Departed, Yet Present

Life may be just like a shooting star. It disappears just as quickly as it appears, and leaves no trace behind.

By now, Father Malatesta has left us for six years. However, his life is like an ever shining star at night. His vision and mission are still being carried forward, and his spirit is still well alive in our heart. From the lecture hall of Gregorian University in Rome to the lecture hall of Peking University, what was then the driving force for this American Jesuit to start learning the Chinese language at the age of fifty, making a striking leap over this gigantic gap, and devoting his entire life to the cultural exchanges between China and the West?

I felt his passionate heart when I first met him over twenty years ago. His dream was to share the gospel of Christ to Chinese people through cultural exchanges, just in the same way that his predecessor Matteo Ricci did four hundred years ago. Such Salvation is not the privilege just for the Jews, nor is it the heritage of the western world. It is a God given grace for thousands of millions of the Chinese people as well.

While reflecting on the life of Father Edward Malatesta, may Christ grace us with more friends of Ricci to continue his legacy in God’s grand plan.

Joseph Ku

Photo Exhibit in Los Angeles

For the 2005 Chinese New Year, the Ricci Institute and the InterFriendship House Association of Los Angeles (IFHA-LA) are planning a photo exhibit entitled “Taiwan in the Fifties”. Fifty black-and-white photos from the Ricci Institute’s Fred Foley Collection will be displayed. Photographs from Los Angeles and Orange County Chinese residents’ private albums will also be exhibited. This will be the first cultural activity that the Ricci Institute will offer outside of San Francisco. It is also a first step in bringing public awareness and support of the Ricci Institute to Los Angeles and fundraising activities in Southern California.

New Collaboration with Chinese Scholars

With the growing interest in religious studies in higher education and research institutions in China, the Ricci Institute recently sponsored two seminars in China. At Fudan University in Shanghai (October 16-17, 2004) eight young Chinese scholars met with the goal of expanding the connections that link them in a common commitment to the development of religious studies in China. Led by Drs. James and Evelyn Whitehead, Distinguished Fellows of the Ricci Institute, the participants shared their current teaching responsibilities, research, and “dreams” for the future.

In addition, The Ricci Institute co-sponsored a seminar with the East-West Cultural Exchanges Research Center at the Central China Normal University, entitled From Confrontation to Integration: Chinese Christians and the Rise of the Indigenous Church in China (Oct. 23-24, 2004). The seminar focused on the experiences of Chinese Christians in China, their contribution to the social and educational development of modern China, and the relationship between the Christian religion and traditional Chinese religions.

New Photo Acquisition at the Ricci Institute

Thanks to the generosity of Dr. Thomas Gassert, a physician and alumnus of the University of San Francisco, the Ricci Institute received 100 digitized, black-and-white photos by the late Rev. Alden J. Stevenson, S.J. Father Stevenson was a professor at the University of San Francisco between 1970 and 1999. During these years, he opened many doors to friendship and scholarly exchange with China. He also took many black-and-white photos when he visited China. A selection of these photos will be displayed on the Ricci Institute website soon.
Malatesta Scholars Update

Dr. Zhang Xiangqing, one of the recipients of the Malatesta Scholarship, received an award for his dissertation by the Center for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society, Chinese University of Hong Kong. While acknowledging this unique prize for outstanding doctoral dissertations, Dr. Zhang said, “Differing from other research works dealing with a much higher level of intellectual and official exchanges between Western Catholic missionaries and Chinese scholars and officials, my research is centered on the life and community of a small town in Fujian Province. Through ordinary people and their grassroots’ encounter with Catholicism, I tried to paint a picture of Chinese-Western exchange from a new angle.” Dr. Zhang’s dissertation is held in the Ricci Institute library.

Malatesta Scholarship Endowment Update

We are now moving into the public phase of our fundraising drive. We are proud to have already attained 80% of our campaign goals and are grateful for the generosity of the Friends of Ricci and colleagues and friends of the Ricci Institute. With your help we hope that by May 2005, we will have surpassed the $100,000 fundraising goal for the Malatesta Scholarship Endowment. As of November 1, 2004, we have raised $79,500.

How to join Friends of Ricci

The fully tax deductible annual membership of Friends of Ricci is used to support various unique programs at the Ricci Institute. For detailed information about how to become a member, please contact us at: 415-422-6401, on the web: http://www.usfca.edu/ricci, or via email at: ricci@usfca.edu

Chinese 2005 Liturgical Calendars

For the second year, the North America Catholic Chinese Clergy and Religious Association is offering a Liturgical Calendar with a beautiful reproduction of one of the Chinese Christian paintings in the Ricci Institute collection, Icons of the Celestial Kingdom. The calendars will be on sale in different Chinese Catholic communities nationwide. The Friends of Ricci invite their friends to buy these calendars. A portion of proceeds goes to our Malatesta Scholarship Endowment.

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