 inactive (HSSC)
- 97 according to the official Church (PA-BiCo)

Bishops

- 74 bishops in the official Church (HSSC)
- 40 bishops in the underground (HSSC)

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-94 and 96.

¹⁷ I would like to thank the Holy Spirit Study Centre for making available the figures on the Catholic Church in Mainland China (as of the end of 2012).

Priests

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| 2,150 | in the official Church (HSSC) |
| 1,500 | in the underground (HSSC) |

Seminaries und Seminarians

| | |
|-------|--|
| 10 | major seminaries (for philosophy and theology) with 533 seminarians (HSSC) [on the temporary closure of seminaries, see below] |
| 10–12 | minor seminaries (secondary school level) with 490 seminarians (HSSC) |
| 10 | underground seminaries with 450 seminarians (HSSC) |

Sisters

| | |
|-------|--|
| 3,420 | in the official Church, belonging to about 80 congregations (HSSC) |
| 1,500 | in the underground, belonging to about 80 congregations (HSSC) |

Sisters' Novitiates

| | |
|----|--|
| 40 | in the official Church with 50 sisters in formation (HSSC) |
| 20 | in the underground with 100 sisters in formation (HSSC) |

Diocesan Centers for Social Services

According to a compilation by the FICS, the Catholic Church in Mainland China has 19 centers for social services (as of August 2012). Of these, in addition to the Hebei Jinde Charities Foundation, there are 17 diocesan centers for social services in the dioceses of Beijing, Cangzhou (Heb) [newly founded on July 14, 2012], Chifeng (NM), Chongqing (CQ), Handan (Heb), Hengshui (Heb), Guangxi, Jilin, Kunming (YN), Lanzhou (GS), Liaoning, Linyi (SD), Shanghai, Taiyuan (SX), Tianjin, Wanzhou (CQ), Xi'an (SN) and Zhoucun (SD) as well as the Joseph-Aimin-Center in Xinzhou (SX).¹⁸

In addition to these diocesan centers which usually offer services and programs in various areas, there are also numerous Catholic social institutions such as orphanages, nursing homes, clinics, etc.¹⁹ The underground Church is also involved in charitable activities.

Baptisms

For many years now, the leadership of the official Catholic Church (PA-BiCo) has each year been reporting the same blanket figure of 100,000 baptisms into the Catholic Church annually in Mainland China. In his report on the Catholic Church in the BB, Liu Guopeng

18 According to John B. Zhang, "Walking in Love and Service with China and the Chinese Church," manuscript of a lecture at the conference "Faith-based Social Services in China Today," organized by Caritas Germany and Jinde Charities in cooperation with the China-Zentrum, Freiburg, October 18-19, 2012. The text will appear in a future issue of *RCTC*.

19 See the 2010 work report of the official Catholic bodies (see Wenzel-Teuber 2012, p. 38) and the more detailed but incomplete 2009 list of FICS (see Malek 2010, pp. 22-24).

arrives at a figure of only 30,000 baptisms per year, which seems rather low. As he sees it, the Catholic Church is just barely keeping up with the general population growth.²⁰

Table 4: Number of the Newly Baptized in Mainland China for Easter of 2012 (figures collected by the Faith Institute for Cultural Studies [FICS], published in *xdb* Apr. 19, 2012)

| Province / Municipality | Diocese | Number of baptized |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Anhui | | 137 |
| Beijing | | 500 |
| Chongqing | Chongqing | 300 |
| | Wanzhou | 900 |
| Fujian | Fuzhou | 367 |
| | Minbei | 24 |
| | Mindong | 200 |
| | Xiamen | 130 |
| Gansu | Lanzhou | 100 |
| | Pingliang | 15 |
| | Tianshui | 83 |
| Guangdong | Guangzhou | 260 |
| | Jiangmen | 45 |
| | Meizhou | 160 |
| | Shantou | 757 |
| | Shenzhen | 60 |
| | Zhanjiang | 145 |
| Guangxi | | 514 |
| Guizhou | | 160 |
| Hainan | | 8 |
| Hebei | Baoding | 93 |
| | Cangzhou (incl. Langfang) | 495 |
| | Chengde | 111 |
| | Handan | 1,222 |
| | Hengshui | 308 |
| | Shijiazhuang | 184 |
| | Tangshan | 195 |
| | Xingtai | 1,750 |
| | Zhangjiakou | 52 |
| | Heilongjiang | |
| Henan | Anyang | 565 |
| | Kaifeng | 68 |
| | Nanyang | 180 |
| | Puyang | 124 |
| | Shangqiu | 120 |
| | Xinxiang | 30 |
| | Xinyang | 57 |
| | Zhengzhou | 67 |
| | Zhumadian | 63 |
| | Hubei | Chibi |
| Jingzhou [Shashi] | | 12 |
| Wuhan | | 176 |
| Xiangfan | | 53 |
| Yichang | | 45 |
| Hunan | | 202 |
| Jiangsu | Haimen | 57 |
| | Nanjing | 121 |
| | Suzhou | 54 |
| | Xuzhou | 153 |
| Jiangxi | | 156 |
| Jilin (data from only 2 parishes) | | 75 |
| Liaoning | | 726 |
| Neimeng (Inner Mongolia) | Bameng | 350 |
| | Baotou | 120 |
| | Chifeng | 41 |
| | Hohhot | 182 |
| | Jining | 159 |
| Ningxia | | 87 |
| Qinghai | | 13 |
| Shaanxi | Ankang | 11 |
| | Fengxiang | 157 |
| | Hanzhong | 119 |
| | Sanyuan | 351 |
| | Weinan | 140 |
| | Xi'an | 271 |
| | Yan'an | 404 |
| | Zhouzhi | 295 |
| | Shandong | Heze |
| Jinan | | 400 |
| Liaocheng | | 118 |
| Linyi | | 162 |
| Qingdao | | 84 |
| Weifang | | 49 |
| Yantai | | 9 |
| Yanzhou | | 160 |
| Zhoucun | | 199 |
| Shanghai | | |
| Shanxi | Changzhi | 70 |
| | Datong | 50 |
| | Fenyang | 413 |
| | Linfen | 88 |
| | Puzhong | 131 |
| | Shuozhou | 171 |
| | Taiyuan | 612 |
| | Xinzhou | 97 |
| Yuncheng | 187 | |
| Sichuan | Chengdu | 400 |
| | Leshan | 151 |
| | Nanchong | 783 |
| | Xichang | 66 |
| | Yibin | 134 |
| Tianjin | | 116 |
| Tibet Autonomous Region | | 3 |
| Xinjiang | | 20 |
| Yunnan | Dali | 2 |
| | Kunming | 144 |
| | Zhaotong | 32 |
| Zhejiang | Hangzhou | 133 |
| | Ningbo | 281 |
| | Taizhou | 27 |
| | Wenzhou | 681 |
| Total | | 22,104 |

