



## 25 Years China-Zentrum, Sankt Augustin

衷心感谢

Thank you

A great many people have helped to make it possible for the China Center to carry out its commitment during 25 years – and on into the future – to be a bridge to China and its churches and religions in the context of society and culture. We thank them sincerely for their fidelity to and solidarity with the people of China and the China Center.

### Members

The basically stable “structure” of the bridge is provided by the members of the Incorporated Association China-Zentrum e.V. (China Center) in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy, on behalf of whom the team of the China Center works, and who also provide the financial basis for this activity:

**Funding Agencies:** Aid to the Church in Need, Königstein; Austrian Catholic Youth / Katholische Jungschar Austria (until 2013); Caritas International, Freiburg; German Bishops' Conference, Department for International Church Affairs and Migration (guest); Misereor, Aachen; Missio Aachen; Missio Munich; Pontifical Missionary Childhood of Germany, Aachen.

**Religious Orders:** Capuchins Germany; Capuchins Switzerland; Divine Word Missionaries (German and Italian Provinces); Franciscans Germany; Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Italy; Franciscan Sisters of Münster – St. Mauritz; Jesuits Austria; Jesuits Germany; Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing; Missionary Benedictines of St. Ottilien; Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, Münster; Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Hiltrup, Münster; Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit, Germany; Salesians of Don Bosco, Bonn; Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, Ingenbohl-Brunnen, Switzerland; Steyl Mission GmbH, Sankt Augustin.

**Dioceses:** Diocese of Essen; Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart.

**Individual Persons:** Prelate Heinrich Haug; Prof. Dr. Roman Malek SVD; Fr. Andreas Müller OFM; Dr. Hermann Schalück OFM; Prof. Dr. Dr. Hans Waldenfels SJ.

The very list of members of the Association shows the China Center's close connection to the Church funding agencies, religious orders and dioceses.

### Sustaining Members and Benefactors

A circle of sustaining members – still identifiable – and many benefactors contribute in their own way to establish a reliable financial basis.

### Management Board

The China Center has always enjoyed committed and competent board members and presidents. The presidents are named here to represent all the board members: Prelate Heinrich Haug, Prelate Bernd Kaut, Prelate Norbert Herkenrath, Prelate Dr. Konrad Lachenmayr, Dr. Hermann Schalück OFM, Fr. Eric Englert OSA, Prelate Dr. Klaus Krämer.

### Advisory Board

Competence and continued solidarity with China are ensured by the China Center advisory board in which experts in church, academic and social fields bring their knowledge and experience to the discussions on China, thus contributing to professional work at the China Center.

To one and all: a very sincere thank you! 衷心感谢大家



The directors of the Association's office: Prof. Dr. Roman Malek SVD (1988–1998); Fr. Paul Raabe SVD (1998–2004); Fr. Anton Weber SVD (2004–2012), with Sr. Hildegard Maria Hau SSPS as vice director (2004–2009); and Fr. Martin Welling SVD (since 2012).

## Origin

Hoped and prayed for over a long time but then still a surprise: with the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) and the almost total isolation from the outside world, China's opening to the West under Deng Xiaoping was unexpectedly rapid. The people of China sensed a gentle breeze of ever increasing economic and personal freedom. For the Church – unfortunately a divided Church – in spite of many lingering limitations there was scope after such a long time of persecution to organize itself anew and build up new Christian life. Contacts with other countries were again possible after the long isolation.

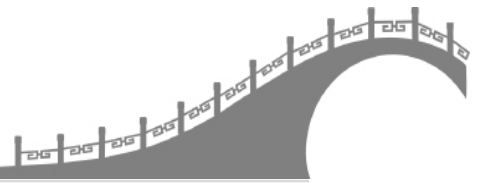
On September 29, 1988, the China-Zentrum e.V. was officially founded by members of the German Catholic Mission Council – as a response of the German Church to the reform and opening up policy of China in the 1980s. The office is based in Sankt Augustin on the campus of the Divine Word Missionaries.

