

Walking in Love and Service Together with China and the Chinese Church

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Foreword

Ever since China launched its open-door policy in 1978, Chinese society has achieved rapid and comprehensive development, but some problems remain unresolved in society and the Church. They include a downward slide in morality, the wide gap between rich and poor, and conflicts in Sino-Vatican relations. These issues have grown more severe, often even giving rise to new quarrels. One way to resolve conflicts of state and religion could be love and service, which bear witness to the Gospel and help solve some social problems. For a Catholic NGO in China such as Jinde Charities, which for a time was called into question, the journey to achieve legal registration as a foundation was especially slow and arduous. This was caused by society's lack of understanding and sensitivity toward Sino-Vatican relations as well as by the Church's own restrictions.

I. Unbalanced Development: Economic, Cultural and Moral Construction¹

After the heavy blow of the ultra-left period (1950s) and the decade-long calamity called the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), China's economy was nearly paralyzed. In 1978, when China's reform was launched to improve the country's seriously underdeveloped economy, Deng Xiaoping, who had just resumed political power, proposed the goal of "let some people get rich first" and an "economic construction" approach. Deng viewed developing the economy as a political task. He stressed that economic development should

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1 This part is mainly taken from my paper "Strengthening Cultural Construction, Playing Prophetic Role." It was presented during the colloquium on "Asian Cultures in Dialogue" at Assumption University in Bangkok, January 11–13, 2011.

be the overriding concern, and demanded that all be subject to economic construction.² After years of sparing no effort to advance economic growth, China finally achieved the goals and objectives proposed by the late national leader Deng Xiaoping, but it had to pay a heavy price.

For example, the gap between rich and poor in China continues to widen, and instances of corruption and fraud keep surfacing. At the same time, the uncertainty of belief systems and the blind pursuit of money and other material benefits only worsen social morality and dampen the development of religion and culture. In fact, even though rapid economic development has made China quite visible on the world stage, charitable enterprises in China still lag behind, charitable services sharing and sympathy are still rare, and the negative images reflected by some state-based charitable foundations have only produced questions and suspicions around the world in the last two years.

The time has come for China to engage in some deep soul-searching and reflection. What, after all, has happened to China over the years? Striving for economic development is necessary, but if it becomes a one-sided development solely focused on the economy and GDP, if it neglects people's spiritual and emotional needs and denies the purifying and uplifting belief systems and worldviews inherent in both religion and traditional Chinese culture, social crises and problems are bound to arise.

In making economic construction the central premise of its development, China has achieved sustainable development for many years. Its total economic output in world rankings keeps rising. In per capita terms, however, most Chinese people are far from rich, and millions of ordinary Chinese people suffer great hardships and difficulties. Data from the World Bank in 2009 reported that China's per capita GDP ranked No. 124 among 213 countries and regions worldwide. One could take "medical care" as an example. According to the World Health Organization's ranking based on member states' integrated assessment scheme, such as collecting and fairly distributing funds for health care, China ranked 188 among the 191 member states – fourth from the bottom.³

The unbalanced development of China's economic growth has created a huge, ever more severe rich-poor gap. The latest research data indicates that the current social gap between rich and poor in China will further expand, close to the limit of social tolerance. The Gini coefficient provides an example. China's Gini coefficient at the start of the 1980s was 0.275, but it reached 0.438 in 2010. At the same time, the income ratio between China's urban and rural residents is now 3.3:1 – the highest is about 2:1 internationally. The difference between the highest and lowest wages for various industry workers in China is a multiple of 15. The income gap between state-owned enterprise executives and front-line workers is a multiple of about 18. As for the difference between the wage of executives in

2 Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, "Guanyu jingji gongzuo de ji dian yijian" 关于经济工作的几点意见 (Some Comments on Economic Work) (October 4, 1979), in: *Deng Xiaoping wenxuan* 邓小平文选 (Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping), vol. 2, p. 194. Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, "Muqian de xingshe he renwu" 目前的形势和任务 (The Present Situation and the Tasks before us) (January 16, 1980), in: *ibid.*, p. 250.

3 Wang Xiaozong 汪孝宗, "GDP ju shijie di er bei zhi yi yi bu da, duo ling huo luohou" GDP居世界第二被指意义不大, 多领域落后 (GDP's Second Rank in the World Demonstrates Little Significance and Multi-field Backwardness), in: *Zhongguo jingji zhouban* 中国经济周刊 (China Economic Weekly), March 1, 2011, <http://finance.huanqiu.com/roll/2011-03/1529791.html>.

state-owned enterprises and the average wage across Chinese society, the difference is a multiple of about 128. The gap between the 10% highest-paid citizens and the 10% lowest-paid grew from a multiple of 7.3 in 1988 to 23 in 2007.⁴

Economic construction has become the central guide and doorway to development. This economic wave has impacted all levels of Chinese society and accelerated the process of secularization. The blind pursuit of economic interests is corrupting people's minds and leading China into a difficult transition. As the gap between rich and poor constantly expands, relationships between people have become materialistic and indifferent. The insensitivity and indifference of some people has shocked Chinese society. The tragedy of Yueyue in October 2011 was a typical case evidencing the lack of compassion and conscience.⁵

Material conditions are important, but the pursuit of spiritual development and beliefs is also vital. If a society neglects or lacks the latter two, the consequences would be unthinkable. In the pursuit of economic and material interests and the drive for money, some people even dare to take and make money by going against human conscience and to carry out criminal acts. For instance, they would add melamine to milk and blend in an alcohol mixture, and collect and sell waste oil discarded from restaurants, etc. From various food adulterations (honey, pasta, meat, rice, dried sea cucumber, etc.) to the contamination of ordinary commodities (washing liquid, shampoo, shower gel, gasoline, etc.) and the production of fake drugs, fake diplomas, and fake invoices, adulteration and fraud have penetrated all walks of life and become a common phenomenon.

