

## Colloquium “Challenges of Evangelisation – China and Europe”

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### Introduction

The title of the 9th European Catholic China Colloquium ECCC itself – “Challenges of Evangelisation – China and Europe” – aroused high expectations, which the great amount of information and the fruitful encounters alone fulfilled. The title evokes much – not least Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), which is concerned with the “proclamation of the gospel in today’s world.” It would also have been unthinkable without Vatican II and its missionary dynamism, made particularly effective in the Decree



Group photo of the conference participants. In the first row from left to right: Chinese religious sisters with Fr. Antoni Koszorz SVD, Archbishop Savio Hon SDB, Cardinal John Tong and Bishop Jan Piotrowski (Kielce Diocese). Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

A selection of the conference presentations appears, spread over several issues, in English in *Religions & Christianity in Today's China*, in a German translation in *China heute* (for both periodicals see [www.china-zentrum.de](http://www.china-zentrum.de)) as well as a Polish translation in *Chiny Dzisiaj* (Sinicum, Warsaw, [www.sinicum.pl](http://www.sinicum.pl)).

on the Mission Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes* which states, “In the present state of affairs [...] the Church [...] is more urgently called upon to save and renew every creature, that all things may be restored in Christ and all men may constitute one family in Him and one people of God” (AG 1). December 7, 2015 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of this important mission document by Paul VI. It is still relevant. Our present “world state of affairs” has not yet caught up with and certainly not overtaken it.

The 9th European Catholic China Colloquium (ECCC) took place from 10–13 September 2015 in the small city of Konstancin-Jeziorna, situated to the southeast of Warsaw. It was the second time, since 1999, that an ECCC was held in Poland. The venue this time was the Mission and Formation Center of the Pallotines which offered sufficient room for the 125 participants hailing from 17 countries. The languages of the conference were Chinese and English. The simultaneous translation was excellent and thus everyone could understand the talks and contributions. In addition a handbook in which most of the talks had been printed was available. Working groups were arranged according to language, making translation unnecessary. A large number of Chinese who are studying in Europe, as well as many Polish, attended the Colloquium. There were both very young participants and older ones, among whom a few could be called “old China hands” (Jerome Heyndrickx, CICM as well as Jean Charbonnier, MEP). Many already knew each other from their participation in earlier ECCCs. Unfortunately hardly any representatives from German aid agencies attended.

The first such event took place in Verona in December 1992, entitled “European Catholic China Meeting,” on the topic “Prospects of Catholic Cooperation with China in the Present International Context,” the second was in Paris in November 1995 with the theme “Europe – China Theological Exchanges.” Then followed in Krynica Morska (Poland) in September 1999 the “Third European Catholic China Colloquium” with the theme “The Catholic Church in China: Message, Response, and Commitment” and the “Fourth European Catholic China Colloquium” in Louvain (Belgium) in September 2003 entitled “Mutual Confirmation in Faith;” the “Seventh European Catholic China Colloquium” in Triuggio (Milan) in September 2006 had as theme “25 Years of Encounters with the Church in China. An Evaluation, Looking to the Future,” the “8th European Catholic China Colloquium” in Freising in September 2010 took up the topic “Chinese in Europe – Trends and Catholic Perspectives.” Since (due to a misunderstanding in the numbering) there was neither a 5th nor a 6th colloquium of this kind, this year’s colloquium was actually not the 9th but the 7th.

The Colloquium was organised by the China-Zentrum (China Center) and by Sinicum in Warsaw. Finance was provided by Church in Need, Missio Aachen, the Pontifical Society of Missionary Childhood, the Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart and the Archdioceses of Cologne, Munich and Freising as well as Paderborn. On the Polish side financial support came from the Bishop of Opole, the Diocese of Gliwice, the Mission Commission of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, the Polish Province of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the Mission Secretariat of the Franciscans, the Pallotines, the parish of the

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Swarzewo, the Polish Province of the Divine Word Missionaries and the Silesian School of Iconography.