20 See Liu Guopeng 2012, p 122. Liu Guopeng is a younger CASS researcher who holds a PhD from the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. In 2012 he took over from the previous Catholicism specialist of BB, Wang Meixiu, as author of the article on the Catholic Church.



Province abbreviations:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| AH Anhui | JS Jiangsu |
| CQ Chongqing | JX Jiangxi |
| FJ Fujian | LN Liaoning |
| GD Guangdong | NM Inner Mongolia |
| GS Gansu | NX Ningxia |
| GX Guangxi | QH Qinghai |
| GZ Guizhou | SC Sichuan |
| HB Hubei | SD Shandong |
| Heb Hebei | SN Shaanxi |
| Hen Henan | SX Shanxi |
| HL Heilongjiang | XJ Xinjiang |
| HN Hunan | YN Yunnan |
| JL Jilin | ZJ Zhejiang |

In 2012, for the fifth year in a row, the FICS published statistics on baptisms at Easter, the most important date for baptisms (see Table 4 on previous page). According to this data, on the occasion of Easter of 2012, a total of 22,104 persons were baptized into the Catholic communities of Mainland China (as compared to 21,287 the previous year). 75% of those baptized were adults, that is, first generation Christians. For some dioceses, FICS registered a clear increase in the number of baptisms, for example, for the Province of Hebei and for the Diocese of Wanzhou. FICS polled 101 dioceses via e-mail and fax and confirmed the results via telephone. According to its report, the figures are still not complete (*xdo* Apr. 19). Moreover, it is most likely that those baptized in underground communities are at most partially included in the FICS statistics.

In many communities baptism is also administered at other times besides Easter. Here are only three examples:

Diocese of Beijing, Evangelization Center of the Xishiku-Church (North Church): Following completion of their three-month catechumenate preparation, during 2012 three groups of catechumens were baptized on three different occasions, with 148, 161 and 130 in each group respectively. The center places great importance on having the newly baptized continue their ongoing formation in special groups (*xdb* Dec. 20).

Diocese of Tianjin, Xikai Cathedral: On December 15, 2012, 206 persons were baptized upon completion of their three-month catechumenate instruction period. Their average age was 35, and 70% had at least a technical college (*dazhuan*) diploma (*xdo* Dec. 18).

Diocese of Nanjing, Jiangyin parish: From January until August of 2012 the parish had 400 catechumens, of whom 294 eventually presented themselves for baptism at the end of the course. Parish members publicize the catechumenate course and baptismal preparation through the distribution of material and by means of home visits or telephone contacts with interested inquirers (*xdb* Sept. 20).

Bishops Who Died During 2012

1. Chen Shizhong 陈适中, John (1917–2012), Yibin (SC)
2. Guo Chuanzhen 郭传真 OFM, Samuel (1918–2012), Jinan (SD)
3. Li Yi 李毅 OFM, Hermenegild (1923–2012), Changzhi (Lu'an) (SX)

Consecration of Bishops During 2012

1. Chen Gong'ao 陈功鳌, Joseph (born 1964), Nanchong (SC), April 19, 2012
2. Qu Ailin 屈蔼林, Methodius (born 1961), Hunan / Changsha (HN), April 25, 2012
3. Yue Fusheng 岳福生, Joseph (born 1964), Heilongjiang (HL), July 6, 2012*
4. Ma Daqin 马达钦, Thaddeus (born 1968?), Shanghai, July 7, 2012

* Consecrated without the mandate of the Holy See, which declared his automatic excommunication.