At present, both the Chinese government and society at large have begun paying attention to these social problems and trying to solve them properly. Not only do the legal system and management as well as transparent supervision mechanism need to be strengthened, the spiritual needs, cultural construction, and religion's role must also be given due attention. In other words, China needs to pay attention to constructing traditional culture, social charities, and the moral system as much as the economy.

II. Complex State-Church Relations and the Social Services of the Catholic Church in China

At present, the Chinese political map is divided into “two sides / banks (Mainland and Taiwan) and three regions (Mainland, Hong Kong, and Macau) or four regions (Mainland,

4 The International Institute for Urban Development, Beijing 北京国际城市发展研究院 and the Social Sciences Academic Press, China 中国社科文献出版社 on September 14, 2012, co-issued the “Shehui guanli lanpishu – Zhongguo shehui guanli chuangxin baogao” 社会管理蓝皮书—中国社会管理创新报告 (Annual Report on the Innovation of China's Social Administration, 2012. Blue Book of Social Administration), www.ssap.com.cn/zw/220/19602.htm. The article “Wo guo pin fu chaju zheng bijin shehui rongren xian” 我国贫富差距正逼近社会容忍线 (The Gap between Rich and Poor in China Is Approaching the Line of Social Tolerance), September 15, 2012, was widely reported in China, www.zj.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/InAndAbroad/2012-09/15/c_113089772.htm.

5 On October 13, 2011, on a street in Foshan City, Guangdong Province, 2-year-old girl Little Yueyue was hit and run over by two vehicles. Within 7 minutes after the incident, 18 individuals went past Yueyue's body, but not even one tried to help her. Finally, a garbage-collecting woman came to her rescue. In the following days, the video and photos of this tragedy shocked all Chinese society, and it became the center of public news media and the focus of attention that caused a nationwide discussion.

Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau).” Sino-Vatican relations have not achieved normalization over the past half century. The complicated political landscape and State-Church relations have hampered the full development of the Catholic Church in China and her social services.

1. Taiwan and the Church

The Republic of China was established on January 1, 1912. When the Communists defeated the Nationalists in 1949, the capital of the Nationalist government was moved from Nanking (Nanjing) to Taipei. On October 1 that same year, the Chinese Communist Party established the People’s Republic of China. Since then, there has been no common governance between the Mainland and Taiwan. Taiwan’s President Jiang Jingguo, the son of former President Jiang Kaishek, died in January 1988, and the independence-minded Li Denghui succeeded him as president until 2000. Thereafter, Chen Shuibian of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, founded in 1986) was president until 2008 and the Nationalists became the opposition party. Due to the Taiwan independence issue, cross-strait relations were very tense during that period. In 2008, Ma Yingjiu was elected president – the “Taiwan regional leader” – and the Nationalists returned to power.⁶

The Mainland government adopted strategies to isolate Taiwan’s DPP government. However, once unification-minded Ma Yingjiu became president, Beijing ceased isolating Taiwan and instead deliberately provided convenience and protection for the current Nationalist government. The stabilized cross-strait relations brought new opportunities for development to all sides. Toward the end of 2008, for example, the two sides for the first time achieved the historical “three direct links” – namely “direct postal services, direct commercial activities, and direct flights.”

After the Second Vatican Council, local Churches around the world set up bishops’ conferences, and 16 bishops met in Taipei to establish their own conference in 1967. Since most participants originally came from dioceses in the Mainland, they called it the Chinese Bishops’ Conference. In 1998, it was renamed the Chinese Regional Bishops’ Conference (CRBC), Taiwan. At present, there is a friendly diplomatic relationship between Taiwan and the Vatican. The CRBC is recognized by the Holy See. Caritas Taiwan, which is under the Social Development Committee of the CRBC, is an official member of Caritas Asia (CA) and Caritas Internationalis (CI).

2. Hong Kong, Macau, and the Church

Following the First Opium War (1839–1842), Hong Kong became a British colony. In 1887, the Portuguese took over Macau. Mainland China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997 and over Macau in 1999. Under the “one country, two systems” policy proposed by Deng Xiaoping for both places, the original capitalist system and life style were to be unchangeably maintained for 50 years.

⁶ Taiwan uses “president” when referring to its national leader, but the Mainland avoids using this term and instead uses “leader of Taiwan regional authority” or “Taiwan leader.”