## Colloquium

In the early afternoon of September 10, the Colloquium was opened by Fr. **Antoni Koszorz, SVD**, Director of Sinicum. The “Michał Boym SJ Sinicum Society,” named for a 17th century Polish missionary to China, was founded in 2011. Sinicum’s main task is to further cultural, social and religious exchange between Poland and China and to help the Catholic Church in China. Among other things it offers a course of several weeks on the *vita consecrata*, as well as three-year courses in sacred art for Chinese Sisters. The presence, even though brief, of Cardinal **Kazimierz Nycz**, Archbishop of Warsaw, was a sign of the Polish Bishops’ Conference’s esteem for the Colloquium. The Cardinal also spoke words of greeting. Msgr. **Jerzy Mazur, SVD**, bishop of the diocese of Elk and chairman of the mission commission of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, mentioned a mission initiative of this year, namely the IV National Mission Congress (June 2015). The Director of the China Center, Fr. **Martin Welling, SVD**, welcomed everyone in the name of the Center. He emphasized the great respect shown by German Catholics for their Chinese brothers and sisters in the faith. He said that he himself admired their mission commitment, shown by the loving welcome they give to non-Christians.



From left to right: Cardinal Nycz, Archbishop Hon, Fr. Welling. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

The actual opening talk was given by Archbishop **Savio Hon Tai-Fai, SDB**, Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples since 2010. His topic was, “What Does Evangelisation Mean to Us? China and Europe Perspective. Some Inspirations from Cardinal Celso Costantini.” Savio Hon traced a line from the mission mandate of Jesus Christ (Mt 28:16-20) to more recent Church documents such as the Apostolic Exhorta-

tion *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI. Mainly, however, he spoke about a talk of Celso Costantini (1876–1958), Delegate Apostolic for China and later, 1927, Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, given at the inauguration of the Catholic Fu Jen University in Peking on the topic of “Know Thyself.” Even if this talk with its praise of patriotism was historically interesting, a number of the Colloquium participants would have welcomed a more intensive connection with current problems. Students’ protests, for instance, were rejected across the board as useless by Costantini. Savio Hon did, however, point strongly to social injustices in materialistic China.

The second presentation of the first day of the Colloquium was close to the present times. The topic addressed by Fr. **Paul Han, SVD** was “The Church in China Urgently



Fr. Paul Han SVD. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

Needs the Attitude and Spirit of Francis.” Han is on the board of directors of Jinde Charities Foundation, a Catholic NGO founded in 1997 with the title “Beifang Jinde Catholic Social Service Center” in Shijiazhuang, the capital city of Hebei Province. This organization concentrates on aid for marginalized groups. After the earthquake in Sichuan in 2008, it acted as a partner of Caritas international. Han began his very critical talk with an appreciation of the commitment of Pope Francis for the poor and especially for China. 400 years after Matteo Ricci’s efforts in China, he said, the Catholic Church was still only a “little flock” among the almost 1.4 billion strong population. Since the beginning of

the somewhat freer 1980s, the Church, according to him, has paid ever more attention to its tasks of pastoral ministry and evangelisation, also using quite modern media as, e.g. microblogging. The overheated development of the economy, the growing gap between poor and rich, corruption, the break-up of family structures, AIDS and increasing criminal rates among the youth present a huge challenge. More difficulties, he stated, came from the division between the open Church and the underground Church, the unsolved diocesan structures, as well as the non-existence of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and China. He mentioned the efforts of Pope Francis to regain contact with the Chinese government. Francis invited us to re-read the letter written in 2007 by Pope Benedict XVI to the Catholics in China. It justifiably states that the Church in China ought to unite in reconciliation. Han’s talk clearly showed that he esteems and admires Francis’ modesty, openness and down-to-earth focus. He quoted, not without reason, the following passage from his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (49):

*I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures.*

A serious problem, according to Han, is the antiquated theological thought in the Chinese Church. On the other hand that is positively balanced by an increase of the faithful due to

baptisms of non-believers. The transition to a new way of thinking and a new spirituality is very difficult, said Han, especially since rapid urbanization brings great radical changes, also particularly for younger priests and religious from the countryside. Not a few have left the priesthood. Secularization and materialism contributed to that. At present there is a crisis of vocations. These needs were being met, said Han, on the part of some dioceses and orders through on-going courses in the Faith – also for lay persons. Help with personnel and finances are made available from outside the country. Han recommended that the Church should learn from the vicissitudes of its history (the Rites Controversy and the sufferings of the Cultural Revolution), so that it could finally lose its image as a “foreign religion.” His question, “Is it possible to be a real Chinese and at the same time be a faithful Christian?” was merely rhetorical. In closing Han quoted the China missionary Vincent Lebbe (1877–1940): “China belongs to the Chinese, the Chinese belong to Christ!” [See the text of Paul Han’s talk in the last issue of *RCTC* 2015, Nos. 3-4, pp. 45-59.]

## Church and State: Service and Power

The Colloquium as a whole was divided into four sessions with presentations and a closing session. The first session dealt with the topic “Church–State Relations: Service and Power.” It showed how different these relations are, depending on whether the Church wishes or has to live (survive) in a free nation or an authoritarian or dictatorial one.