Ordinations to the Priesthood

According to information provided by FICS, 78 deacons were ordained to the priesthood in Mainland China during 2012. There were probably additional ordinations in the underground Church which are not included in these statistics. Contrary to the general trend of declining numbers of priestly ordinations, this year almost twice the number of priests were ordained as in the previous year. A few ordinations (for example, in Shanghai) should actually have taken place in 2011. – In his article on the Catholic Church for the BB, Liu Guopeng gives the figure of 44 priestly ordinations for the previous year of 2011.²¹

Table 5: Priesthood Ordinations in Mainland China 2012, FICS²²

| Diocese | Number ordained | Ordination date |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Baotou (NM) | 2 | Oct. 18 |
| Beijing | 1 | Dec. 8 |
| Cangzhou (Heb) | 7 | May 3 |
| Dali (YN) | 3 | March 26 |
| Fenyang (SX) | 1 | August 18 |
| Hainan | 1 | May 17 |
| Hanzhong (SN) | 1 | 2012 |
| Hengshui (Heb) | 5 | April 25 |
| Hohhot (NM) | 1 | Sept. 21 |
| Changsha (HN) | 3[*] | Oct. 28 |
| Jiangxi | 3 | June 24 |
| Kunming (YN) | 2 | March 26 |
| Leshan (SC) | 4 | June 29 |
| Meizhou GD) | 2 | June 7 |
| Minbei (FJ) | 1 | July 3 |
| Nanchong (SC) | 2 | Oct. 9 |

21 Liu Guopeng 2012, p. 119.

22 My thanks to the FICS for making the above data available.

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Nanjing (JS) | 2 | May 1 |
| Ningxia | 1 | March 18 |
| Pingliang | 1 | 2012 |
| Sanyuan (SN) | 1 | Oct. 6 |
| Shanghai | 8 | March 17 and Dec. 3 |
| Shaozhou (GD) | 1 | May 24 |
| Shashi (HB) | 1 | May 24 |
| Suzhou (JS) | 2 | Sept. 15 |
| Tangshan (Heb) | 3 | June 3 |
| Tianjin | 1 | Nov. 30 |
| Wenzhou (ZJ) | 4 | March 17 |
| Wuhan (HB) | 1 | May 3 |
| Xi'an (SN) | 1 | June 29 |
| Xichang (SC) | 1 | August 4 |
| Xingtai (Heb) | 3 | July 3 |
| Xinxiang (Hen) | 3 | Sept. 18 |
| Xuzhou (JS) | 1 | Oct. 18 |
| Yibin (SC) | 1 | Nov. 30 |
| Yuncheng (SX) | 2 | Dec. 8 |
| Zhaotong (YN) | 1 | March 26 |
| Total | 78 | |

[* of whom 2 for Xiangtan and 1 for Yueyang]

Religious Sisters' Profession of Vows

For 2012, it has been calculated that 49 sisters from various congregations professed their perpetual vows as religious. The actual figure is probably higher. Again, there is no information about the profession of vows of sisters who belong to non-registered congregations in the underground Church.

Two sisters profess their perpetual vows on September 29, 2012, in the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Wanzhou.
Photo: *xdo*.



Number of Theology Students in Major Seminaries in China and Abroad

At the beginning of the new 2012/2013 academic year, 486 candidates for the priesthood were studying in nine of the ten major seminaries of the official Church in Mainland China.

The tenth seminary – the Sheshan Regional Seminary in Shanghai – was forced to close until further notice following the contested consecration of Ma Daqin as Auxiliary Bishop

of Shanghai on July 7, 2012. In addition, at the beginning of 2013, after conflicts between the seminary board of directors and the religious affairs authorities, the Montecorvino Seminary in Taiyuan (SX) was abruptly closed for a two-year evaluation period (the top, graduating class will be allowed to continue until finishing in June of 2013), with the result that for the time being only eight major seminaries are de facto working, i.e. offering courses. It should be understood, however, that the closing of Catholic major seminaries is also partly due to the shrinking numbers of seminarians. Out of the original 12 major seminaries of the official Church, the seminary for Inner Mongolia in Hohhot had already stopped admitting new seminarians in 2006, and the major seminary for the Province of Shandong in Jinan stopped admitting new candidates for the priesthood in 2009. The seminary in Jinan is currently being used as a base for ongoing formation courses for the laity.

Table 6: 2012 Graduates and New Students at Official Catholic Major Seminaries²³

| Seminary | Graduates 2012 | New students 2012 |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Beijing (National) | 11 | 13 |
| Beijing (Diocesan) | none | 2 |
| Pixian (Sichuan) | none | 2 |
| Jilin | 5 | 12 |
| Shenyang | none | 13 |
| Shijiazhuang | 20 | 26 |
| Taiyuan | 16 | none |
| Wuhan | none | none |
| Xi'an | 11 | 12 |
| Total | 63 | 80 |

At the beginning of the 2012/2013 academic year, 213 sisters were taking theology courses offered specifically for them at major seminaries. 102 of these sisters were studying at the Regional Seminary in Xi'an, the others in Taiyuan, Shenyang and Shijiazhuang.²⁴

As of the end of 2012, more than 100 priests and religious from Mainland China were studying at the Faculty of Theology located on the campus of Fu-Jen Catholic University in Taiwan. For three years now, the Faculty has been accepting students from the Mainland (UCAN Dec. 5).

