

WORLD & NATION

Kung says Chinese church in schism

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In a letter to top Vatican officials, the nephew of the late Chinese Cardinal Ignatius Kung Pin-mei asked the Vatican to declare the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association schismatic. "The CPA is not and cannot be Catholic because it continues to deny the supreme authority of the successor of Peter," said Joseph Kung, president of the U.S.-based Cardinal Kung Foundation.

Kung, whose uncle died in exile in the United States March 12, sent a letter March 28 to the heads of the Vatican congregations for doctrine and for missionary activity, as well as to the Vatican secretary of state, his assistant and to Pope John Paul II's personal secretary.

The Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association was founded by and continues to be directed by China's communist government. It elects its own bishops and spurns all ties with the Vatican.

The Vatican press office declined April 11 to comment on Kung's letter.

One Vatican official who knew about the letter and is familiar with Vatican policies toward Chinese Catholics would say

only that "there are unjust and inexact" statements in Kung's letter.

Another official, while not commenting directly on Kung's letter, said people must realize that not all Catholics — and, perhaps, only a small minority of Catholics — who attend Masses approved by the government agree with the patriotic association's insistence on independence from the Vatican.

UCA News, an Asian church news agency based in Thailand, reported in February that as many as two-thirds of the 70 bishops in the government-approved Bishops' Conference of the Catholic Church in China secretly have sought Vatican approval.

The Vatican has avoided using the term "schism" to describe the situation in China because of the political pressures facing Chinese Catholics, said Father Giancarlo Politi, a veteran China-watcher and a member of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions.

"There's never been a schism because there exists the whole problem of a state that imposes things that the bishops would never do on their own," Father Politi said in a January interview.

But Kung insisted in his letter that the

patriotic association fits the canon law definition of schism: "the refusal of submission to the Roman pontiff or of communion with the members of the church subject to him."

"We do not understand your silence on this issue and need your unequivocal answer," Kung told the Vatican officials.

He also objected to the Vatican-sanctioned practice of Catholic seminaries in the United States and elsewhere accepting seminarians from the government-approved Chinese church.

When they return to China, he said, "they will serve under these same bishops who are not in communion with the Holy Father."

Kung said he had been told the purpose of the program was to give the seminarians a proper Roman Catholic education and to expose them to the reality of the universal church.

But, he said, the program "has the appearance of abandoning the suffering underground Roman Catholic Church in China."

In his letter, Kung also said some U.S. bishops were giving visiting priests associated with the patriotic association permission to celebrate Mass in their dioceses.

Bishops unite against vote

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. bishops are urging members of the House of Representatives to vote against granting China permanent normal trade relations because of China's human rights violations, especially in the area of religious freedom.

Boston Cardinal Bernard F. Law, chairman of the bishops' Committee on International Policy, stated the bishops' position in an April 12 letter to House members.

"The full integral human development of China, most populous of the world's nations, and its economic advancement in the global economy is a goal of great importance," wrote Cardinal Law. "However, as long as the Chinese leadership steadfastly refuses to abide by the universal norms of human rights protection, the United States should not grant normal trade relations on a permanent basis."

Under a historic U.S.-China trade deal announced last November, the United States agreed to support China's long-sought membership in the World Trade Organization.

But, before Chinese accession can occur, the House must grant China permanent normal trade relations, and China must negotiate bilateral agreements with the European Union and other nations. A third round of negotiations between Chinese and European Union officials recently broke down, but a Chinese official in Beijing said April 12 that talks would resume soon.

Throughout the 1990s, the House annually has reviewed China's trading status.

During that period, Cardinal Law said, the U.S. Catholic Conference, public policy arm of the bishops, repeatedly urged "that the well-documented violations of the Chinese people's human rights, and notably their lack of true religious freedom, be seriously addressed and reversed."

Sponsor a Child at a Catholic Mission. It's Affordable!



Little Maria sells oranges on the street in a village in Guatemala. Her family can't afford to send her to school. Will you help a poor child like Maria?

Your opportunity to help a very poor child is *much* too important to miss. And Christian Foundation for Children and Aging (CFCA), an international *Catholic sponsorship program* can show you the affordable way.

Through CFCA you sponsor a child for the amount you can afford. Ordinarily it takes \$20 a month to provide one poor child with the *life-changing* benefits of sponsorship. But if this is not possible for you, we invite you to sponsor at a level you can afford (minimum \$10). CFCA will see to it from other donations and the tireless efforts of our missionary partners that *your child receives the same benefits as other sponsored children.*

Your sponsorship pledge helps provide a poor child at a Catholic mission site with nourishing food, medical care, the chance to go to school — whatever is needed most. *You can literally change a life!*

And you can be assured your pledge has its greatest impact because our programs are directed by dedicated Catholic missionaries with a long-standing commitment to the people they serve.

To help build your relationship, you receive a picture of your child, information about your child's family and country, letters from your child and the CFCA newsletter. But *most important*, you receive the satisfaction of helping a poor child!

"Jubilee 2000 is a wonderful time to begin sponsoring a child!"

Archbishop James P. Keleher, Kansas City, Kansas — who sponsors José Muños of Honduras.



Yes, I'll help one child:

Boy Girl Teenager Any in most need

My monthly pledge is:

\$10 \$15 \$20 \$25 Other \$ _____

I'll contribute:

monthly quarterly semi-annually annually

Enclosed is my first contribution of \$ _____ CJ4/00
(Make check payable to CFCA.)

I'd prefer to bill my first sponsorship payment to my credit card: VISA MC Discover AMEX
Card No _____ Exp. Date _____

I can't sponsor now, but here's my gift of \$ _____

Please send me more information about sponsorship.

427

FOUNDED AND DIRECTED BY CATHOLIC LAY PEOPLE

Name _____
(please print)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

Send to:
Christian Foundation for
Children and Aging (CFCA)
One Elmwood Ave. / P.O. Box 3910
Kansas City, KS 66103-0910
or call toll-free 1-800-875-6564
www.cfcausa.org

Member: U.S. Catholic Mission Association, National Catholic Development Conference, Catholic Network of Volunteer Service
Financial report available on request / Donations are U.S. tax-deductible



The Life You Change May Be Your Own

Be a friend to a child or adult who is dealing with mental health issues.

If you can:

- Share a few hours a month
- Be a good listener
- Be a friend

You can be a Compeer! Change someone's life...even your own!

Call (716) 546-8280



www.compeer.org