Msgr. Dr. habil **Józef Kloch**, speaker of the Polish Bishops’ Conference from 2003–2015 and Professor at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, opened this session with a talk on “Relationships Between the Church and the State: Poland’s Case (1989–2014). The Debate in the Media.” Listening to him speaking of the present, one felt somewhat reminded of a lament. Whereas the Catholic Church played a major role when it supported the trade union *Solidarność* in 1980 and thereafter until the country was freed from Communism in 1989, that changed greatly to the disadvantage of the Church especially during the first decade of this century. Up until the fall of the Socialist system, press and media supported by the Church had eked out ever more freedom. Consequently the Church was greatly respected. In the debates of the late 1990s, the Church was recognized as a serious partner in the debate with the State, searching for the common good. The most significant discussion at that time concerned the new Constitution (1997). Its preamble expresses respect for both believers and non-believers and is, therefore, neutral. The practice of religion, religious instruction in schools, pastoral care in the army and more were established. Kloch stressed that the Polish Constitution could serve as a model for other countries. A concordat had been established between the Polish State and the Vatican that regulates the relationship of the State with the Church in Poland – together with an improvement in the protection of life. In addition in the 1990s moral questions dominated the discussion in the media, including family planning and defense of life in general. During that time as well, many of the public officials were scrutinized with regard to whether they had collaborated with the Communist secret service. At that time the Church was excluded from such scrutiny, for after all Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Warsaw’s Archbishop, was a person of integrity in the resistance. Kloch also mentioned the

reverence of the Polish Pope John Paul II that became very clear once more at his death in 2005. Immediately afterwards, however, the Church went on the defensive. It had been found that Church personnel had also collaborated with the secret service. Kloch accused the media of sensationalism. They had also criticized the Church regarding questions of bio-ethics (in vitro fertilization). The Church had, however, opposed this method with the NaPro-Technology (natural procreative technology). The Church was also criticized over a number of pedophile cases. Kloch formulated his conclusion: “A new trend, unknown before, emerged – intentional anti-Church texts.”

Prof. **Liu Peng**, Founder and Director of the Pushi Institute for Social Sciences (Beijing), gave a talk on “Religion and Rule of Law in China Today.” His Institute regularly



Professor Liu Peng. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

conducts summer courses and conferences on questions of religion and the rule of law. Liu Peng stressed that China needs a law on religion, also to regulate the relationship between State and Church. Regulations pertaining up till now were not satisfactory, he maintained. That applies, for example, to questions of the finances of the religious communities. Problems were arising increasingly also due to new sects and the opposition of official and non-official religions. Added to that, he stated, came ethnic problems in the autonomous regions Tibet (Buddhism) and Xinjiang. In addition many people misuse religion to enrich themselves. There were some very rich temples and even false Buddhist monks, as well. Completely

different difficulties arose from the tearing down of crosses and churches. Yet again, the Catholic Church has problems with state recognition of its bishops appointed by the Pope. The solution to many of these problems failed due to a lack of legal regulations, as well as the lack of a constitutional court in China, thus Liu Peng. Since 1954 the constitution of the People’s Republic of China does mention freedom of religion but the term itself was not defined. The privately owned Pushi Institute presented its own draft for a law on religion in 2013. The authorities for religion, however, were not in favour of a law of that kind, Liu said. Liu Peng emphasized that to achieve a good law, broad citizens’ participation and a public process would be necessary.

**Richard Madsen**, Professor for Sociology at the University of California (San Diego) and Fudan University (Shanghai), spoke on “Church–State Relations in China – Consequences for the Catholic Church.” According to Madsen these relations are a confusing, unstable mixture of Leninist-Stalinist policy and traditional imperial practice, neither of which adequately fits the realities of contemporary Chinese society. The Leninist-Stalinist policy, he said, was originally devised to weaken and control the Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union but was then imposed on all Communist countries. In Poland with its strong Catholic Church it only worked in a weakened form. In China the policy did not fit most forms of religion, which were not organized in hierarchies and were embedded in local community life. It was different for the Catholic Church. Unintentionally it



Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

strengthened the social solidarity of the faithful in the Catholic communities. Since the Catholic Church in the countryside “was as much local folk religion as hierarchical world religion,” said Madsen, “the dismantling of the hierarchy could not dislodge Catholic identity.” The low growth rate of the Catholic Church compared to the Protestant can be explained, according to Madsen, by the fact that the clergy could easily be controlled by the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. The evolving over-all approach of the Communists seems to be inspired more by the practices of the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties than by Marxist–Leninism. Under

the heading “cultural pluralism” and “intangible cultural heritage” the State today tolerates a broad range of religious expression (practices). But, stated Madsen, this is not out of regard for the right to form a religious association and the separation of Church and State. Rather it is based on the imperial principle that the State is the master and religion the follower. The Chinese emperor combined the “western” roles of king and pope. Even today the State decides whether a religion is considered orthodox or heterodox and thus is to be forbidden. In any case, the indigenous religions such as Daoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and folk religion are preferred. Due to its global connections, Catholicism is regarded as particularly problematic. The new and to some extent incoherent approaches toward religion/s are, thought Madsen, the consequence of a leadership that is not sure of its nationalistic cause. That could change, however, when China becomes more secure in its global status. The increasing dynamics of the religions could ultimately also lead to positive changes. [See the text of Richard Madsen’s talk in the last issue of *RCTC* 2015, Nos. 3-4, pp. 60-68.]

**Dmitry I. Petrovsky**, Representative of the Department for External Church Relations of Moscow Patriarchate, gave a talk on “Perspectives and Experiences of the Russian Orthodox Church Regarding Evangelization in Russia and China.” The speaker made reference to the 330 years’ history of orthodoxy in China, including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. It included both Russian Orthodox Christians who for various reasons had come to China and Chinese who had accepted baptism. He explained that the Orthodox Church is universal but is composed of different national, autonomous churches. In China, however, it is not (yet) recognized at the national level. The Orthodox Church is currently involved in a protracted dialogue with the Chinese State. The aim is that the Chinese Government would recognize a Chinese Autonomous Orthodox Church. Only then would it be allowed to obtain the urgently needed training institutions. Today the Orthodox Church in China numbers about 15,000 faithful, of whom the majority are ethnic Russians. In the concept of a “harmonious society” Petrovsky sees an advantage, since religion could promote harmony, including a patriotic attitude. It was informative to hear that Petrovsky stressed the loyalty that the members of his Church show the authorities –

including government authorities. Reciprocal visits by high ranking representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church on the one hand and of the Chinese State Administration for Religious Affairs on the other had variously taken place. One highlight to date was the visit of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to Beijing in May 2013. Kirill also met with President Xi Jinping. The maintenance or restoration of Church buildings was a positive aspect. In everything the faithful had to concentrate on the “salvific mission of Christ and His Church.” In Russia, on the other hand, the Church had to carry out missionary activity among the Chinese living there. [See the text of Dmitry Petrovsky’s talk in this issue.]

## Experiences of Evangelisation

The second round of talks took up the very concrete theme of “Experiences of Evangelisation.” The first speaker was **John Cardinal Tong Hon**, Bishop of Hong Kong Diocese. He



Cardinal John Tong. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

emphasized with *Ad Gentes* (2), the Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church, that the pilgrim Church “is missionary by its very nature.” The Catholic community in Hong Kong which began in 1841 – at the time there were a few Irish soldiers in the small fishing village – has in the meantime grown to over 560,000 members today. That made Hong Kong the largest Chinese diocese in the world. The Cardinal cited a few numbers regarding Church personnel (around 300 priests and 500 religious sisters). He also spoke about his own life. The diocese of Hong Kong, said the Cardinal, stood on three “legs” – parishes, schools and social services, and had four main pastoral concerns. The

first is evangelisation. Every year they count around 7,000 baptisms. Half of those are adults. Also important, he said, were initiatives geared to deepening the faith. In September 2016 a Catholic university is due to open. The second concern is the promotion of vocations. Hong Kong urgently needed more priests, sisters and permanent deacons, as well as lay missionaries. There are already some lay missionaries from Hong Kong working in Asia and Africa. The third priority is pastoral work among non-Chinese Catholics. The largest group are the guest workers from the Philippines, mainly domestic employees. The fourth priority is Hong Kong’s task as bridge between the Church in Mainland China and the Universal Church. Cardinal Tong expressed his esteem for the exemplary missionary spirit that he had come to recognize in many Catholics – priests, sisters and lay persons. The personal contact with people is always necessary if we wish to lead them to Christ. He expressed his hope that the Catholics in Mainland would in future be able to enjoy full religious freedom. He closed with a prayer to “Our Lady of Sheshan.” [See the text of Cardinal Tong’s talk in the last issue of *RCTC* 2015, Nos. 3-4, pp. 69-75.]



