

Papal Honour

Mr. Stephen Shak, a member of a well known Hong Kong Catholic family has been honoured by the Holy Father Pope Pius XII with the Knighthood of St. Sylvester.

Born 51 years ago of good Catholic parents, Mr. Shak has proved himself to be an outstanding member of the Catholic Church. His elder brother is Father Felix Shak, a priest of the Hong Kong Diocese for the past 20 years and now the Notary in the Curia of the Diocese of Hong Kong, and a member of the Mission Council. An elder sister joined the Precious Blood Community of nuns 43 years ago.

When he was twenty years old Mr. Shak opened the Sacred Heart English School for Boys and took up duties as Manager of the School which position he maintained until 1953.

During this time he became President of the Catholic Action Society of his parish, and a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and also of the Society of St. Raphael. For some years he was President of the Pious Confraternity of St. Joseph.

Over the years he has aided the development of the Chinese Sisters of the Precious Blood in their work financially and with his advice and interest.

The P.I.M.E. Mission too has been a beneficiary of his many donations. After the Second World War in order to help the mission works in the New Territories and in China he donated bicycles to the priests in charge of the various mission stations irrespective of whether they were Chinese or foreign missionaries.

In 1947 he presented the late Bishop Valtorta with a motor car, and when the Bishop later donated the car to the building fund of the parish church of Wanchai as a prize in a raffle, Mr. Shak donated a second car which is still being used by the present Bishop Lawrence Bianchi.

Not only did the P.I.M.E. fathers in Hong Kong benefit by Mr. Shak's generosity but also the fathers in Italy. A large sum of money was given to the seminary there for the training of future missionaries of the P.I.M.E. Society and as well a motor car for the Superior General to visit the houses of the Society in Italy.

The late Bishop Henry Valtorta had for Mr. Shak a particular and sincere friendship. He esteemed him for his generosity and public service, and he greatly desired in a public way to compensate him for the amount of good work done by asking for the pontifical decoration. Now one of the first acts of Bishop Bianchi since his release from the Chinese Communists is to announce this honour and to hold the investiture at a date to be announced later.