In various European countries, in the USA and in the Philippines, study programs for Chinese Catholic priests, seminarians and sisters began as far back as the year 1993. Between 1994 and 2006, 387 priests, seminarians and sisters were sent by their dioceses or congregations for studies (generally theology) in various European countries: by 2006, 70 of them had already returned to China, while the others at that point had not yet completed their studies abroad. Between 1991 and 2006, 90 Chinese Catholics (36 priests, 40 seminarians, 12 sisters and 2 lay people) went to the USA for higher studies: by 2006 58 of them had already returned home to China after having successfully completed their stud-

²³ Table compiled according to information from *xdo* Sept. 18.

²⁴ The figures are according to *fi* Sept. 19 and *xdo* Sept. 18. For more on the seminary closings and their underlying causes, see *RCTC* 2012, No. 4, pp. 6-7 and 16-17; *UCAN* Jan. 11 and 25, 2013.

ies.²⁵ No new figures were published for the years after 2006, but it can be presumed that a good many new Chinese theology students from Mainland China's Catholic Church have gone abroad to begin higher studies since that time.

New Churches

In his article for the BB on the Catholic Church, Liu Guopeng concludes that the 6,300 churches which are already in existence across Mainland China are generally sufficient to offer Catholics the possibility of an orderly and structured life of faith. With roughly one church a day having been completed in the period from the end of the Cultural Revolution until the year 2000, it seems to Liu that the tempo of church construction has now slowed down somewhat. However, according to him, with many new churches the square footage and the pretension are considerably larger than before. Liu also observes that besides buildings based on the gothic or traditional Chinese style, one can now even find bold new buildings in a modern style. In these new churches, as he sees it, the religious language is being translated into architectural language in a new way, while still keeping the atmosphere and attraction that are unique to Catholic churches.²⁶

On its website, *Xinde* refers to 37 churches of different sizes and architectural styles that were either newly built or were renovated in various parts of China during 2012. They will be presented in the appendix of this statistical update and will give at the same time a small glimpse into the situation of the parishes.

Catholic Church in Hong Kong

As in previous years, 3,400-3,500 persons were baptized in the diocese at Easter of 2012 (*fi* May 15; *HKSE* Apr. 7). – The number of Catholics in Hong Kong has been steadily increasing over the last ten years. As of August 31, 2011, the diocese estimated the number of Catholics resident in Hong Kong at 363,000. A further 138,000 Catholics were living temporarily in Hong Kong (for further data, see statistics in: *RCTC* 2012, No. 3, pp. 50-51).

In 2012 the diocese was able to look back over 15 years' experience since the introduction of the permanent diaconate. Since that time, 18 permanent deacons were ordained, the most recent three ones on July 14, 2012. All of them, except one, are married men (*fi* July 20; *HKSE* July 7).

In the 2011/2012 academic year, 50 students graduated from the Diocese of Hong Kong's Holy Spirit Seminary: 18 in Theology, 13 in Philosophy und 19 in Religious Studies. Ten of the 50 graduates were seminarians of the Diocese of Hong Kong or belonged to various religious congregations active in Hong Kong (*fi* Dec. 7).

25 Jean Charbonnier MEP, "Welcoming Chinese Theology Students in Europe. The Experience of the Past 12 Years, Prospects for the Future," in: *European Ecumenical China Communication* No. 6, Sankt Augustin 2008, pp. 398-409, here p. 397; Larry Lewis MM, "Chinese Seminary Teachers & Formators Project Summer 1991 – September 2006," in: *ibid*, pp. 427-432, here p. 431.

26 Liu Guopeng 2012, pp. 108-110.

Chinese Catholic Communities Abroad

In the Chinese Catholic community of New York City, a total of 154 persons were baptized at Easter 2012, of whom 120 were adults. At Christmas of 2011, 175 were baptized, including 95 adults. Chinese Catholics in New York gather in three different churches for their liturgies (*fi* Apr. 12).

Religions in Taiwan

On July 14, 2012, Taiwan's Ministry of the Interior released a statistical report on "The situation of the temples and churches of the religions at the end of 2011."²⁷

Table 7: Number of Registered Temples and Churches in Taiwan at the End of 2011²⁸