The China Center fulfills its original purpose, namely encounter and exchange with China in the field of culture and religions, in many ways: through information and raising awareness of religions and churches in China, through dialogue and promotion of social and academic collaboration with Chinese partners – especially in relation to the Chinese Catholic Church – and through the study of Christianity and its history in China, as well as of the other religions in the Chinese cultural area. This research is done mainly in cooperation with the neighboring Sinological Monumenta Serica Institute, whose work contributed to the foundation of the China Center.

Left: Board of the China Center 2012–2015: Vice President Dr. Thilo Esser (Pontifical Missionary Childhood); Treasurer Jürgen Knieps (Steyler Bank Sankt Augustin); Board President Prelate Dr. Klaus Krämer (Missio Aachen and Pontifical Missionary Childhood); Johannes Scholz (Caritas International); Abbot President Jeremias Schöder OSB, Sankt Ottilien (also in the photo: Katharina Feith, staff member of the China Center). Right: China Center team with representatives of Monumenta Serica.



# on the way from understanding to helpful solidarity



## Publications

Information on Christianity, religions and religious policy in China is provided by the German periodical *China heute*. *Informationen über Religion und Christentum im chinesischen Raum*, and – within the context of greater internationalization – the English language e-Journal *Religions & Christianity in Today's China*, founded two years ago, as well as publication of books, articles in newspapers and magazines and info brochures on the Church in China.



The periodical *China heute* and the e-journal *Religions & Christianity in Today's China*.

## Seminars, Talks, Interviews

Questions relating to social-political developments, religions and churches in China are the focus of the annual seminars of the China Center, of lectures at conferences and in parishes, in contacts with State offices and the media.



Prof. Dr. Barend ter Haar (University of Leiden) speaking at the annual seminar in 2012 on “The Persecution of Religious Groups in Old and New China.”

## Catholic, Protestant and Ecumenical Church Congresses

These major events are a good opportunity to arouse interest in China and its Christians. The China Center participates in these events in cooperation with ecumenical partners like the Protestant China Information Desk in Hamburg – also with the collaboration of Chinese theologians – with information booths and occasionally also with panel sessions.



Meeting with Wolfgang Thierse, former vice president of the German Parliament, at the Catholic Congress in Saarbrücken in 2006.

## Project Mediation

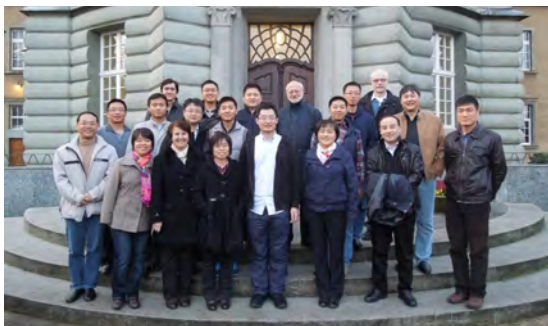
At the wish of Chinese partners and members of the China Center, the office plays an important role in translating and mediating Chinese Church project requests to aid agencies, dioceses and religious orders – from church construction and social projects to training for catechists, seminarians and religious sisters.



Church construction project in the Province of Hebei.



Excursion during a students' encounter in Würzburg in 2010 with the theme "The Search for Orientation in the Mirror of the Cinema."



Departure of a student, Sankt Augustin 2012.



Cardinal John Tong of Hong Kong with Chinese sisters, May 2011.



Working groups at a workshop organized by the China Center in St. Ottilien in 2007.

### Chinese-German Students' Encounters

At German universities Chinese students from the People's Republic of China are the largest foreign group. For these students the China Center organizes annual encounters with German students. In 2013 the 28th Chinese-German Students' Encounter took place, an event that originated from the work of Monumenta Serica. During these encounters the students and young academics discuss current questions.

### Education of Chinese Priests, Seminarians and Sisters

For the past 20 years, at the request of Chinese bishops and religious superiors, the China Center has invited young priests, seminarians and religious sisters from the People's Republic of China to Germany for theological studies. The majority study theology at the Philosophical-Theological Faculty S.V.D. St. Augustin; some take Religious Education at the Catholic University of Applied Science of North Rhine-Westphalia in Paderborn, others do doctoral studies at various German universities.

