



ASIA/CHINA - Diocesan Bishop of Xiamen in China ordained

Xiamen (Agenzia Fides) – On Saturday, May 8, the Feast of Our Lady of China in the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary in Xiamen hosted the episcopal ordination of Bishop Joseph Cai Bingrui of the diocesan clergy, 44 years of age and 18 years of priesthood. He was approved by the Holy See as Bishop of the Diocese of Xiamen (Hsiamen/Amoy) in Fujian, of which he had been Administrator for several years. The Chinese authorities approved his ordination.

The liturgy was presided by Bishop John Fang Xingyao, Bishop of Linyi, assisted by five brothers: Joseph Li Mingshu of Qingdao, Paul Xiao Zejiang of Guiyang, Joseph Xu Honggen of Suzhou, Joseph Cheng Tsai-fa of Taiwan, and Vincent Zhan Silu of Funing/Mindong. These are all bishops in communion with the Holy Father, except one. The episcopal consecration was attended by more than 2,000 faithful and 60 priests. The joy of the Catholics, both official and unofficial, for the gift of a new Pastor was increased by the presence of Archbishop Joseph Cheng Tsai-fa, Archbishop Emeritus of Taipei, who is a native of Xiamen and participated in the celebration together with some priests and lay faithful of Taiwan.

Bishop Cai was born September 15, 1966 into a family of long Catholic tradition. Having completed his studies at the seminary of Sheshan (Shanghai), he was ordained August 15, 1992. Soon after the death of Bishop Joseph Huang Ziyu (April 8, 1991) he was given the leadership of the diocese as Diocesan Administrator, showing capacity for good governance.

The Diocese of Xiamen is located in the southern coastal province of Fujian. It currently has more than 30,000 faithful, mostly farmers or workers. Pastoral care is administered by 10 priests and 15 nuns.

Bishop Cai said a priority will be to rebuild the structures of the diocese, which have remained without a pastor for almost twenty years, to promote vocations, and to strengthen the training of priests and the laity. The new Bishop said he was optimistic about the path of reconciliation within the diocesan community, especially after the letter that the Holy Father sent to the Church in China in 2007, which invites all to forgiveness and reconciliation. In entrusting Bishop Cai Bingrui to the motherly protection of Our Lady of China, the diocesan community hopes that he can carry out, with dedication and love, the pastoral service in Xiamen that the Church has entrusted to him. (Agenzia Fides 14/5/2010)