

Pope Francis: The Church is sent to bring the Gospel to the whole world

Pope Francis reflected on the apostolic and missionary aspect of the Church during his Wednesday General Audience on October 16.

“To profess that the Church is apostolic means to underline the profound connection, the association it has with the Apostles, with that small group of 12 men that Jesus called to Him one day, He called them by name, to remain with Him and to send them out preach,” the Holy Father said.

“Apostle, in fact, is a Greek word that means “one who is sent”, “envoy”. The Apostles were chosen, called and sent by Jesus to continue his work.”

The Holy Father went on to underline three aspects of the apostolic nature of the Catholic Church, the first being that the Church was founded on the basis of preaching and prayer of the Apostles. Citing St. Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians, the Pope stated that we as Christians are the “living stones” that form the Church, which is supported by the Apostles who are the columns and the cornerstone which is Christ.

“The Apostles lived with Jesus, they heard his words, they shared in his life, and above all were witnesses of his Death and Resurrection,” the Holy Father said. “Our faith, the Church that Christ wanted, is not founded on an idea, or on a philosophy, but on Christ Himself. And the Church is like a plant that has grown over the centuries, it has developed, it has borne fruit, but its roots are well-planted in Him and the fundamental experience of Christ that the Apostles, chosen and sent by Jesus, and now comes to us.”

The second aspect of the Church’s apostolic nature is its role, with the help of the Holy Spirit, “in keeping and handing on the teaching, the ‘good deposit,’ the salutary words she has heard from the apostles,” as stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The Church, he said, preserves this “precious treasure” consisting of the Sacred Scripture, doctrine, the Sacraments, the ministry of Pastors, all of which allows us to participate in the life of Christ.

“It is like a river that flows through history, it develops, it irrigates, but the water that flows is always that which comes from the source, from Christ Himself: He is the Risen One, the Living, and his words do not pass,” the Holy Father said.

The Holy Father called on the faithful to contemplate on the importance of the gift that Christ has given us, the gift of the Church.

Speaking on the final aspect, the Holy Father said the Church is apostolic because it is sent to bring the Gospel to the whole world. Christ’s call to “make disciples of all nations” highlights this missionary aspect of the Church.

“Christ, the Pope said, invites us all to go meet with others, he sends us, he asks us to move ourselves to bring the joy of the Gospel!”

Concluding his address, the Holy Father stated that Church always looks towards the future with the clear indication that it is sent, that it is missionary.

“A Church that closes in on itself and stays in the past betrays its own identity,” the Pope said. “Now, let us all rediscover the beauty and the responsibility of being an apostolic Church.”

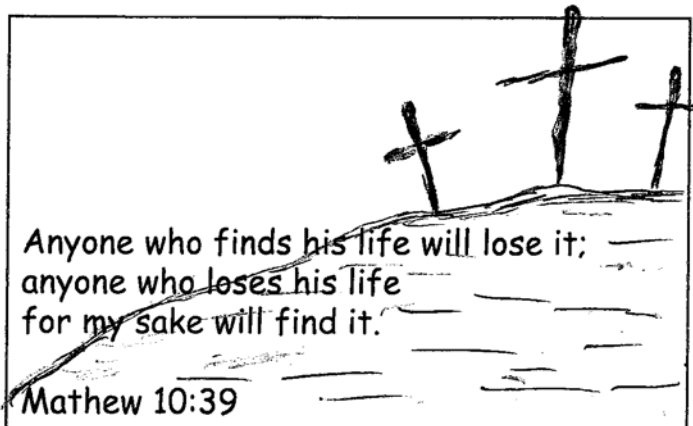
Source:

[Pope Francis: ‘Christ Invites Us to Go Out and Bring Joy of the Gospel’](#)