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Temples | 11,968 |
| Daoism (<i>daojiao</i> 道教) | 9,361 |
| Buddhism (<i>fojiao</i> 佛教) | 2,354 |
| Lijiao 理教 | 6 |
| Xuanyuanjiao 軒轅教 | 8 |
| Tiandijiao 天帝教 | 1 |
| Yiguandao 一貫道 | 213 |
| Tiandejiao 天德教 | 5 |
| Confucianism (<i>rujiao</i> 儒教) | 15 |
| Taiyijiao 太易教 | - |
| Haizijiao 亥子教 | - |
| Mile dadao 彌勒大道 | 2 |
| Zhonghua shengjiao 中華聖教 | - |
| Yuzhou Milehuang jiao 宇宙彌勒皇教 | - |
| Xian tian jiu jiao 先天救教 | - |
| Huangzhong 黃中 | 1 |
| Xuanmen zhenjiao 玄門真宗 | - |
| Tiandao 天道 | - |
| Others | 2 |
| Churches | 3,342 |
| Catholicism (<i>tianzhujiao</i> 天主教) | 737 |
| Protestantism (<i>jidujiao</i> 基督教) | 2,556 |
| Islam (<i>huijiao</i> 回教) | 5 |
| Tenrikyo (<i>tianlijiao</i> 天理教) | 20 |
| Bahai'i (<i>bahayijiao</i> 巴哈伊教) | 2 |
| Mahikari (<i>zhenguang tuanti</i> 真光教團) | 1 |
| Scientology (<i>shandaji zongjiao</i> 山達基宗教) | 1 |
| Unification Church ("Moonies") (<i>tongyijiao</i> 統一教) | 1 |
| Mormons (<i>momenjiao</i> 摩門教) | 2 |
| Others | 17 |
| Total | 15,310 |

Source: Civil Affairs Bureaus / Offices of municipalities, counties and cities.

27 Neizhengbu tongjichu 2012. See also *Central News Agency* July 14.

28 Adapted from Neizhengbu tongjichu 2012, Table 5.

The data in the report of the Ministry of the Interior as shown in Table 7 on the previous page include the numerical development of the officially registered religious sites and their adherents between 2007 and 2011.

At the end of 2011, 27 distinct religions were registered with the Department of Religious Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior, which registers religions in two separate categories as either “temples” (*simiao* 寺廟) or “churches” (*jiaohui[tang]* 教會[堂]). The above table shows the places of worship of 26 of the religions registered with the government. Not listed here, but in 27th place on the ministry’s list of registered religions is Tibetan Buddhism (*Zangchuan fojiao* 藏傳佛教).²⁹

For the Ministry of the Interior statistics presented here, only temples and churches registered with the authorities by the end of 2011 were taken into consideration. The number of adherents for each is based on the self-reporting of each individual place of worship.³⁰

Table 8: Number of Adherents at Taiwan’s Registered Temples and Churches 2007–2011³¹

| | End 2008 | End 2009 | End 2010 | End 2011 | % Growth 2010–2011 |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Daoist Temples | 783,100 | 792,700 | 802,300 | 816,900 | 1.82% |
| Buddhist Temples | 165,400 | 168,300 | 166,500 | 167,100 | 0.35% |
| Other Temples | 19,100 | 19,600 | 20,400 | 21,500 | 5.53% |
| Catholic Churches | 171,600 | 177,000 | 176,200 | 174,900 | -0.74% |
| Protestant Churches | 389,900 | 385,400 | 389,400 | 401,000 | 2.98% |
| Other Churches | 11,600 | 11,900 | 14,000 | 15,900 | 13.95% |
| Total Temples and Churches | 1,540,700 | 1,554,900 | 1,568,800 | 1,597,300 | 1.82% |
| Believers to 10,000 Inhabitants | 668.80 | 672.53 | 677.32 | 687.76 | |

Source: Civil Affairs Bureaus / Offices of municipalities, counties and cities.

At the end of 2011, based on their own information, all registered places of worship together numbered nearly 1.6 million (1,597,3 million) believers. Among them were 816,900 (51.14%) Daoists, 401,000 (25.15%) Protestants, 174,900 (10.94%) Catholics, and only 167,100 (10.46%) Buddhists.

29 www.moi.gov.tw/dca/02faith_0be1.aspx. – At the same site it is noted that Protestantism is divided into so many churches and groups that only the 24 best known would be presented. It is unclear exactly which Protestant denominations are registered. According to United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (ed.), “International Religious Freedom Report for 2011,” section on Taiwan, the Presbyterians, the “True Jesus Church,” the Baptists, Lutherans, Adventists and Episcopalians are not registered, but on the other hand they are presented on the website of the Ministry of the Interior. – Not named on the Ministry’s website is the cult of the goddess Mazu (which is very popular in Taiwan; some classify it as belonging to Daoism). – In the *Taiwan Yearbook 2006*, one finds mention of 226 registered groups of Tibetan Buddhism with a combined total membership of more than 600,000 adherents.

30 The Civil Affairs Bureaus / Offices of municipalities, counties and cities urged all registered temples and churches within their jurisdiction, to report the number of their members. These data have been included in the statistics. (Information obtained by telephone from Ms. Jiang Xinrong of the Ministry of the Interior, Department of Civil Affairs, on Feb. 21, 2013).

31 Adapted from Neizhengbu tongjichu 2012, Table 3.

By the end of 2011, the total number of believers of all registered places of worship accounted for only 6.87% of the total population of Taiwan. The statistics of the Ministry of Interior, however, show an increase from year to year in the proportion of believers in the total population; in 2010–2011 the increase was 1.82%.

Among the registered places of worship, there were at the end of 2011 more Protestant Churches (2,556) than Buddhist temples (2,354) and four times as many Daoist temples (9,361) as Buddhist temples.

It should also be noted that the number of Catholics determined by the Ministry of the Interior (177,000 at the end of 2009) differs considerably from the figures of the Taiwanese bishops (299,938 in 2009).³²

How can these startling figures be explained, particularly the small number of believers as a whole, the relatively low percentage of Buddhists and the high percentage of Christians?

