



ASIA/CHINA - Open the door of faith and invoke the Lord so that he "makes us see again": Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of Zheng Ding for the Year of Faith

Feng Xiang (Agenzia Fides) - Open the door of faith, together with our Heavenly Mother, so that the Lord "let us see again" (Luke 18.41): is the invitation addressed to the faithful by His Excellency Msg. Julius Jia Zhi Guo, Bishop of the Diocese of Zheng Ding in the province of He Bei, through his Pastoral Letter for the Year of Faith, signed on the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, August 15, of which a copy was sent to Fides Agency. In the Letter, divided into five chapters, the senior Pastor of one of the largest dioceses in the continent, emphasizes the exhortation of the Pope, the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, what the Catechism of the Catholic Church says about faith, recalling also one of the greatest Chinese philosophers, Lao Zi (600-470 BC), warning the faithful "not to allow their eyes to be covered by the wild material desires that never quench the spiritual thirst of people." Instead one should always invoke: "Lord, let me see you again! (Luke 18.41)".

Mgr. Jia dedicates five chapters of his Letter to as many issues related to the Year of Faith: The Year of Faith and the priest; the Year of Faith and the family; the Year of Faith and Sunday; the pastoral direction; conclusion. With regards to priests, the Bishop presents a detailed analysis of "the priest and the sacrament of thanksgiving", "the priest and the ecclesial communion" and "concelebration and communion." With regards to the family, he highlights a number of issues: the sanctity of marriage and the current crisis, formation, growth and challenges for the Christian family; formation of faith, prayer of the whole family and the happiness of the family; family and vocations; vocation and faith; faith and joy; the challenge of faith. The sacredness of Sunday and the duty to celebrate Sunday are two other points raised by the Bishop in the chapter dedicated to this topic.

In the part concerning the pastoral direction, Mgr. Jia announces a diocesan seminary on the II Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In addition, a test will be carried out on the knowledge of four Constitutions of the II Vatican Council for university students and their teachers, and for secondary school students and for the laity active in parish life, the test will cover the knowledge of the Catechism. The parishes are invited to organize a seminar on the Council and on the Catechism of the Catholic Church because they are opportunities for evangelization and new evangelization. The priests then are required to deepen the Decree "Presbyterorum Ordinis" and religious documents on the consecrated life and the teaching on community life. (NZ) (Agenzia Fides 07/09/2012)