Except for sovereignty, diplomacy and military affairs, the governance and other civil matters, such as charitable services and exchange activities conducted by religious communities with the outside world, Hong Kong and Macau enjoy the same kind of freedom. At the same time, the relationship of all other aspects of these two special regions with those corresponding aspects in Mainland China abides by the rule of “non-affiliation, non-interference, and mutual respect.”⁷ They can join certain international events, such as the Olympic Games, and international organizations, like the World Health Organization, in the name of China-Hong Kong and China-Macau. The Holy See Chargé d'affaires (China Study Mission) office responsible for Mainland Church affairs was also set up in Hong Kong.

The Church in Hong Kong keeps direct communication channels but has no bishops' conference of its own. The same is true of Macau. The bishops of these two regions usually go together for *ad limina* visits to the Vatican. The diocesan Caritas organizations of both Hong Kong and Macau are official members of Caritas Asia as well as Caritas Internationalis.

3. Mainland China and the Church

When the New China began in 1949, only the former Soviet Union and the Vatican did not close their embassies in the Mainland. However, following many instances of Sino-Vatican conflict, the papal nuncio to China, Archbishop Antonio Riberi, was expelled in 1951. No formal diplomatic relations have existed between China and the Vatican since then.

Since 1989, four Monsignors have served as the head of the China Study Mission of the Holy See in Hong Kong, which is equal to the “Chargé d'affaires.”⁸ Their task has been to facilitate Mainland Church affairs and its relationship with the Holy See but they could not enter the Mainland and openly work there directly with the native Chinese clergy and faithful.

In 1980, the “open” Church community established the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference (CCBC) in Beijing. Toward the end of 1989, the “underground” Church community set up the Mainland China Catholic Bishops' Conference in a small village, Zhang'erce, of Sanyuan Diocese in Shaanxi Province. To this day, the Holy See has recognized neither organisation. After dialogue and negotiations between China and the Vatican started in 1996, Sino-Vatican relations improved, but as conflicts about electing, appointing, and consecrating bishop candidates arose in recent years, Sino-Vatican relations and dialogue have cooled to the freezing point.

No matter what happens or how it develops, once Sino-Vatican relations are normalized, we will be happy to hand over Faith Weekly (a national, widely read Catholic newspaper started in 1991) and Jinde Charities Foundation (launched

7 “The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China,” www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/index/, chapter VI, articles 141, 148, and 149.

8 They are Jean-Paul Aimé Gobel (1989–1992, now Archbishop), Fernando Filoni (1992–2001, now Cardinal), Eugene Nugent (2001–2010, now Archbishop), and Ante Jozic (2010–today). See my paper “Papal Envoys to China: Strategies, Contributions and Influences,” prepared and presented at the 11th International Symposium, Verbiest Institute, Leuven University, Belgium, September 6, 2012.

in 1997), both belonging to the Catholic Church in China in reality, to the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference. Certainly if the future bishops' conference would like to take it over.

As founder of both entities, I have openly made this declaration on various occasions when facing questions and concerns both within and outside China. The reason is that under normal circumstances, Jinde Charities, based in Hebei but serving all over China, should be under the leadership of the Social Services Committee of the CCBC. In this way, the bishops' conference can coordinate internal disaster relief works and, at the same time, cooperate with overseas Church communities for the same activities in the name of the Catholic Church in China. The Holy See could also work with Church foundations like Jinde Charities through the CCBC or the responsible persons in charge of its Social Services Committee. Nevertheless, due to Church-State stalemate, the Holy See still cannot work with either of the above-mentioned bishops' conferences in China, nor can Jinde Charities be under either one.⁹ This situation has hampered Jinde's fund-raising efforts in various local Church communities and limited further cooperation with them. For example, local parishes in many countries collect donations on at least one Sunday or several times a year for the emergency funds of the national Caritas. It is impossible to do this in China for the time being. If Jinde Charities were now affiliated with the bishops' conference in Beijing, many clergy and faithful would refuse to send donations to us. If it were under the unofficial bishops' conference (underground Church community), Jinde could not work and do fundraising openly as it now does. In other words, no matter with which bishops' conference Jinde were now affiliated, its cooperation with the Mainland clergy and faithful would be affected.¹⁰ Meanwhile, lacking affiliation with any episcopal conference that the Holy See regards as licit, Jinde Charities also cannot establish normal relations with CI.

As regards disaster relief, Caritas Germany and others have worked with Jinde Charities since 2001 and helped it to grow.¹¹ In other projects, CCFD-Terre Solidaire (France) and Misereor also have cooperated with Jinde Charities since 1999 and 2001 respectively.¹² Several times since 2008, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and Cor Unum have directly cooperated with Jinde.¹³ At the same time, countless clergy and faithful from the open Church community and the underground Church community have cooperated with Jinde Charities for relief work privately or in the name of a parish or diocese as well as NGOs. All of them are blessings from God through human hands. Regarding overseas emergency aid, Jinde has also taken part in disaster relief activities abroad, such as the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and earthquakes in Haiti, Italy, and Japan, through CI and Cor Unum, and helped disaster-stricken areas in Taiwan in cooperation with Caritas Taiwan.¹⁴ This

9 From the start, Jinde Charities has belonged to the regional bishops of Hebei Province, never to a single diocese, because it would be hard to ask other dioceses to donate if it belonged to just one diocese.

