



Father Thaddaus Chan of Hong Kong, who was ordained by the Pope in St. Peter's on the Feast of the Epiphany, begins his first Mass at the Headquarters of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres—Assistant Priest, Father F. X. Wong.



Father Chan distributes Holy Communion

Ordination of 62 Missionary Priests

The Pope's Sermon

VATICAN CITY — When ordaining Father Thaddaus Chan and 61 other missionary priests in St. Peter's on the Feast of the Epiphany, the Pope spoke at length on the missionary priesthood.

The Pope referred to the rarity of the occasion: "The priestly ordinations conferred by a Pope for the first time in the history of the Church in this form, and on so many . . . who come from 23 of those countries which are called missions, indicate the special condition of infancy, effort, heroism, hazard, innocence, humility and evangelical love in which the Church there finds itself," he said.

The character of the ceremony, he went on, revealed not only the spirit of the post-conciliar Church but also the spirit of this Feast of the Epiphany which commemorates extension of the message of salvation "to all peoples, to all humanity drawn . . . towards the unity of faith and salvation to form in Christ a new messianic people—the People of God. . . ."

"My brothers—for the sacrament you have received confers this title on you—are you able in this moment of spiritual rapture and bliss, to realize at only a spiritual glance what has happened . . . ?"

"It seems to us there are four types of new relationships which have been concentrated in each of your persons. We speak of relationships with God, since each has become a man of God and has dedicated his entire life to God's service; with the Church; and in special way with

your own bishops; with the People of God; and with Christ—one of virtual identification as "another Christ."

The relationship with the Church and bishop, he said, provides that "henceforth you are not available for activities foreign to serving him; you have become collaborators, jointly responsible with him and participans in his ministry, teaching authority, and pastoral rule. Do you realize that you have renounced all, your very liberty, to be at the command of the bishop, to be faithful, solicitous and devoted interpreters of his will?"

With the People of God, the newly ordained have taken on a double relationship as mediators: "You will be interpreters of the word of God, dispensers of the mysteries of God to the people; and you will be interpreters of the prayers of the people themselves, bearers of their offerings to God, assimilated into their fortunes before the face of God—whether they be of sorrow, of sin, of penitence or of health."

The new priests should keep in mind the moral and spiritual needs of the world in which they are destined to live. "Listen to the voice of history, the voice of the people, the voice of souls, the voice of your fellow countrymen. Perhaps that voice does not al-

ways express itself clearly, but it arises from their dignity, from their pursuit of their goal in the Gospel, from their very need of that Gospel.

"In short, be conscious of that love which has taken possession of you, and which must pour out from you on all who cross your path."

The newly ordained priests come from Burundi, Ceylon, China, the Congo, Korea, Japan, India, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Vietnam, Zambia, Jamaica, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, and the U.S.A.

After the ceremony which lasted almost three and a half hours, the Pope went directly to his window where he recited the Angelus with Epiphany Holidayers in St. Peter's Square. He asked all to pray for the newly-ordained missionaries, some of whom were by then standing on the front steps of the basilica with their families, many of them in the colourful garb of their native lands.

He also asked prayers for mission lands — "especially those disrupted and . . . bathed in blood by battles and guerrilla warfare. Let us pray then for the peace and prosperity of the world missions," he concluded.