The registration of religious organizations in Taiwan is voluntary. Religious organizations may register with the central state authorities through their national associations, and individual religious sites may register with the local authorities. Many, however, refrain from registering. The only consequence of non-registration, according to a report by the U.S. State Department, is the forfeiture of tax advantages [unlike Mainland China, where religious activities in non-registered sites are illegal].³³

Thus, the statistics presented by Taiwan's Ministry of the Interior only reflect the situation of registration, not the real religious landscape of the country. This can be seen if we compare them with another census of the Ministry of the Interior from the year 2005: according to this survey, in Taiwan Buddhism is the largest religion with at that time 8,086 million believers (including followers of Tibetan Buddhism), followed by 7.6 million Daoists, 810,000 adherents of Yiguandao (Unity Teaching), 605,000 Protestants (including Moonies), 298,000 Catholics and 298,000 supporters of Tiandijiao (Teaching of the Emperor of Heaven).³⁴ The juxtaposition of these two sets of statistics makes it clear that religious life in Taiwan is obviously highly unregistered. It makes sense that the Christian churches, which traditionally have a high degree of organization and through baptism have a fixed membership, have comparatively many registered sites and adherents belonging to those sites. But why so many more Daoist temples are registered than Buddhist temples, remains an open question, perhaps a matter of definition.

32 Compare "Taiwan Catholic Church Statistics in 2009," pp. 69-70; this data is also reported in Wenzel-Teuber 2012, pp. 51-52.

33 Presentation in this section is taken from the section on Taiwan of the United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, "International Religious Freedom Report for 2011," published on July 30, 2012 (www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/).

34 This survey of the Ministry of the Interior is quoted in Government Information Office (ed.), *Taiwan Yearbook 2006*. The segment on religion can be found at <http://web.archive.org/web/20070708213510/http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/yearbook/22Religion.htm>.

Appendix: New Catholic Churches in Mainland China 2012

The churches consecrated in 2012, which are presented here, vary considerably in size and complexity. Often, meeting rooms, living quarters for the priests or sisters as well as offices are built into the church. In the reports, which are taken from the website of *Xinde*, the costs are often indicated, costs which in many cases are raised by the congregations themselves. They range in value from 15 million down to 110,000 Yuan (about 1.9 million down to 13,800 Euros), whereby on average in the coastal Province of Wenzhou, where there are also wealthy businessmen among the Catholics, church buildings tend to be larger and cost more than those in places like rural Shaanxi.

New construction becomes necessary, as the reports indicate, when previous older buildings have to give way before the demands of modern city planning, when they become too small for growing congregations or when they begin to fall apart and are too expensive to repair. Time and again, church buildings are demolished that are over a hundred years old, often damaged by the Cultural Revolution and misappropriation. But even churches built in the first years following the Cultural Revolution, but with shoddy construction material, are already falling to pieces and ready for demolition. Finally, new churches are being built in places where previously there were no Catholics. Despite growing urbanization, most of the new churches described below are still to be found in rural communities.

Bameng (Bayanur League, NM), Urad Rear Banner: Inauguration of the renovated and expanded Church of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (*xdo* Dec. 10).

Interior of the newly renovated Catholic church in Urad Rear Banner, Inner Mongolia.
Photo: *xdo*.



Cangzhou (Heb), Botou, Shiqiao, Ludaocun: Dedication of a new church. The Catholic community in the village, which today has more than 100 faithful, only came into existence in recent years (*xdo* Apr. 18).

Cangzhou (Heb), Suning Parish, Gezhuang: Inauguration of the new Sacred Heart Church. The 32 meter long, twin-towered church cost 1.4 million Yuan. The 380 member congregation donated 1.12 million Yuan, the rest of the money came from the diocese and other benefactors, including non-Catholics (*xdo* Jan. 7).

Guangxi: In 2012, 17 chapels or meeting points were newly built in the province, whose dioceses were officially merged into one. In the same period the Catholic Church gained an additional 1,681 new believers in Guangxi. – The media usually do not report on the establishment of such simple places of worship. The figures presented were found on the

website of the local church in its annual report of the bishop (catholicgx.org June 01, 2013).

Hainan, Haikou: Dedication of the new Sacred Heart Church. On the same occasion, a new priest was ordained, the first to be ordained on the island of Hainan Province in 60 years. The Diocese of Hainan now has two priests, who look after the needs of the 5,000 Catholics in eight churches (*UCAN* May 22).

Handan (Heb), Guangping Parish: Dedication of two new churches in the sub-parishes of Fengying and Xidingzhuang (*xdo* Feb. 1, 4).

Handan (Heb), Handan County, Nanlöguxiang, Shaozhuang: Opening of a new church. The 110,000 Yuan in funding for the simple building came from the collected donations of the village's Christians (*xdo* Apr. 28).

Handan (Heb), Yongnian Parish, Shizhuang: Dedication of the newly rebuilt Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The predecessor of the new church, built in 1989, was in shabby condition (*xdo* Dec. 9).

