



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Mourning in the episcopate

On 7 September, at the age of 88, Bishop Vincent Zhu Weifang of Wenzhou (Yongjia) in the province of Zhejiang, continental China, returned to the house of the Father.

The prelate was born on 10 December 1927 in the village of Yang'ao, district of Yongjia. In 1939, at the age of twelve, he entered the minor seminary of St. Vincent in the diocese of Ningbo, after which he continued his formation in the major seminaries of Ningbo, Jiaxing, Fuzhou and Shanghai. He was ordained a priest on 6 October 1954 in the Church of Xujiahui in Shanghai by Msgr. Ignatius Gong Pinmei, S.J.

In July 1955 he began to exercise his ministry in the parish of Qianku in Wenzhou. Some months after he was arrested and sentenced to sixteen years of re-education through labour. Following his liberation in 1971 he was arrested and underwent checks on several occasions on account of his faith. From 1988 he was able to work openly in the parishes of Cangnan and Pingyang in Wenzhou, building up the faithful with his witness. He also paid attention to the female diocesan Congregation of St. Therese of the Child Jesus. During the period of detention, he had contributed to the work of evangelisation, offering the Lord all the effort of forced labour "as a fragrant sacrifice".

In November 2007 he was appointed as bishop of Wenzhou. He was ordained on 10 January 2009 but was unable to take possession of the diocese until 23 December 2010. From that moment, despite his advanced age, he assumed his important pastoral responsibility by working with great passion. As a bishop, he spared no effort in safeguarding the rights and interests of the Church, earning great esteem among all the faithful.

The diocese of Wenzhou (Yongjia) has more than 140,000 Catholics; it has around 50 priests, mostly young, and more than 100 women religious, active in care for the sick, the elderly and families, and in the work of evangelisation.

Bishop Zhu's funeral was held on 13 September. In accordance with canon law, Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin, coadjutor of the same diocese, succeeds the deceased prelate.

