



Verbiest Update

Information on the activities of
Verbiest Institute KULeuven, Verbiest Institute Taipei
And Chinese College Leuven
sent by e-mail, occasionally by **Verbiest Foundation** to its friends
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Verbiest Foundation joins General Audience at Rome

On April 25, feast of St. Mark, the 26 Chinese priests attending the Verbiest Spring Session at KU Leuven joined the General Papal Audience at St. Peter Square. The General Audience marked the end of their Rome pilgrimage.



At the end of the Audience they were invited to have a short encounter with His Holiness, Pope Francis. During the encounter, a priest from Inner Mongolia presented the Pope with a chasuble that was handmade by the Mongolian Catholics of Inner Mongolia (China). The Pope blessed the Church in Inner Mongolia as a sign of gratitude for their gift and their Christian witnessing. In a brief dialogue, the Pope shared with the Chinese priests some encouraging words; His Holiness said that he supports their pastoral and evangelizing work in their dioceses back in China and keep them in his prayers. The Pope also asked the Chinese parish priests to keep him in their prayers.

Today's General Audience was centered on the catechesis on baptism through the inspiration of the letter to the Philippians (4:13). It was quite an encouraging and meaningful address for us all: "In any and all circumstances...I can do all things in Him who strengthens me". In baptism, said the Pope, we have been anointed with the Sacred Oil of the Spirit to get us ready to overcome all challenges we may face in life.



The Pope also had a special prayer in view of the April 27 Inter Korean Summit. He asked the Lord, and all related leaders, that it may become a right step towards long-lasting reconciliation and peace.

Verbiest Foundation continues faithful to its aims of keeping open the bridges of dialogue and encounter, built throughout the years, between the Chinese Church and the Universal Church.

Francisco Carin Garcia, cmf

Verbiest Foundation Director

Know and support the China Programs of Verbiest Foundation

- The **Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation** is named after the Belgian Jesuit missionary Ferdinand Verbiest who was a famous astronomer and teacher of Emperor Kangxi in the 18th century. The Foundation was established by CICM missionaries in 1982 at the **Leuven University (Belgium)**.
- Verbiest Foundation is chaired by **Cardinal Jozef De Kesel of Malines (Belgium)**. Members represent the missionary congregations: CICM, OFM, Brothers of Charity. The Foundation sponsors the activities of **Verbiest Institute at Louvain University (Belgium) and of the Verbiest Institute in Taipei** (Central Building, 8th floor). Since May 1, 2009 the Foundation also sponsors the **Chinese College Leuven**. Through these institutes it promotes academic research on the history of the Chinese Catholic Church and pastoral cooperation with the Church in China.
- The **priority concern** of Verbiest Foundation is: to develop a new relationship with the Church in China. **In line with the letter of Pope Benedict XVI it promotes reconciliation and unity inside the Catholic Church without prejudice for or against anyone of the two Church communities in China.**
- The **most efficient way** to help the Church in China is **to invest in the formation of Church personnel**. Therefore the Foundation offers support for **the formation of ministers** (priests, religious, lay catechists) for the Catholic Church in China. The foundation offers scholarships for the formation of priests, religious and also lay ministers. Priority goes to supporting **formation programs inside China**. We invite also priests and religious to come abroad for obtaining a more specialized **formation in the field of evangelization** in institutes in Europe, the USA or the Philippines. Scholars are expected to return to China and teach in Catholic seminaries and formation institutes. We are in direct contact with the dioceses or religious communities in China and we **see to it that the money of donations is well used.**
- The Foundation also responds positively to requests from China to support (small scale) **development projects** in dioceses of N-W China: **Gansu, Qinghai, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia.**
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