10 Certainly, Jinde Charities in the Mainland also absolutely cannot be affiliated with Taiwan's bishops' conference.

11 See Appendix: Cooperation of Caritas Germany and Jinde Charities (2001–2012).

12 See Appendix: Cooperation of CCFD and Jinde Charities (1999–2012).

13 See Appendix: Cooperation of Cor Unum and Jinde Charities (2008–2010).

14 See Appendix: Cooperation of Jinde Charities and Overseas Partners (1999–2011).

number is small, but hopefully the future Church in China can help overseas more. The Church in China is not only a local Church that receives help from others, but also a local Church that can offer help for others today and in the future.

4. Relations among Churches in the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau

The cooperative relationship between Churches in the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau has had a long history. As early as 1950, a considerable number of Mainland clergy, brothers, and nuns went to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau, and strengthened the local Church in each place. Catholics in Taiwan, for example, grew from 15,000 in 1949 to 200,000 in 1970. God mysteriously protected some bishops, priests, and nuns. While rendering their contributions to the local Churches of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau, they also considerably helped the Church in Greater China. In 1978, when Mainland China started its open-door policy, the clergy and Catholics of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau could visit the Mainland as tourists and help Church communities there.

During the *ad limina* visit of Taiwan's seven bishops on February 28, 1984, Pope John Paul II urged them as well as overseas Chinese Catholics, "It is to you Catholics of Taiwan and the *diaspora* that is entrusted this wonderful task of being a bridge-church for your mainland compatriots."¹⁵ Therefore, "the Bridge Church Service Committee" (1988–2010) was set up by the CRCB in 1988. Some religious orders and lay associations set up some Mainland Church Care Groups as well. After Bishop John Baptist Wu of Hong Kong became a cardinal in 1988, Archbishop Paul Shan of Gaoxiong (Kaohsiung) in Taiwan became a cardinal in 1998, and Bishop Joseph Zen of Hong Kong became a cardinal in 2006, the role and task of the bridge-church were given more consideration. Bishop John Tong of Hong Kong Diocese was appointed by His Holiness Benedict XVI as a cardinal on January 6, 2012, once again affirming the role of the bridge-church of Hong Kong and the new cardinal.

During the 1980s and 1990s, both the Vatican and the overseas Churches kept contact with the Mainland Church communities via the bridge-church. The bridge-church provided much needed material and spiritual help to the Mainland Church and enabled its further development. For this, the Mainland Church will always be grateful.

According to this year's *Directory of the Catholic Church in Taiwan*, the Bridge Church Service Committee no longer exists. It has been replaced by the "Catholic Care Group for the Cross-strait Churches," whose task is to help the Holy See with the education and formation of priests, seminarians, and sisters. This shift indicates that cross-strait communications and cooperation have become much smoother and more direct. For instance, Mainland students presently studying at Fu Jen Theologate outnumber those from Taiwan itself.

With Mainland China's further openness and reform, ever more foreigners can now not just visit China, but also live and work there. Some overseas organizations such as Cor Unum have started direct cooperation with the Mainland Church communities and social

15 "Address of Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of the Regional Conference of China in Taiwan," February 28, 1984, www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1984/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19840228_vescovi-taiwan_en.html.

service organizations, and some even set up offices in the Mainland. The liaison office of Misereor in Beijing is but one example. By choosing to enter into China's front-lines, these overseas organizations and friends can work without having to go through a third party. This strategy, however, has challenged the Church's social service organizations not only overseas, but also in the Mainland. It has compelled some overseas organizations, such as Macau Catholic Social Services, to halt their services on the Mainland,¹⁶ and challenged those in the Mainland to improve their capacity building and become professional.

Though the Caritas organizations in Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan are official members of both Caritas Asia and Caritas Internationalis, none of them can replace Mainland Church social service organizations. Due to their special circumstances of political background, economic development, and religious freedom, the Church communities in these four areas also follow the rule of non-affiliation, non-interference but mutual respect. This situation makes it hard for these Church communities to cooperate in social services, especially when disasters strike and mutual cooperation is sorely needed.

5. The Case of Cooperation

During the Sichuan earthquake relief, the Caritas Network Members in Europe, Asia, and America happily cooperated with Jinde Charities. With the blessing of the Holy Father through Cor Unum and the support of Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Germany not only called on the Caritas organizations from 14 nations to work together with Jinde Charities in China, but also sent professionals to the disaster areas to provide a variety of technical support.¹⁷ Meantime, the Archdiocese Crisis Coordination Team of Singapore and many other overseas Social Service organizations, communities, and individuals also participated in this joint relief effort. Pope Benedict XVI also gave his loving support to the people in China while offering his prayers for the disaster-stricken areas.

At that time, the US\$ 100,000 for Wenchuan earthquake of Sichuan province and the US\$ 25,000 for Yushu earthquake of Qinghai Province donated by Pope Benedict XVI were also put to good use. Both the Holy Father and Cor Unum were very satisfied with the successful relief work and follow-up reports. This needs to be recognized and promoted.

III. Challenges and Opportunities Currently Facing Faith-based NGOs

In this time of globalization and secularization impacting China's social situation, Sino-Vatican relations, and the political division of the Mainland, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, faith-based NGOs such as Jinde Charities and some of its partner organizations face nu-

16 It is said another reason is that Macau Catholic Social Services and Caritas Macau duplicated services, so the late bishop of the Macau Diocese decided to eliminate the former.