A Chinese priest reported on faith formation and evangelisation work in his diocese. Within China itself it counts as one of the largest dioceses. After years of continual effort in the field of faith formation and evangelisation it could now serve as a model, the priest said. The youth are particularly addressed and are formed in the faith by means of courses and summer camps. Otherwise in the secular environment of the universities they would easily lose their faith. A few years ago a youth center was specifically set up. Those in responsibility are aware that the youth is the future of the Church. Young persons can take training as (certified) youth leaders. They spread the Gospel among non-Christian youth among whom, by the way, the feast of Christmas has a special attraction. Annually a number of students come forward for baptism. Something is also being done for high school students and young workers. The mission mandate (Mt 28:19) applies to every Christian.

Fr. **Bruno Lepeu, MEP** (Hong Kong) spoke on “Evangelisation among young people in China since 2005.” In the mid-2000s a few priests and religious sisters were sent abroad for further studies on youth ministry. One difficulty lies in the increasingly rapid succession of young generations. While high school students can only be reached with difficulty, it is different with university students. They have more time. Their numbers are strongly increasing. In 2014 there were 7.27 million university graduates. Many are willing to work for a better world. However, it is prohibited to promote religion in the universities. In some cities, however, the Church offers a wide range of religious events for students (pilgrimages, larger meetings, formation and prayer). Marriage preparation courses are well visited, even by non-Christians. In all this, personal spiritual accompaniment is important. There are many opportunities to renew the life of the Church with the help of young persons. [See the text of Bruno Lepeu’s talk in this issue.]

Sr. **Teresa Yu**, of the Congregation of Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (China), reported experiences of religious sisters in Mainland in their efforts at evangelisation. The experiences had to be seen against the background of socialism, which propagates values such as well-being, harmony and patriotism and dreams of the restoration of the great Chinese Nation. The pursuit of wealth determines the current value system. The Church was recovering again after the time of massive oppression, she said. At the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, congregations of sisters shot up like bamboo shoots in spring in the whole country – around 60 in the official and 30 in the unofficial Church. Since the sisters’ congregations are diocesan institutes, they mainly serve the local churches in parish work and health care. To fill the spiritual emptiness of modern times, the sisters also organized retreats, for example, and care of the aged. Their institutional and material dependence is often a hindrance. There is a growing gap between the demands made on them and their possibilities. A number of sisters are suffering a psychological crisis. Therefore it is good to see that more efforts are being made to give the sisters more spiritual and pastoral formation.

Fr. **Anthony Chiu Hung-Jen, SVD** (Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei) gave a talk on “Experiences of Evangelisation: Taiwan.” He also touched on the history of the Catholic Church in Taiwan that today comprises seven dioceses. After the overthrow of the Kuomintang in 1949, very many Chinese fled from Mainland to Taiwan. Some of them found a new “home” in the Church. Among the aboriginal population of Taiwan, Chiu said, the

Church had enjoyed a successful mission. Today there are in all around 300,000 Catholics – of whom two-thirds are active – and about twice as many Protestants in a total population of a good 23 million. The Catholic Church works very much in the area of education and social work, including among others for migrant workers. Many “lay apostles” help, according to Chiu. Unfortunately, however, the Church will for a long time still be very dependent on foreign Church personnel (mainly priests and sisters from other Asian countries). For that reason also the inculturation of the Good News is still in its initial phase. A model for mission and evangelisation would need to be developed, taking into account characteristic features of the society and culture/s of Taiwan.

Prof. Dr. **Fredrik Fällmann**, Professor of Sinology at the University of Gothenburg (Sweden), set an ecumenical accent. He spoke on “A Chinese Protestant Perspective on



Prof. Fredrik Fällmann. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

Evangelisation. Reflections from a European Sinologist.” The Protestant Church has grown very rapidly, he said, since the 1980s. In the 1950s the government had prohibited the individual denominations and yet today a strong denominational return can be observed. For China evangelisation in small groups is important, because they can give a feeling of social belonging. Also Bible reading is greatly important for Chinese Protestants – including learning text excerpts by heart. The healing power of prayer and accompanying miracles are

also significant, he stated. Intellectuals are working towards an evangelisation of Chinese culture. They are also open to socio-political commitment. A Chinese woman pastor once said: “We must stir the people up.” She was probably thinking of Paul and Silas of whom the Acts of the Apostles reports (16:20): “These men are causing a disturbance in our city.”