Jinan (SD), Manzhuang, Wangzhuang: Dedication of the new Sacred Heart Church. Wangzhuang is a well known Catholic village, which has been home to a Christian community for 300 years. The previous church, which was more than 100 years old, had been in serious need of repair (*xdo* Aug. 20).

Lanzhou (GS), Wuwei: Dedication of two new churches in Siba Jiudun and Yangou (*xdo* Oct. 10 and 18).

For the inauguration on October 7, 2012, St. Michael's Church in Yangou is decorated with colorful pennants.
Photo: *xdo*.



Liaoning, Chaoyang City: Dedication of the Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The old church from 1891 had to be torn down due to the demands of city planning. The new 2,700 m² church, with twin 57 meter high towers, was built in gothic style and cost 15 million Yuan. Three annex buildings contain separate living quarters for priests and sisters, common rooms for parish activities, offices as well as some rooms which the parish community will rent out as part of their self-reliance program. Chaoyang Parish has more than 2,000 faithful (*xdo* May 24).

Linfen (Hongdong, SX), Zhaocheng Parish, Nanyidian Sub-parish: Dedication of the new church under the patronage of Mary Help of Christians on May 24. The assembled parish

community prayed for the Church in China and recited together the prayer to Our Lady of Sheshan, composed by Pope Benedict XVI. In the 1970s a lone Catholic woman from Henan came to the village and began spreading the faith. Today, there are 70 Catholics in Nanyidian and 140 in the neighboring village of Shizhuang. The two villages joined together in their efforts to build the new church. A building next to the church contains an apartment for the priest and a parish hall for the faithful. The total cost came to 500,000 Yuan (*xdo* June 10).

Nanjing (JS), Taizhou: New church dedicated to the Glorious Cross (*xdo* Nov. 13).

Ningxia, Pingluo: Dedication of a newly rebuilt church, which had been forced to relocate by the widening of the streets. The authorities made more than two million Yuan available to the community for the necessary rebuilding. – Two Belgian Scheut fathers had brought the Christian faith to Pingluo in 1880. Both were martyred in 1900 (*xdo* Oct. 30).

Shanghai, Jiading District, Anting Town: Dedication of the new church of the Nativity of Mary. The foundation stone was laid in 2003. With the help of contributions by the faithful and with the support of the diocese, the church has finally been completed (*catholicsh.org* Sept. 11).

Shijiazhuang (Heb), Benduzhuang: Launching of a new church. Benduzhuang (“Benedict’s Village”) is an entirely Catholic village with 1,000 inhabitants. It came into existence in 1949 when Benedictine missionaries worked to reclaim land, which they then leased out to people who had been driven from their home villages by starvation (*xdo* July 12).

Taiyuan (SX), Changgou Parish, Shuigou Sub-parish: Dedication of a new church. The 300 year old village has 250 Catholics. The old village church, dating from 1895, had to be torn down due to its advanced state of disrepair (*xdo* May 6).

Taiyuan (SX), Heshangju Parish, Jijiagang Sub-parish: Dedication of a new twin-towered church in gothic style. 220 of the 420 inhabitants of the village are Catholic (*xdo* June 26).

Taiyuan (SX), Shagou Parish, Wujiashuang: Blessing of the new church dedicated to St. Paul. Its architecture is influenced by that of the Shanghai Cathedral Xujiahui. The two towers are 28.5 meters high. The village of Wujiashuang has 3,000 inhabitants, of whom there are more than 50 (*sic!*) Catholics, coming from a line of Catholics stretching back at least five generations (*xdo* Oct. 23).

Tianjin, Wanghailou Church: Reopening of the historic church after restoration by the government. In 2006, after a church-commissioned inspection of the building’s structural integrity, the church had to be closed because of the extensive damage (cracks, etc.) that was observed. The parish community built a temporary structure for Mass in the church

courtyard. It took a number of years before the application for renovation could make its way through the channels of the governmental historic monuments protection authorities, but the restoration finally got underway in November of 2011. The Religious Affairs Bureau of Tianjin obtained funding for the restoration from the city government. Daily Masses were resumed in the church on December 10, 2012.



The Wanghailou Church in Tianjin.
Photo: *xdo*.

The first Wanghailou Church was built in 1773. In 1861, it became part of the French Concession. In 1869 it was renamed Our Lady of Victory. In the Tianjin Church Incident of 1870 it burned to the ground and was rebuilt on the same site in 1897, but was destroyed once again in the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. It was rebuilt for the third time in 1904, this time together with a house for the bishop as well as a school for boys and one for girls. In 1914 the bishop's see was transferred to the Xikai Cathedral. During the Cultural Revolution and the Tangshan earthquake of 1976, the Wanghailou Church was severely damaged. In 1985 the dilapidated building was returned to the Catholic Church, and after renovation it was reopened once again in 1986. The Wanghailou Church is classified as a cultural monument on the national level (*xdo* Dec. 18; Charbonnier 2008, pp. 62-63).



Wanzhou (CQ), Dazhou City, Daxian County, Shiqiao Town: Dedication of a new church. The Catholic community in Shiqiao has a history going back about 100 years. There are 1,000 Catholics in the community. The original church was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and for various reasons it was not possible to rebuild it until now (*xdo* July 4).