17 Caritas Germany invited more than 10 Caritas Network Members from Europe, Asia, and Oceania to collaborate with Jinde Charities for the earthquake relief works in Sichuan. These Caritas Network Members are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Korea, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland.

merous difficulties and challenges, but they also have been given new opportunities for development and collaboration.

1. In the present political and religious relationship, the Catholic Church in China needs to pay more attention to witnessing faith by loving actions.

As is well known, China and the Vatican have not forged formal diplomatic ties, and frequent conflicts have recently occurred between them. Dialogue has worsened to the extent that they criticize each other publicly and – even worse – engage in condemnation and excommunication.¹⁸ Sino-Vatican relations have fallen to their lowest point and the Catholic Church in China once again is in a dilemma.

What can the Catholic Church in China do in China's current situation? How should the Church act to be accepted by the general public and recognized by China's government? What must be done to develop the Church and advance Sino-Vatican relations? Besides evangelization, pastoral care, and the formation of male and female religious, what else can the Church do? Obviously, the loving action of witnessing the Gospel and practicing the faith can contribute to society and help purify the public. Such deeds can be more easily accepted by the Chinese government and the Holy See as well as Chinese society. Therefore, charitable work is one way to develop the Catholic Church in China.

In the past, the local Church and charitable organizations like Jinde Charities have served and worked for orphans, handicapped children, the elderly and lepers, and provided medical care and disaster relief. These initiatives beautifully witnessed to the faith and showed that making such choices and paying close attention can be prompt and correct responses. The Church's love witness can reshape the image of the Church, soften/ease the tension of Sino-Vatican relations, defuse disagreements and resolve conflicts, remove/eliminate misunderstandings, serve as a bridge, and play a socially inspiring role. The witness of the Church also can promote values such as justice, peace, democracy, charity, forgiveness, dialogue, and reconciliation in society. All will have a long-term effect and convey deep meaning.

2. Change of political policy about religion brings new opportunities.

Facing serious moral problems and the loss of religion in society, China needs religion and its values in order to develop. The Chinese Communist Party in principle does not support religion as a policy, but it has been adjusting its policy on religion. Some changes are very obvious – for example, from regarding religion as opium in the past, it now sees religion in terms of culture, and from worrying about religious infiltration in the past, it now encourages religions to contribute to society.

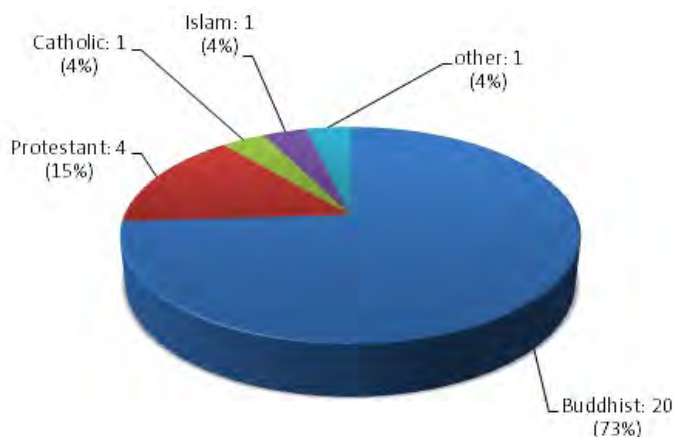
Therefore, the government issued a call to “guide religions to adapt to socialist society” (1990s) and encouraged all religions to “play active roles in society” and “contribute more

¹⁸ For example, licit bishop candidates in Leshan (June 29, 2011), Shantou (July 14, 2011), and Harbin (July 6, 2012) were consecrated without the Holy See's approval. All three were excommunicated. Also, the newly ordained bishop in Shanghai (July 7, 2012) was not accepted by the government and has been put under house arrest in Sheshan Seminary.

to society” (2000s). Charitable work and services done by religions gradually gained recognition and acceptance as well as importance in China. In February 2012, China’s State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) joined five other ministries and commissions of the State Council in issuing a statement, “Opinions about Encouraging and Regulating Charity Work Done by Religious Communities” (No. 6, 2012, SARA).¹⁹ It provides a platform for religions to do social service and charitable work, and also offers opportunities for the development of each religion.

In the past, only governments at all levels or their related departments could set up foundations. As a result, more or less all past foundations had a sort of government background. Each reflected a strong government-run color and deep official influence. In 2004, the State Council issued new “Regulations for the Management of Foundations” that distinguish public funding foundations from non-public funding foundations. The new regulations built a platform for individuals, enterprises, and organizations, including religions, to establish non-public funding foundations. As a result, non-public funding foundations promptly emerged and gradually became an important and indispensable force in the field of social service and charitable work in China.²⁰

Distribution of Faith-Based Foundations in China 2012



Now, 2,794 foundations are registered in China – 1,265 public funding foundations and 1,529 non-public funding foundations.²¹ Faith-based foundations number 27, of which 20 have a Buddhist background (73% of the total) and four a Protestant background (15%). Only Hebei Jinde Charities Foundation has a Roman Catholic link, while another has an Islamic background, and there is one other (4% each).²²