For Evangelization in Chinese Community

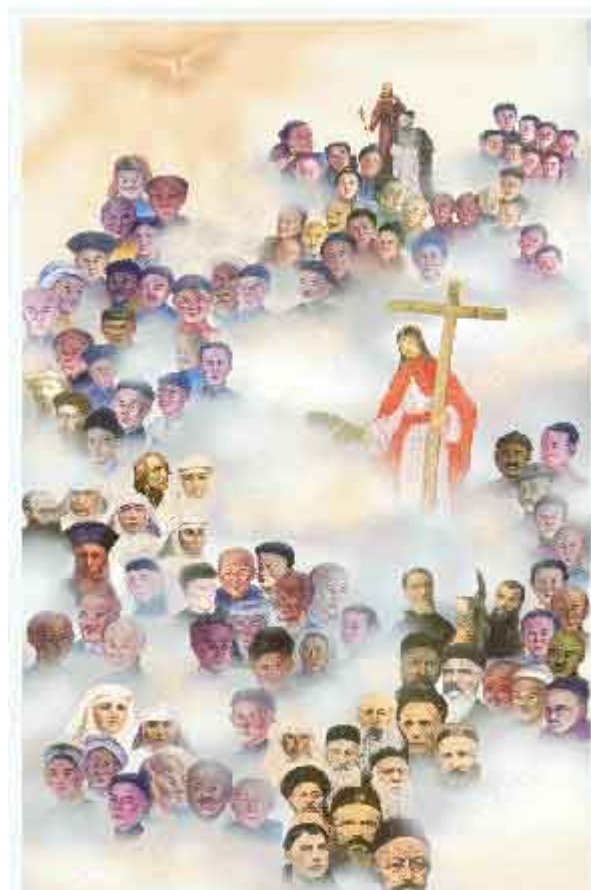
Prayer to the Martyrs of China

Almighty God, we give you thanks for choosing many Chinese faithful to witness for Christ by giving up their lives. We especially thank you for bestowing sainthood on over one hundred martyrs of China. We beg you that through the intercession of all the martyr-saints of China, many more Chinese would know Christ and follow His Way. We also pray that we may follow the example of these martyrs by remaining strong in faith, hope and love, by overcoming fear and hardship and sacrifice, and by boldly proclaiming our faith. May the Gospel of Jesus Christ be spread throughout China and may Chinese people in all parts of the world receive the light of faith and the grace to follow Christ each day, so as to enter your everlasting kingdom. We ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.



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教宗方濟各：教會被派遣把福音帶給全世界

教宗方濟各 10月16日在聖伯多祿廣場主持公開接見活動。他在要理講授一開始，就向來自世界各地的信友和遊客問道：你們有沒有反思過《信經》中「從宗徒傳下來的教會」這句話的意義？教宗邀請眾人重新發現一個宣講和守護福音，把福音帶給全世界的教會的美好。在公開接見活動前後，教宗像往常一樣熱情地問候人群。

教宗解釋說：宣認「從宗徒傳下來的」教會，意思是強調教會與宗徒們的「構成關係」。耶穌召叫那十二人跟隨自己，並派遣他們去宣講福音。「宗徒」這個詞在希臘語中意思是「被派出者」、「受派遣者」。因此，宗徒的首要任務是祈禱，其次是宣講福音。教宗說「當我們想到宗徒繼承人，想到包括教宗在內的所有主教時，我們應該自問這位宗徒繼承人是否祈禱，是否宣講福音？」如果我們願意做使徒，我們也應該自問：「我是否為世界得救祈禱，是否宣講福音？」

一個從宗徒傳下來的教會「建立在宗徒宣講之上」。教宗說：「我們的信德和基督所建立的教會，並不建立在一個想法或一套哲學思想上，而是以基督本身為基礎。教會如同是一棵植物，隨著時間而成長，茁長，結出果實，直到我們的時代。但是她的根基深深地埋在基督內，紮根於基督召選和派遣宗徒的基本經驗內。」

教宗繼續說：一個從宗徒傳下來的教會「守護和傳播」福音，「她就像一條穿梭歷史的河，雖然綿延千里，灌溉大地，但流動的水始終從源頭而來，而這源頭就是基督本身。基督復活了，祂是活著的，祂的話不會過去，因為祂不會過去。今天祂就在我們中間，就在這裡；當我們與祂說話時祂就能聽到，祂聆聽我們，居住在我們心中：今天，耶穌與我們同在！耶穌基督臨在於我們中間，耶穌基督是活著的，因為祂復活了：這就是教會的美好。」

教宗然後談到教會是「基督賜予我們的重要恩典」，在教會內「我們可以會晤基督」。教宗詢問說：「我們有沒有想過，教會在她的歷史進程中不顧困苦、艱難和軟弱，向我們傳播基督的真實訊息？有沒有想過教會確保我們所相信的正是基督的真實訊息？」

教宗最後說：教會「被派遣把福音帶給全世界」，她深知自己的傳教使命。「教會如果封閉在自我和過去中，她將背叛自己的身份。因此，我們要重新發現作為從宗徒傳下來的教會的美好和責任！」

資料來源：

教宗方濟各：教會紮根於基督召選和派遣宗徒的基本經驗

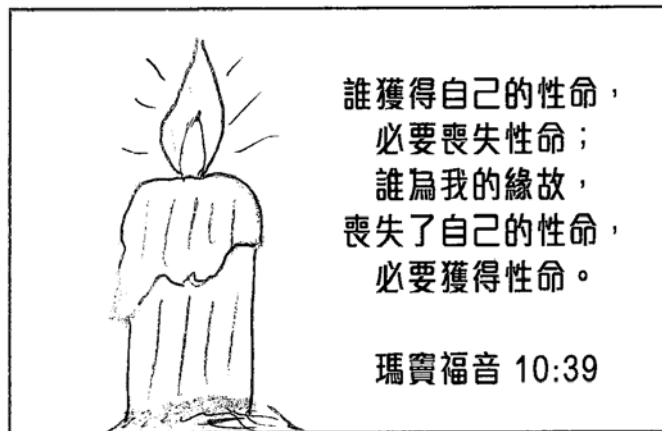


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全能的天父，我們感謝祢揀選了中華歷代眾多信友，勇敢犧牲、為主作證，我們更感謝祢賞賜百餘位中華殉道真福獲得「聖人」的榮銜。現在，我們懇求祢，因中華諸聖的轉禱，使更多中華殉道烈士能早日加入真福、聖人行列，以彰顯祢的光榮。我們也懇求祢，使我們能效法中華殉道聖人的芳表，堅定信、望、愛三德，不畏艱苦、不怕犧牲、勇往直前、弘揚聖教，望基督福音早日傳遍中國、海內外全體中華兒女同沾信德真光，今生追隨救主，來世同登天國。以上所求，是靠我們的主耶穌基督。阿孟。



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