Wanzhou (CQ), Fenshui Town: Dedication of a new church (*xdo* Dec. 7).

Crowds at the church of Fenshui for the dedication on December 6, 2012. Photo: *xdo*.

Wanzhou (CQ), Houshan Town: Dedication of a new meeting place, at which the poor Catholic farmers of the neighborhood will be able to attend Holy Mass. The remote locality is totally hemmed in by mountains (*xdo* March 20).

Weinan (SN), Nanzhidaohui: Bishop Tong Changping dedicated the new Christ the King Church. The 18 meter long and 7 meter wide church cost 200.000 Yuan. One single Catholic individual of Weinan donated the greatest part of that cost. It is the second time that he has provided most of the funds needed to build a church (*xdo* Oct. 22).



Modest: the village church in Nanzhidaohui. Photo: *xdo*.

Wenzhou (ZJ), Nanxi Parish, Bilian Sub-parish: Dedication of the new St. Lawrence Church. The three-story “gothic” church, with its two 37 meter high towers, contains a multi-functional hall on the ground floor. On the 1st floor there are rooms of various sizes for group activities and on the 2nd floor there is the church itself, with room for 400 persons. The complex cost 2.4 million Yuan. The village’s first little church dated back to 1896. It was enlarged various times over the years and then restored after the Cultural Revolution. The authorities decided it was too dilapidated in 2008. In any case, it had become too small for the growing community (*xdo* Jan. 16).

Wenzhou (ZJ), Pingyang County, Cangnan Deanery, Zhoujiache: Dedication of the new church of Our Lady of the Rosary. The building is two-storied, with a 55 meter high tower. It has an area of 2,000 m² and can accommodate 800 worshippers. The construction cost 8 million Yuan (*xdo* Oct. 9).

Wenzhou (ZJ), Yongjia Deanery, Yonglin Parish, Luoxi: Dedication of a new church in honor of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The church, lying at the foot of a mountain and built in the gothic style, has a surface area of 1,600 m² and cost 5 million Yuan to build. Originally, there was only one Catholic family in Luoxi. Now there are 33 Catholic families. The small community first met for prayer in a private house, but that soon became too small for the quickly growing and mostly young community. Only a few weeks after the celebration of the dedication, 22 persons were baptized in the new church (*xdo* Dec. 3 and 25).



Built for growth:
the church in Luoxi,
Yonglin Parish.
Photo: *xdo*.

Xiamen (FJ), Nanjing 南靖: Dedication of the new church of Mary Help of Christians. The first church in Nanjing was built with permission of the Emperor Kangxi and a stone tablet bearing the imperial decree is still preserved today over the main door of the church. The new building has two stories, with a multi-purpose hall on the ground floor. The church itself is on the 1st floor and can hold 500 persons. It cost about 1 million Yuan (*xdo* Nov. 19).

Xiamen (FJ), Nan'an City, Jintao: Dedication of a new Catholic church under the patronage of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. The church holds 150 persons (*xdo* May 9).

Xi'an (SN), Zhonghehui: Dedication of a new church under the patronage of Our Lady of China. The village has about 1,000 inhabitants, of whom 140 are Catholics. The building of the 20 meter long and 10 meter wide church cost 430,000 Yuan (*xdo* May 15).

Xichang (SC), Panzhihua City, Hongge Town: Dedication of the newly built Divine Mercy Church. There were originally quite a few Catholics in the place, but since they had no church and could only meet in private houses, the community grew very slowly (*xdo* June 4).

Xinzhou (SX): Dedication of the new church in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary. Two hundred Catholics from the surrounding outlying mountain regions have settled in the village, which has been newly built by the City of Xinzhou. The pastor of the community has been deeply involved in solving social needs since 2006. In 24 separate fundraising campaigns, he succeeded in raising 180,000 Yuan to provide scholarships for 70 gifted, but poor, students. The Joseph-Aimin-Center of the parish visits 100 poor families each year and distributes clothing and groceries. The day of the dedication of the church also saw the founding of the “Family of Charity,” which occupies rooms in an already existing building of the parish. “Family of Charity” will provide free meals, shelter and proper care to single, needy and homeless persons (*xdo* Oct. 27).

Zhouzhi (SN), Xingping City, Potou Parish: New church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The first church from 1914 was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. A newer building, dating only from 1982, was nevertheless dilapidated and had become too small. During 2011 and 2012, funds were raised from donations (about 500,000 Yuan) to build the new church (*xdo* Sept. 11).

Zhouzhi (SN), Yangling Shifan, Wuquan Town, Bigong Parish: The cross is once more raised into place atop the parish church. The 2008 Wenchuan earthquake caused the façade of the church to collapse, together with the cross. The first church of the village was built in 1927 and was built anew in 1987. The 200 Catholics of Bigong live from vegetable market gardening or have jobs outside the village (*xdo* Jan. 3).

Zhouzhi (SN), Zhuyuantou Village: The cross is hoisted into place on the newly rebuilt church dedicated to St. Anthony. The first church from 1911 was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. A simple replacement church built in 1990 was rendered unusable after the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake and heavy rains. The faithful themselves managed to collect the 200,000 Yuan needed for the construction of the new church (*xdo* May 1).

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