



*Private Audience for Cardinal Wu and the Hong Kong group on June 30. The Holy Father spoke as follows:*

Dear Cardinal Wu, Dear Brothers and Sisters from Hong Kong, the Church now has a new Cardinal from the great Chinese family, and I am happy to see so many friends of Cardinal Wu gathered here in the Vatican to share these moments of joy with him. I am confident that your Chinese brothers and sisters throughout the world will rejoice at this recognition given to him. More than anything else, it is a new responsibility that has been placed on him, a more visible sharing in the care of the universal Church which the Lord entrusted in a special way to Peter and his successors.

You know that the special task of the Bishop of Rome is to serve the faith and fellowship of all Christ's followers. It is a religious and pastoral ministry, not a political or worldly one. Its purpose is to maintain the body of the faithful in unity, in fidelity to the revealed word of God, and in the charity that the Spirit of God pours forth in our hearts. It will be a source of great joy for me to have the assistance of Cardinal Wu in this task.

I greet all of you who have come to Rome for this special event in the life of the Church in Hong Kong, and I send my best wishes to your families and friends wherever they may be. I am happy to meet the civil representatives of Hong Kong, and I would ask you to convey my prayerful greetings to your fellow-citizens. I express once more my great respect and esteem for the Chinese people and I invoke God's blessings upon you all.