## Inculturation, Media, Art

The third session was devoted to “Inculturation, Media, Art.” Dr. **Giuseppe Jing**, Director of the Matteo Ricci Study Centre (Macerata/Italy), opened it with a quite theory-oriented talk on “The Evangelisation of Culture and Inculturation of Christian Faith in China – The Humanistic-Social Context of Contemporary China: An Opportunity or a Challenge?” Jing examined the connection between evangelisation, culture and inculturation of the faith from early Christian times down to present day China. He pointed out that every Christian ought to regard evangelisation as his/her mission or task. The early Christians had a pronounced sense of that. They had already had to inculturate the faith in diverse societies. The term inculturation found its way into an official Church document of John Paul II in 1979. Cardinal Ratzinger later made use of the concept of interculturality to show clearly that the Good News passed over from the culture of the one proclaiming



Conference participants during one of the lectures. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

it into the culture of the receiver. Although the universal Good News transcends the individual cultures, according to Jing it has to be transmitted into them. The individual cultures have to assimilate it into themselves. Naturally that is also valid for the Chinese culture. The Church is enmeshed in the context of the challenges presented by secularization and globalization. Christians would have to be open to them in society. Since there is no (legitimate) bishops' conference, more would have to be done independently at the diocesan level. In many cases, however, dioceses lack, e.g. a priests' council, professional commissions, structured planning. Helplessness and inadequacy often shape the picture. In addition there is a lack of commitment and social responsibility. Jing partially judged the condition of the local churches very critically. He did, however, make suggestions for the improvement of the situation. The Church in China ought to acquire competence and knowledge in many fields. For that Jing recommended forming, for want of a functioning bishops' conference, a team of committed and dedicated Chinese Catholic intellectuals, who are competent in the fields of philosophy, sociology, religious studies and canon law. Such a team could help Church communities to purposefully take up measures for improvement, to understand the needs in society and to help form the spirit of a "humanistic" society. The aim is to overcome China's "spiritual vacuum." Chinese intellectuals were longing to shape a new culture, said Jing. For that, values such as love, fidelity and justice would be necessary. The social teaching of the Church could help in that, as well as an inculturated and contextualized theology. Jing spoke of an "evangelisation of the (Chinese) culture." In that way "Christ's dream" and "China's dream" could be fulfilled. Catholic intellectual communities and the elite in society would have to cooperate actively here.

Fr. **Li Rongpin**, Director of Faith Press (Shijiazhuang), gave a talk on “The Role and Functions of the Church Media in China.” The media are often regarded as a yardstick to measure the progress and development of a society. *Inter mirifica*, the Vatican II *Decree on the Means of Social Communication*, already described the media as “wonderful technological discoveries” (IM 1). They ought to be used, among other things, for pastoral evangelisation and the promotion of social justice. Church media could contribute an irreplaceable freshness to the partially chaotic secular media landscape. The staff of Faith Press, founded in 1991, endeavor to accomplish that. The main thing is to give reliable information and to show the role of the Church, i.e. the Christians, as “salt of the earth” and “light of the world” – through information, reports and proclamation of the Word of God. It would also mean mobilizing people for good purposes. Printed matter and use of the Internet, including for interaction between those making the media and those using them, would be the means for that. There are (government) restrictions regarding what may be published. In spite of that Faith Press must be developed further and the contact to the Universal Church improved.

**Isabel Hess-Friemann** (Heidelberg, Germany), who lived in China from 2004 to 2012 and is currently chairwoman of the Protestant section of the German Ecumenical China Working Group, gave a talk on “Evangelisation Through Art in China: A Protestant Perspective.” To give the audience an impression of modern Christian art in China she showed a number of Christian works of art in a Power Point Presentation. She emphasized that Christian Chinese express their faith also through the traditional Chinese art forms of calligraphy and paper-cutting, woodcuts and oil painting. For places of worship and also in the home they use signs for, among other things, faith, love and hope. The character for fish, e.g. is a very catchy symbol as the pronunciation of its character *yu* is the same as the character for increase and this character is used on porcelain dishes. On the other hand the cross proves problematic for a culture that is centered on harmony and happiness. One possibility, she stated, was to present the cross as a source of light and life. Then the aspect of suffering would not be so much in the forefront. In the Protestant Church such Christian Chinese artwork has become popular since the 1990s. Hess-Friemann mentioned among others the paper-cutting artist Fan Pu, the woodcut artist Qian Zhusheng, Ying De (oil painting) and Dao Zi, who produced the 2015 abstract hunger cloth for Misereor, “God and Gold – how much is enough?” There is now a tendency towards newer, more complex presentations and techniques. The number of artists as well as the range of their work for the proclamation of the Good News with paintbrush and colour is still expanding. The listeners would have liked to hear much more, e.g. on the altogether rather meagre acceptance of modern art in the churches. Time, however, was much too short. Consequently they had to do without an answer to the question whether alongside pictorial art there was Christian music, literature, sculpture or architecture.

