Message from the Chair of Friends of Ricci

With the recent acceleration of technological and social change in China, the world has its eyes fixed on how the Chinese people have been coping with the changing society. On a recent family trip to China, I remember taking a 8 RMB ($1) cab ride to drink a 24 RMB ($3) cup of nonfat vanilla latte at Starbucks. It struck me that the local Chinese population craved the same luxuries that we do. It made me wonder how young Chinese were dealing with the Western influence, while still keeping their Chinese identity. Indeed, there is a crisis looming in the distance for a population of educated young Chinese who see the realities of globalization and industrialization but are not spiritually prepared for the complex issues that come with them.

The USF Ricci Institute has been focused for the last two decades on Chinese-Western exchange. This year, the Institute plans to look into the growth of contemporary spirituality in China. The hope is to inspire young Chinese scholars to explore spirituality and continue to ask questions to help them digest the intangible complexities of our changing world today.

The Friends of Ricci will be launching a fundraising campaign later this year to support this important project. I invite you to join me in leading this program to success.

Isabel Chou
Executive Committee, Friends of Ricci

Goodbye to Fr. Michel Marcil

Fr. Michel Marcil, S.J. a well-known name among Bay Area Chinese Catholic communities and a long time Jesuit friend and colleague for many of us, has accepted a new appointment as the Executive Director of the US-China Catholic Bureau at Seton Hall University (New Jersey). His first day as Executive Director of the Bureau was on June 4, 2007. Fr. Marcil came to the Ricci Institute in 1998 where he worked tirelessly as a program coordinator and served many Chinese Catholic communities in California. Both the Ricci Institute and the local Chinese Catholic communities have benefited from his generous service. He also served as President of the Friends of Ricci for the past six years. Before his departure, Fr. Marcil commented, “I am sure I will work with my friends in California again.” Thank you, Fr. Marcil! We look forward to seeing you again in the near future.

Support the Friends of Ricci

We encourage friends of Ricci to invite their friends to become member of the Friends of Ricci and support the Ricci Institute. In appreciation of your donation, the Ricci Institute will send you our limited edition mouse pad. For more information about how to become a member, please contact us at 415 422-6401, on the web: www.ricci.usfca.edu, or via e-mail at: ricci@usfca.edu.

Contributions are tax-deductible.
Two Malatesta Scholars Graduate

Thanks in part to your generous donations to the Edward J. Malatesta Scholarship fund, two more scholarship recipients have now completed their doctoral degrees in China. Both of their dissertations will undoubtedly contribute to a more balanced and detailed understanding of the history of Christianity in China.

Zhang Yu (2005-2006 EJM Scholarship Recipient) received his PhD from the College of Liberal Arts at Jinan University. Zhang Yu’s dissertation, “Research on the CICM’s Activities in Inner Mongolia during the late Qing dynasty (1865-1911)” was completed in 2006 and is now part of the Ricci Institute’s collection.

Deng Jie (2005-2006 EJM Scholarship Recipient) recently graduated from the Department of History and Culture at Sichuan University. Her dissertation is entitled, “Christianity and Modern Medical Service in the Multi-National Areas of Sichuan and Xikang: A study of the medical service enterprise of the Church of Christ in China.”

We wish both of these scholars much success in their future endeavors!

Chinese-Western Medical Exchange Explored at USF

On March 9, 2007 leading scholars and doctoral candidates gathered at USF to participate in the Ricci Institute’s day-long symposium, “Medicine & Culture: Chinese-Western Medical Exchange (1644-ca. 1950).” Themes included Chinese and Western conceptualizations of mind and body, practicing Western medicine in late imperial China, and linguistic hybridity and medical reform. Scholars had the opportunity to meet and share their research. For a list of papers presented, please visit: www.usfca.edu/ricci/events/events_2007.htm#medicine

A Successful International Symposium in Macau

Leading specialists on China and Japan from around the world gathered in Macau in November, 2006 to attend the symposium, “Christianity and Culture: Japan and China in Comparison, 1543-1644.” USF Ricci Institute, Macau Ricci Institute, and the Jesuit Historical Institution co-sponsored this scholarly meeting that included such themes as: the challenges of religious translation, native faith communities, Christian art, the attitudes of Chinese and Japanese governments towards Christianity and Christians, and Macau as the crossroads of Europe and East Asia. It is the first time that the Jesuit missions in Japan and China were discussed and compared in such depth. A set of commemorative stamps was issued in Macau to recognize the contribution of the Society of Jesus in China.

Journey of Thanksgiving: A Mainland Chinese Jesuit’s Reflections

My heart always fills with gratitude when I see my life as a Jesuit. I was baptized when I was in high school. My mother, a devout and generous Catholic, taught me how to pray and told me stories about foreign missionaries. During my college years, I met a French Jesuit who studied in Sichuan. I was inspired by the spirituality of the Society of Jesus and felt the calling of the Lord for the service of His people. My mother showed her full support for me to answer the call of the Lord, while other relatives were very angry and opposed to my vocation. After three and a half years’ reflection, I joined the Society of Jesus in the Philippines.

Our global world today needs more dialogue and cultural exchange among people. The Ricci Institute encourages and promotes this kind of dialogue and interaction among and between people with varied historical, religious, and cultural backgrounds. It is my dream to serve people in China—to share our faith and values through cultural exchange while becoming a more humane and authentic Christian. Together with others, we hope to foster the intellectual, religious, ethical, and personal formation of each person by promoting social justice and serving the hearts and minds of those in need. —Joseph Jiang, S.J.

(Brother Jiang is a visiting fellow at the Ricci Institute in 2007.)

Librarian’s Corner


This volume provides a detailed history of the Catholic community surrounding Mopanshan (Millstone Hill), from its origins during the late Ming. By the early years of the Qianlong period, the Jesuits, Vincentians, and Franciscans had established a thriving Catholic community. The 150 square kilometers around Mopanshan form the longest continuing Catholic community in China. Blending historical sources with sociological inquiry, this study reveals this community’s intimate, harmonious relationship between traditional Chinese values and Catholic faith.

The author, Kang Zhijie, is a member of the Xibo minority, and a graduate of Huazhong Normal University. She has published many books and articles on Christianity in China.