By now several dozen young theologians from different dioceses of China have had further training. During their studies they are also made aware of social problems and get to know life in German parishes, while the latter learn something of the situation of Chinese Christians. At the end of their studies they return to China where they teach in Chinese seminaries and sisters' convents, contribute to the development of the local Church and act as a bridge in contact with the universal Church.

The project is sponsored financially and with personnel commitment by many congregations, dioceses and funding agencies.

### Workshops

For many years, two-week summer workshops with retreats included have been held at a European level in various countries for Chinese priests, seminarians and sisters studying in Europe. The China Center co-organized these meetings. Today, more specialized courses are being offered on matters such as pastoral ministry or questions of Christian social doctrine.



## Ecumenism

The China Center also feels committed to ecumenical work with Protestant partners. For many years the Ecumenical China Working Group has been meeting twice a year for joint discussion on religion, churches and society in China and to cultivate ecumenical contacts with partners in China. The group is composed of representatives of different Protestant institutions and the China Center advisory board. It also has close contact with the Ecumenical Society Switzerland-China.



In 1996 the Ecumenical China Working Group organized the conference on "Christianity and Culture in the Face of Challenges of the Modern Spirit."

## Cooperation on the European and International Levels

Networking and European and international cooperation regarding China are a significant field of work. Especially the big European Catholic (and until a few years ago ecumenical) China Conferences, co-organized by the China Center, are to be mentioned here. The 8th European Catholic China Colloquium in Freising in September 2010, for instance, took up the situation of the Chinese in Europe. The e-journal *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* also serves this process of Europeanization.



European partners for many years: Fr. Angelo Lazzarotto PIME (Italy), Edmond Tang (England), Fr. Jean Charbonnier MEP (France), Fr. Jeroom Heyndrickx CICM (Belgium), Fr. Roman Malek SVD (photo 1991).

## Chinese Catholic Community in the Rhine Area

The Chinese Catholic Community in the Rhine Area, currently directed by Fr. Welling, meets regularly in the Mission House of the Divine Word Missionaries in Sankt Augustin for the Eucharist, catechetical groups, recollection days and festivals such as Chinese New Year. The China Center has good contacts with the Community and also with the Chinese Catholic Community of Munich.



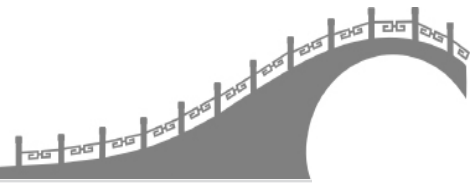
Archbishop Hon Taifai SDB, Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in Rome, with members of the Community in the Rhine Area, St. Ottilien, May 2012.

## World Day of Prayer – Encouragement to Pray

Through Church services, informative material and prayer leaflets the China Center supports the World Day of Prayer for the Church in China proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI in his letter to the Catholic Church in China in 2007.



The faithful at prayer in a Chinese church.



## Dialogue and Collaboration with Chinese Partners

Since the time of the foundation the possibilities for direct meetings and collaboration with Chinese partners have increased greatly. Today the China Center is in contact with many bishops, priests, sisters and lay persons in the most varied dioceses of China. Dozens of visits by delegations from China enabled the establishment of contacts in Germany and neighboring countries. The China Center accompanies its partners to aid agencies, religious communities and dioceses and also to State offices and media representatives. In this way many contacts and friendships have developed over the years. The pioneer was Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian SJ of Shanghai who died this year. He visited the China Center almost annually for many years.

## Accompanying German Church Delegations to China – Some Highlights

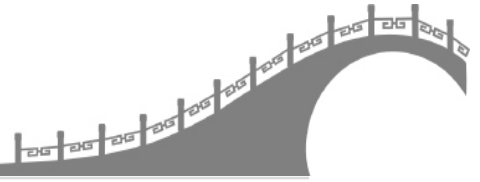
Photos, upper row, from left to right:

1. In 1993 the China Center organized the first big trip to China – for members, religious and journalists –, here with Bishop Dong Guangqing in Wuhan.
2. In 1997 Bishop Dr. Josef Homeyer of Hildesheim went to China. He visited Bishop Li Du'an in the Diocese of Xi'an.