## Formation for Evangelisation

The fourth session comprised the topic “Formation for Evangelisation“. The priest Professor Dr. **Krzysztof Pawlina**, Rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Warsaw,



Participants are exchanging their opinions during the Colloquium. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

opened the session with a lecture on “Experiences of the School of Leaders of New Evangelisation.” This “School”, founded in Warsaw in 2011, aims by means of studies and workshops over the course of an entire year (on ten Saturdays) to train mature persons for religious leadership. After the course they ought to be capable of spiritual guidance of (groups of) people. John Paul II first used the expression “New Evangelisation” in 1979. In his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (1990) he distinguished three types of redemptive activity in the Church: the mission among non-believers, service to and for Christians and new evangelisation for Christians who had lost their faith. For the purpose of new evangelisation he, Pawlina, had then established the above-mentioned School. Trained as religious leaders are among others, psychologists, management professionals and business people. In the meantime around 300 leaders from 26 of the 41 dioceses of Poland have gone through the formation. Unlike in former times, young people in Poland had first to be introduced to Christ through personal talks and contact. Proclamation (*kerygma*) comes before catechesis which presumes the presence of faith. For its proclamation new evangelisation make use of different methods, among others electronic media, dance and music, as well as drama. Neither priests nor lay persons possess the truth, he maintained, rather they have to discover it together in service with and for one another.

**Jean Luc Moens** (Emmanuel Community, Rome) spoke on “Experiences and Visions Regarding Evangelisation in (Western) Europe.” Moens spoke of not just an economic but a spiritual crisis in Europe, marked by increasing secularization, individualism, materialism and a “dictatorship of relativism” (Benedict XVI). In many cities one can speak of evangelisation *ad gentes* because nowadays people from numerous – also non-European – nations live there, many of them Moslems. The missionary dynamic of the Church began with Pentecost, i.e. with the coming of the Holy Spirit. Moens explained that the Church had time and again overcome crises throughout its history. Again and again God acted in history through saints and through religious orders and communities. For the present

time Moens enumerated among others the Focolare Movement, *Comunione e Liberazione*, the Emmanuel Community, the Neocatechumenate and Sant’Egidio, as well as the Charismatic Renewal. A specific characteristic of these communities is the fact that they include members from all states of life. They respond to today’s challenges, to the decline of faith by offering a genuine experience of faith, to the thirst for spirituality by returning to prayer and liturgy, to sadness and loneliness by fraternity and joy, to individualism with a spirit of community, to materialism through compassion and sharing, to relativism with religious formation. Well trained and motivated members of the new communities become missionaries themselves, Moens said.

Fr. **Jean Charbonnier, MEP** (Paris), who was first in China in 1977, spoke on the topic of “The Priests’ Responsibility in Communicating with Non-Christians.” Charbonnier has a great deal of experience with Chinese priests who studied theology in France. His specific attention went to those who thought they could not find work with an income as a parish priest in China and had therefore given up. They had not been aware that a priest could be a good shepherd for all people. As reasons for this lack of awareness he named growing up in a traditional Catholic village community and a seminary formation which emphasized canonical duties (administering sacraments) and on the other hand placed little value on dialogue with others. In addition some of the priests were sent to study in Europe without having any pastoral experience and had great difficulties with abstract terminology and critical procedures. Thus later on they were not able to discuss their faith with non-Christians. Charbonnier’s question was, whether the French model of priests living and working among non-Christians, whether the Mission de France and whether the worker priests could be a model for China. He named Charles de Foucauld (murdered in 1916) who worked among the Tuareg in the Sahara. Urbanization in China was bringing a new, dynamic Catholic life in the cities. Charbonnier wished that priests would be prepared for this new life and already enabled during their formation to dialogue confidently with non-religious youth or those adhering to other religions. The formation ought also to include reading those Chinese authors who criticized the formalistic characteristics of Confucianism and had opened the way to personal responsibility and social awareness. Inculturation may not be too much concentrated on Confucianism but must also include the Daoist masters and their encouragement towards inner freedom and creativity. Buddhist criticism of ego-centeredness and its care for the suffering could be related to the Christian mystery of salvation. He also recommended that seminarians at Chinese seminaries become acquainted with modern writers such as Lu Xun (1881–1936). Chinese priests, predominantly diocesan priests, ought to meet regularly, their bishops ought to have sufficient authority and cultivate good connections to their priests. It is important, said Charbonnier, that priests make a specific contribution to evangelisation and that they give a witness of humility, service and charity.

