

Papal Investiture in Hong Kong



The Bishop with the nine Hong Kong Catholics whom he invested with Papal Honours in the Catholic Club on Monday, August 22. (L-r) Mr. Dominic Cheung, Dr. Olinto de Sousa, Mr. Koma W. Cheu, Sir Albert Rodrigues, Mr. Eugene Li Yiu Bor, Dr. S. C. Lam, Mr. John Chen, Mr. A. E. Perry, Mr. Martin Quincey Wong.

AT a solemn investiture, held in the Catholic Club on Monday, August 22, the Bishop, acting in the name of His Holiness the Pope invested nine Hong Kong Catholics with honours bestowed upon them by the Holy Father.

Sir Albert Rodrigues was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Sylvester. Mr. John Chen, Mr. Eugene Li Yiu Bor, Dr. S. C. Lam, Dr. Olinto de Sousa, Mr. Martin Quincey Wong, and Mr. Arthur E. Perry were made Knights Commander of the Order of St. Sylvester.

Mr. Dominic Cheung and Mr. Komo Wilfred Cheu received the Medal 'Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice'.

Before the ceremony, the Bishop celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Catholic Centre chapel. The Lesson was read by Sir Albert Rodrigues.

Bishop Chan of Penang, Bishop Oste, C.I.C.M., of Jehol, Bishop Lemaire, M.E.P., the Chief Justice, Sir Michael Hogan, and a large and representative gathering witnessed the investiture.

It would tax the resources of a large daily paper to list the varied services that were acknowl-

ed by the conferring of these honours. There is scarcely a single activity of the history of the diocese, at least since the War, that did not benefit from the intelligent and enthusiastic co-operation of some or all of the nine who were decorated. They have played a vigorous part in such recent developments as Caritas Hongkong and the organized work of the lay apostolate. Before the foundation of these organs of renovated Catholicism, they were doing in advance the work of Caritas and of the lay apostolate, as individuals or as members of older organizations. In addition, and perhaps even more significantly, they were carrying their faith into the work they were doing as prominent members of the community.

After the formal investiture the Bishop spoke as follows:

"We are here, to-day, to honour those among us the Holy Father has honoured: to congratulate them, to rejoice with them. It is a fraternal gathering, a family feast. We know each one of them and their good work; we acknowledge that they truly deserve the decorations the Holy Father has bestowed on them. We gratefully render our thanks to the Holy Father — and to God, for having given us such leaders.

"To acknowledge, praise and reward exceptional services and outstanding merit is a practice as old as human society: it is, as a matter of fact, one of the cornerstones on which human society stands. Naturally, the ex-

ternal manifestations of this acknowledgment, in the stormy history of mankind, have taken many different forms, according to the nature and historical development of the various races and nations of the world.

"The decorations with which I have invested you, my dear Sirs, had their origin many centuries ago, in an age that has—long since—begun to pass and is still in the process of passing away. An age in which the Church borrowed from the feudal courts part of this ceremonial and of the external trappings . . .

"Many of the formal details in the ritual and in the equipment once required, have changed, in conformity with the more democratic feelings of our present times. Now, for this investiture, we do without horses, not only, but also without flamboyant uniforms, gilt sword-belts and scabbards, cockaded hats, etc. . . . However, the essential meaning; these honours were conferred upon you by the Holy Father, as acknowledgment and reward for the outstanding services rendered to the cause of God, his Church, and human society, in this Diocese of Hong Kong.

"We are proud of you, in all sincerity and gratitude. The crosses you are now wearing truly symbolize the Holy Father's and our own recognition of good work nobly done and our confident expectation of still greater work to come . . . May God bless you and your families!"