19 For a German translation of the document, see *China heute* 2012, No. 2, pp. 98-102. [Ed.]

20 In 2005, there were 253 non-public funding foundations, and 349 in 2006 (38% increase). In 2007, there were 436, an increase of 25% since 2006. In 2008, there were 643, 47% more than in 2007. In 2009, there were 846, 32% more than in 2008. In 2011, there were 1,279, an increase of more than 200 in just one year. These data are from Su Tingting 苏婷婷, “Jijinhui ‘guan ban’ seci bian dan – fei gong mu jijin cheng zhuban jun 基金会“官办”色彩变淡, 非公募基金成主力军 (Official Aspect Diminished in Foundations, Non-public Funding Foundations Became a Main Force), in: *Gongyi Shibao* 公益时报 (China Philanthropy Times), June 4, 2012, <http://wenhua.cccvic.com/gongyi/gyyw/2012/0604/199861.shtml>.

21 As of October 2012, see “Zhongguo jijinhui zhongxin wang” 中国基金会中心网 (China Foundation Center), <http://foundationcenter.org.cn>.

22 “Dalü zongjiao beijing jijinhui shuju fenxi zhi yi” 大陆宗教背景基金会数据分析之一 (Data Analysis of Mainland China Faith-based Foundations), see China Foundation Center, <http://crm.foundationcenter.org.cn/html/2012-07/239.html>.

The charitable works of Chinese religions have already started, but compared to public funding foundations that enjoy a monopoly position and official background, the role played by Chinese religious circles in philanthropic enterprises and the impact they provide remain very limited, and their voice is quite weak. The spirit of expounding, initiating, and promoting charity to Chinese society from religious perspectives has not yet solidified, and the role of religions in charity has not fully played out in society. So the potential and capabilities of faith-based foundations need to be further developed.

Meanwhile, Buddhism and Daoism are obviously protected and supported by the Chinese government in various ways since both religions are considered indigenous. Deeply influenced by the political orientation and traditional culture, the Chinese wealthy class is fond of contributing and supporting their temples and foundations. Influenced by traditional culture, Buddhism-based foundations have developed rapidly. Due to historic reasons, current political and religious conflicts, and the Chinese Church's own problems, the development of Catholic charitable work in China remains restricted.

Mainland China has about 5.7 million Catholics (2009), about 0.44% of the country's 1.3 billion people.²³ Catholics account for 1% of Taiwan's 23.16 million people (2010).²⁴ Hong Kong has about one-half million Catholics – 170,000 immigrants and 353,000 locals – together representing roughly 7% of the territory's 7 million people.²⁵

Comparing the percentage of Catholics to the total population in each of the three regions, Mainland China has the lowest ratio. Moreover, its religious environment is far from satisfying, and the power to do charitable works is also the weakest among the three. As noted in a statistical report issued by Faith Institute for Cultural Studies (FICS), as of August 2012, only 19 charitable organizations exist at diocesan level, not including the registered foundation Jinde Charities. One of them is registered as a community, two as NGOs, and one newly established foundation exists without registration. The 19 charitable organizations are in Handan, Hengshui, and Cangzhou in Hebei Province, Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Xi'an in Shaanxi Province, Nanning in Guangxi Province, Chongqing, Wanzhou, Jilin Province, Liaoning Province, Taiyuan and Xinzhou in Shanxi Province, Linyi and Zhoucun in Shandong Province, Lanzhou in Gansu, Kunming in Yunnan, and Chifeng in Inner Mongolia.²⁶ Compared with the Greater Church in China, the number is too small, and their management and practice also need to be improved.

Meanwhile, there are three overseas NGOs or foundations that have opened branch or liaison offices in China since 2000. They are Asia Bridge Development Association in Guizhou; BRICKS, The Great Wall Appeal; and Misereor (with a liaison office) in Beijing (see Appendix "2012: Overseas Registered NGOs or Foundations in China").

23 "Zhongguo tianzhujiao ziliao tongji: 2009 yu 1948" 中国天主教资料统计: 2009与1948 (Chinese Catholics Statistics: 2009 and 1948), in: *Xinde 信德 (Faith 10-Day, now Faith Weekly)*, December 20, 2009, No. 36, page 1.

24 *Taiwan tianzhujiao shouce 台湾天主教手册* (Catholic Church Directory Taiwan), Taipei 2012; and "2010 nian Taiwan diqu tianzhujiaohui jiaowu tongji biao" 2010年台湾地区天主教会教务统计表 (Taiwan Catholic Church Statistics in 2010), www.catholic.org.tw/catholic/2012/New%20Book/2012HandBook/2010Statistics.pdf.

25 *Xianggang tianzhujiao shouce 香港天主教手册* (Hong Kong Catholic Church Directory), 2010 and 2004 editions.

26 Appendix: Statistics of Catholic NGOs / Foundations in China, by Faith Institute for Cultural Studies, up to August 2012.

How can each diocese be helped to pay attention to establishing its own social service center? This needs great attention by local and overseas Churches and their partners, since it is also a good opportunity to walk together with the Catholic Church in China in the transitional period.