Fr. **Norman Jennings, SSCME** (Columban Missionaries, Ireland) spoke on the topic of the “Challenges and Opportunities of Formation Programs for Chinese Students – the Example of Ireland.” Jennings is coordinator of the formation program for Chinese seminarians in his Congregation. After Vatican II there was a demand for a holistic approach to study and integration into the community. From the mid-1980s on, Columbans had again



Sr. Weronika Klebba SSs, one of the main organizers from Sinicum, with Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Papal Nuncio to Poland. Photo: Mariola Krystecka.

been able to visit China. They were asked by bishops, priests and sisters to help with the ongoing formation of Church personnel. A decade later they had financed theology studies in Ireland for priests and professed sisters. Since those had been formed in “pre-Vatican II” models, they found it difficult to adjust to critical and participatory study. Moreover, the majority needs intensive English courses. They also find it difficult, according to Jennings, to talk with others about their thoughts and feelings. Yet that is necessary for them to become mature personalities. The Manresa Jesuit Centre of Spirituality (Dublin) offers courses in Spiritual Direction – and also a one-year Master’s degree course. Today Chinese students get to know an Irish Church that has lost a great deal of influence. Perhaps they are surprised that, in spite of that, much is spoken or written in the media about faith, religion and spirituality.

## Summary and Outlook

On 13 September, the final day of the Colloquium, Fr. **Jerom Heyndrickx CICM** (Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, Louvain) moderated the closing session “Summary and Outlook” with the question: “Where should our China concern in Europe be directed to in the future? What is our mission?” Joining him on the rostrum were Archbishop Savio Hon, Dr. Anthony Lam of the Holy Spirit Study Centre in Hong Kong, Sr. Teresa Yu and Katharina Wenzel-Teuber from the China Center. Hopes and possible tasks were presented by the working groups, as well as from the panel. They are listed here somewhat unsystematically: Formation and ongoing formation of priests, sisters and lay persons; further formation for bishops (including in the field of management and human resources); strategies and methods of evangelisation: propagation of Church social doctrine; social apostolate;

promotion of ecumenism; interreligious dialogue; care of and about children and young persons; celebration – also ecumenical – of the world day of prayer for China (24 May); continuation of financial, personnel and methodological (training) help from without but empowerment of the Church in China; setting up networks in China for the purpose of coordinating personnel resources and joint efforts for evangelisation; expansion of a network of the Chinese Catholic communities in Europe that accompany Chinese Catholics pastorally and at the same time serve as bridges to the local churches as well as to non-Christian Chinese in Europe. It was also emphasized that a European Catholic China Colloquium should take place every four to five years. The next one should be prepared and organized by the China Center. It would be necessary to establish an organizing committee for that. The China Center should also endeavor to provide for more networking and communication among the “centers” in Europe that are concerned with China or with the Church in China.

The goal of the Colloquium was to bring together “representatives of relevant institutions in Europe who are involved in this topic or persons with a special interest in or engagement with China and the Church in China.” That succeeded well. The Colloquium enjoyed great attention from the media. The Director of the China Center Fr. Martin Well- ing, SVD, the Director of Sinicum Fr. Antoni Koszorz, SVD, Fr. Dr. Piotr Adamek, SVD

(Director of the Monumenta Serica Institute in Sankt Augustin) and Dr. Anthony Lam of the Holy Spirit Study Centre answered questions during a press conference with 15 journalists shortly before the Colloquium took place.

Even if not all talks were excellent – as is only to be expected at a meeting of this size – they did in any case offer a great deal of information. Some gave impressive and hopeful testimony of the work in the atelier of evangelisation. Overlapping of topics was unavoidable. To those who know the situation of the Catholic and also of the Protestant Church in China naturally not everything was new. After the presentations good use was often made of the chance to ask questions. The availability of different moderators brought added liveliness to the Colloquium. It was especially gratifying that the Colloquium had a strong ecumenical component – totally in line with Jn 17:11: “ut unum sint.” One could have wished for more reports of experiences from Europe. The celebration of Mass in the Center chapel engendered a good, inspiring, spiritual accent. The Colloquium closed in great gratitude with a Eucharistic celebration presided by Cardinal Tong. It remains to be hoped that the Colloquium will be effective.