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ASIA/CHINA - Bishop's death mourned

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – This past August 28, Archbishop John Yang Shudao, Archbishop Emeritus of Fuzhou, passed away in his hometown of Toubao, in the County of Lianjiang, at the age of 91. Archbishop Yang was admitted to the hospital in Fuzhou on August 26, following cardiac arrest.
The Prelate was born April 16, 1919. He entered the minor seminary in Fuzhou in 1933, at the age of 14. After completing his studies in philosophy and theology at the major seminary, he was ordained a priest on October 7, 1947. Archbishop Yang was part of the generation of priests formed in the seminaries in China prior to the Chinese People's Republic. He was ordained a bishop on February 10, 1987.
As a priest, he spent 26 years in prison. In 1955, he was sentenced to life in prison for the cause of the faith and for having refused to deny the Pope's being head of the Catholic Church. Released in 1981, he was once again arrested, this time for 3 years. Afterwards, he almost always lived under house arrest or under strict control.
Those who knew him say he was a man full of zeal, firm and unwavering in his principles, and with a great gift for organization, in spite of the serious difficulties that the Catholic community in the diocese has had to face in recent years.
Archbishop Yang's funeral, obliged to be held in a private manner and under strict surveillance of security forces, was celebrated on September 1.
Faithful across the world unite themselves to their brethren in Fuzhou to pay tribute to a bishop who, in heroic witness to the Gospel and out of fidelity to his faith, spent a third of his life in prison. (Agenzia Fides 03/09/2010)

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