3. Opportunities for overseas partners? What can be done in China?

Ever since Christianity entered China in the 16th century, the Catholic Church in China has gone through various ups and downs. During the Qing Dynasty, the 300-year-long Chinese Rites Controversy hit the Church hard across Europe and Asia. After the First Opium War (1839–1842), the Catholic Church in China was labeled a “foreign religion” due to its links with Western colonization. Later, the Church went through the Boxer Rebellion (1898–1901), the demise of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), the birth of the Republic of China (1912), the warlord period (1916–1928), the Anti-Japanese War (1937–1945), the Chinese civil war (1945–1949) between the Nationalist Party and Communist Party, and various movements after the Chinese Communist Party took over the Mainland.

On January 28, 1979, at the home of Jimmy Carter, the late Chinese national leader Deng Xiaoping told the then U.S. president: “In China, Freedom of Worship, OK! Bible, OK! Foreign Missionary, No!”²⁷ This basically laid the foundation for the Chinese government’s policy toward Christianity for the past 30 years. The Chinese people can believe in and worship Christ, and the Bible can be printed and distributed in China. At present, some missionaries do enter the Mainland via different channels, but they are not legally permitted to evangelize openly or perform education-related work. Deng had worked and studied in France (1920–1926), but he had no confidence in the Church. This had much to do with Western colonization and foreign missionaries in Chinese history.

An expression was once current in China: “One more Christian, one less Chinese.” Today, however, there is a new expression: “One more Christian, one more good citizen.” This change of impression indicates that Chinese society has gained a new understanding and acceptance of the Catholic Church in China. Not only is the Church there changing, so is its relationship with Chinese society. Nevertheless, China’s government and society do not have the same measure of trust and confidence in Christianity that they have in Buddhism and Daoism. The Church in China still has a long way to go.

Now, the question is: Given such circumstances, what can the Universal Church, especially its charitable organizations and friends with a genuine concern for the Catholic Church in China and her NGOs, do in China? How should we act to win the recognition and acceptance of the Chinese government and society at large, and promote the development of the Catholic Church in China and benefit the poor and both China and the Vatican? Works of charity and social services are one obvious option, and some faith-based NGOs have openly launched their services.

Sino-Vatican relations are now in a difficult period. Putting aside the political and dip-

27 “Ye Xiaowen juzhang zai yatelanda shengjing kaimu shi shang de zhici” 叶小文局长在亚特兰大圣经展开幕式上的致辞 (Speech of Director Ye Xiaowen at the Opening Ceremony of the Bible Ministry Exhibition in Atlanta), May 19, 2005, see website of SARA: www.sara.gov.cn/gb/jqgy/jld/ljdh/yexiaowen/0d8814a8-eeee-11da-9a60-93180af1bb1a.html.

lomatic aspects, charity, sports, culture, music, and art can all serve as good means to break the ice. A loving gesture from the Holy Father could serve as a touchstone. It would not violate any Church principles. It could garner international esteem, win over Chinese people's hearts, and express greater respect, admiration, and understanding within China and overseas.

In China, countless poor individuals, families, and communities need help, but there also is need to improve and promote other great concerns: social justice, a proper appreciation of charity, legal concepts, awareness of human rights, democracy and citizenship, particularly to have the Kingdom of God's values of justice, peace, and joy rooted in Chinese society (Romans 14:17). In reaching out to Church NGOs in China, we may be able to open the gate of Sino-Vatican relations with the hands of charity and become a loving bridge that reduces misunderstanding and tension while welcoming a new era.

Conclusion

Amid rapid development and great transition in a period preceding the normalization of Sino-Vatican relations, contemporary Chinese society still needs the international community and universal values, and the international community also cannot do without the participation and contribution of 1.3 billion Chinese people. Regardless of the past or what will happen in the future, cooperation in social services both at home and abroad continues to be a most effective way for the Church to witness to the Gospel and fulfill its important mission of serving society's disadvantaged groups. It is also a way to resolve contradictions between Church and State in China, as well as to portray a positive image of the Church.

Therefore, we suggest that three areas be given great consideration:

- a) continue to educate and awaken charitable awareness;
- b) strengthen cooperation with faith-based NGOs in China in conducting projects; and
- c) support the development of faith-based NGOs in China.

Appendix

Cooperation of Caritas Germany and Jinde Charities (2001–2012)

Year / Project type and location
2001: Snowstorm Inner Mongolia / General emergency
2003: Hebei winter emergency program; Flood response / Hunan; First trainings / Jinde
2004: Drought relief / Inner Mongolia; Floods / Chongqing
2005: Floods / Hunan; Floods / Guangxi
2006: Snowstorm / Xinjiang; Floods and earthquake / Yunnan and Hunan
2007: Flood relief / Chongqing
2008: Snowstorm / Guizhou; Earthquake / Sichuan; Program for elderly
2009: Administration support / Jinde; Floods relief / Guangxi; Rehab after Typhoon Morakot / Fujian
2010: Earthquake relief / Qinghai; Floods / Sichuan and Guangxi
Total donation of Caritas Germany over the years: € 4,451,163.00

Cooperation of CCFD and Jinde Charities (1999–2012)