Photos, bottom row, from left to right:

3. In 2009 Archbishop Dr. Ludwig Schick, President of the Commission for International Church Affairs of the German Bishops' Conference, went to China with a delegation. Here the encounter with faithful in a Chinese village.
4. In 2012 representatives of the Ecumenical China Working Group went on a study trip to China. Among others they visited a project in the village of Shangluo, Shaanxi Province.
5. In 2013 Dr. Hans Langendörfer SJ, General Secretary of the German Bishops' Conference, visited China. Seen here with Bishop Josef Li Liangui in the Diocese of Xianxian. In the background is a former Jesuit station.





### Snapshots of Visiting Delegations from China

Photos, upper row, from left to right:

1. In 1995, invited by the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation in conjunction with the China Center, the four Bishops Jin Luxian (Shanghai), Zong Huaide (then President of the official Chinese Bishops' Conference), Fu Tieshan (Beijing) and Li Du'an (Xi'an) came for a three-week visit to Germany (in the photo with Fr. Werenfried van Straaten of Church in Need, and an African and an Indian bishop).
2. In 1998: Christianity researcher Prof. Dr. Liu Xiaofeng was a frequent guest in Sankt Augustin (on the right Fr. Malek).

Photos, bottom row, from left to right:

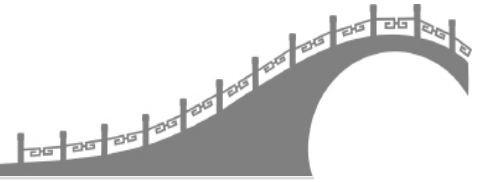
3. In 2003: The artist Qian Zhusheng visited Sankt Augustin.
4. In 2003: Cardinal Joseph Zen of Hong Kong visited the then Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop (now Cardinal) Dr. Giovanni Lajolo in Berlin.
5. In 2011: Cao Bin, Director of the Bureau of Religious Affairs in Shanghai, visited Sankt Augustin (here with Dr. Piotr Adamek SVD, Monumenta Serica, and Fr. Weber).

Visits followed by bishops from Beijing, Xi'an, Hebei Province, Manchuria or Xinjiang, to name but a few. Today it is frequently priests and sisters who come to visit the China Center, among them many who are studying in other European countries or in the USA.

The China Center is also in contact with the growing number of researchers in Chinese universities and academies who study religions and Christianity and occasionally with representatives of Religious Affairs Bureaus. Contacts exist not only with Mainland China but also with Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao.

The China Center also has an intermediary role in the organization and accompaniment of Church representatives' visits to China. These are significant moments of encounter and exchange. Such bridges to China in the Church-religious field will also be needed in the future.





### On the Way to the Future

The China Center wanted to be a bridge, a bridge to a China that is opening up to the world. Countless people have crossed this bridge over the past 25 years – in both directions. They have all given and received, enriched each other mutually and come closer together.

In precisely these past 25 years China has become a highly visible global player and is taking an ever more active role in the development and shape of the world. Without doubt, in this development the religions also gain rapidly in significance. In this context bridges are more necessary than ever to promote encounter and understanding. The China Center wishes to continue and expand this bridge function into the future.

Against the background of social change, the China Center wants to continue offering reliable information and in intensive dialogue with Chinese partners to continue its task effectively, especially in the field of culture and religion, as well as supporting the Christian churches in their development towards more authenticity and greater freedom. In this it feels encouraged by the realization that the local Church is carrying out its mandate of proclaiming the gospel and its social responsibility in Chinese society with growing commitment.

In our focus on this aim we gratefully recognize how united we are with all the institutions and persons who have so generously supported and accompanied the China Center throughout the past years. We will still be dependent on your trust and help in future. We will endeavor to carry out our goals and the activities connected with them in close collaboration with our friends and benefactors and in continued exchange of ideas and experience.

The China Center Team

Photos: China Center Archives

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