

Pope praises Cardinal Wu on 50th anniversary of priesthood



Cardinal John Baptist Wu, 77, celebrates the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood and the 27th year of his installation as bishop of Hong Kong this year.

To John Baptist Wu Cheng-Chung, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Bishop of Hong Kong:

Dear Venerable Brother,

Your fruitful and distinguished priestly ministry, which you have exercised for so many years, both as priest and in the fullness of priesthood as bishop, in the ecclesial communities entrusted to your care, will soon reach a new and honourable turning point and bring you new prestige among outstanding Church Fathers. The sixth of July happily and auspiciously marked the completion of the 50th year since, as a divinely called son of the beloved Chinese people, you were ordained as a minister of Christ and began your distinguished ministry. No one can be unaware of the great spiritual benefit and strength which your ministry has continuously brought to your faithful these 50 years. Therefore we desire, as if in your

very presence, to offer you these our warmest congratulations so that you may consider and feel us as actually attending the celebrations on your jubilee day to bear public witness with so many others to the outstanding moments of your enduring ministry.

It is a great joy and consolation to us to recall that in the year 1952 in Hong Kong you entered the priesthood and there began your sacred ministry among the refugees from China, your homeland. Then you were sent to Rome, where you undertook higher studies at the Pontifical Urban University and gained a doctorate in Canon Law. In 1957 you transferred to the island of Taiwan, where you fulfilled offices of great importance, among which was the care of the parish ministry. You were also given charge of the Priests' Council and in the years 1971-1972 you were actively involved in the Diocesan Synod. Since, therefore, from the very beginning your priestly virtues and natural talents were clearly seen to be of

spiritual service to the church, Paul VI, our predecessor of happy memory, raised you to the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders and at the same time appointed you bishop of the community in Hong Kong.

Accepting the heavy burden of pastor for you laboured to govern your flock and to sanctify them by the administration of the sacraments. You showed an admirable care, not only in guiding your Catholic faithful but also in providing for others a way towards Christ. Particular mention must be made of your noted kindness towards everyone, by which you have gained the respect, not only of the people, but also of your clergy and your fellow-bishops. We also, dear venerable brother, gratefully acknowledge your fidelity to the successor of Peter and to the Apostolic See.

In the College of Cardinals with the presbyteral title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Mostacciano, While we recall all these things to you, in union with you we give heartfelt thanks to God. At the same time we pray humbly that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Queen of the Apostles, God may grant you everything that is propitious, joyful and holy. As a sign and positive indication of our affection, we impart the Apostolic Blessing, first of all to you and then with equal affection to the clergy and your whole community, and to all who participate in the celebration of your Golden Jubilee.

At the Vatican, 13 June 2002, the Twenty-fourth Year of our Pontificate.

Joannes Paulus P. II
John Paul II