

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

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CHINA: Catholic Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu: still detained

Catholic Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu: still detained despite reported Vatican intervention

The bishop of Xinxiang, in Henan province, refuses to join the Patriotic Catholic Church and was arrested in a spectacular raid in 2021.

By Wu Xiuying

Bitter Winter (11.05.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3Leq5Go> – Readers of Bitter Winter may remember that in 2021 we reported about a

raid conducted by more than 100 public security officers on May 21. The police stormed a disaffected factory in Henan province, where Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu of the Xinxiang diocese had organized an independent seminary for fellow conscientious objectors.

Conscientious objectors are Catholics who reject the suggestion by the Holy See, following the Vatican-China deal of 2018, that they join the Patriotic Catholic Church, believing that for reasons of conscience they cannot be part of a church controlled by the CCP. The Vatican has clarified that it does not encourage such conscientious objection, yet regards the objectors as Catholics in good standing who should be treated “with respect.”

The May 21, 2021, raid was reminiscent of actions taken against groups labeled as “xie jiao” or “cults,” only it targeted a Roman Catholic seminary. Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu, ten (or more) priests, and ten seminarians were arrested. Three seminarians managed to escape, but they were also arrested later.

The seminarians were sent back home and kept under surveillance. The ten priests were taken to Legal Education Centers, and have reportedly all been released.

At the time of our article in 2021, the whereabouts of Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu were unknown.

Bitter Winter has now learned from a reliable source that the Vatican asked the Chinese government to release Bishop Zhang, but has been told that the prelate committed serious crimes and should remain in detention.

Catholic devotees in Xinxiang told Bitter Winter that they are concerned about the situation and the health of the bishop. He suffers from cancer, and when he was arrested he had just gone through a surgery.

Photo: Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu. From Weibo.

Further reading about FORB in China on HRWF website

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