

# Diocese to Call Synodal Convention

## *Preparatory Work Entrusted to Fr. John Russell*

The Senate of Priests and the Pastoral Council of the Diocese of Hong Kong have responded positively to Bishop Francis Hsu's proposal to convene a synodal Diocesan Convention, which will be the first of its kind in the history of the diocese.

The main aim of the Convention will be to review the pastoral policies, structures and practices in this diocese in the light of Vatican II, according to Mgr. Francis Hsu, Auxiliary Bishop. The Convention will also draw up plans for future development in the light of today's pastoral needs.

It is envisaged that preparatory work will take six months to a year. Father John Russell, S.J., one-time lecturer in Canon Law at Gregorian University, Rome, and the *Sunday Examiner's* Rome Correspondent during the Vatican Council II, has been elected Secretary-General of the Preparatory Commission by the Senate. He will be assisted by two Secretaries and will be mainly responsible for the planning of the Convention. It is expected that a number of sub-commissions will be set up.

As diocesan convention rather than a synod in the canonical sense, the Bishop will be able not only to invite female religious and lay representatives to the conference, but also to give them a vote. The "acta" of the Convention will also be pastoral in approach rather than juridical.

SE19680913