Year	Project
1998	Well project
2001	A school building project
2001	Well project
2002	Training and exchange program
2002	Well project
2002	Eye clinic
2002	Training for young people
2002	Training program for environment protection
2003	School building
2003	Network development
2003	Training program on media and rural development
2004	Training program on media and rural development
2003	Equipment for an elderly home
2005	“Religion and Ethics” academic seminar
2005	Registration & organization development
2005	Staff training
2006	Religion and Charities Forum
2006	Handan youth orchestra (entrusted project)
2006	Capacity building: home for the aged
2006	Summer volunteers outreach teaching
2006	Conference on Christian Faith and Media Today
2006	Yunnan Zhaotong Vocation Training Center
2007	Free medical treatment project of a hospital
2007	Workshops on Elderly Care Project
2008	A Catholic Center
2008	Rural area development
2008	Well project
2008	Handan Dazhong Hospital project
2008	Handan Pastoral Care Center project (entrusted project)
2008	Youth (World Youth Day)
2008	Earthquake – psychological aid
2009	Cataract surgery project for elderly patients in the rural area
2012	Sandstorm Control Project
	Total donation of CCFD: € 572,927.00

Cooperation of Cor Unum and Jinde Charities (2008–2010)

Disaster area / Time
Snowstorm, South China, February 2008
Earthquake, Sichuan, China, May 2008
Earthquake, Yushu, Qinghai, China, April 2010
Mudslide (Gansu Province) and flood disaster (South China), August 2010
Total donation of Cor Unum: US\$ 185,000.00

Cooperation of Jinde Charities and Overseas Partners (1999–2011)

Disaster area / Time	Overseas partners
Earthquake, Taiwan, September 1999	Caritas Taiwan
Tsunami, Southeast Asia, December 2005	Caritas Asia (India)
Earthquake, Abruzzo region, Italy, April 2009	Cor Unum
Typhoon Morakot, Taiwan, August 2009	Caritas Taiwan
	Cor Unum
	Caritas Internationalis
Earthquake, Haiti, January 2010	Caritas Germany
Earthquake, Japan, March 2011	Caritas Internationalis
Total donation of Jinde Charities: US\$ 202,482.05	

Statistics of Catholic NGOs / Foundations in China

by Faith Institute for Cultural Studies, up to August 2012

Province	Name	Since	Nature
Beijing	Beijing Diocese Social Service Office 北京教区社会服务办	1984	NGO
Hebei	Hebei Jinde Charities Foundation 河北进德公益基金会 http://www.jinde.org	1997.5	Registered
	Handan Diocese Social Service Center 邯郸教区社会服务中心	2006.1	NGO
	Hengshui Diocese Social Service Center 衡水教区社会服务中心 http://shifu7155245.blog.163.com	2005	NGO
	Cangzhou Xianxian Diocese Xian'ai Foundation 沧州献县教区献爱基金会	2012.7	Not Registered
Tianjin	Tianjin Diocese Social Service Center 天津教区社会服务中心	2009	NGO
Shaanxi	Xi'an Diocese Social Service Center 西安教区社会服务中心 http://www.caritasxian.org	2002.7	NGO

Province	Name	Since	Nature
Guangxi	Catholic Church Guangxi Diocese Loving Heart Foundation 天主教广西教区爱心会 http://www.tzjgjq-axh.com	2003.8	Registered as a community
Jilin	Jilin Diocese Social Service Center 吉林教区社会服务中心 http://www.tj-ssc.org	2006.2	NGO
Liaoning	Liaoning Diocese Social Service Center 辽宁教区社会服务中心 http://www.sjraln.org	2004.4	NGO
Shanghai	Shanghai Guangqi Social Service Center 上海光启社会服务中心	2005.5	NGO
Chongqing	Chongqing Wanzhou Catholic Holy Love Service Center 万州天主教圣爱服务中心	2004	Registered NGO
	Chongqing Catholic Social Service Office 重庆市天主教社会服务办	2007	NGO
Shanxi	Taiyuan Aide Social Service Center 太原爱德服务中心	2003	Closed 2007
	Xinzhou Joseph Aimin Service Center 忻州若瑟爱民服务中心	2005	NGO
Shandong	Linyi Diocese Social Service Center 临沂教区社会服务中心	2003	NGO
	Zhoucun Diocese Social Service Center 周村教区社会服务中心	2009	NGO
Gansu	Lanzhou Diocese Social Service Center 兰州教区社会服务中心	2006.6	NGO
Yunnan	Kunming Diocese Social Service Center 昆明教区社会服务中心	2008	NGO
Inner Mongolia	Chifeng Diocese Social Service Center 赤峰教区社会服务中心	2008.3	NGO

On September 23, 2012 Shantou City Catholic Morning Star Charities and Social Service Center 汕头市天主教晨星公益慈善与社会服务中心 was established in Guangdong province.

2012: Overseas Registered NGOs or Foundations in China

Province	Quantities	Name	Since	Identities
Guizhou	1	Asia Bridge Development Association 亚桥发展促进会	2000	Registered as NGO in Hong Kong
Beijing	2	BRICKS, The Great Wall Appeal 砖, 长城呼吁	2007	Registered as NGO in Ireland
		Misereor Liaison Office Beijing 德国米苏尔社会发展基金会	2001	Misereor was founded 1958 in Germany