

Prayer for China

in particular on 24 May

Introduction

The Holy Father in his letter the Catholics of the Peoples Republic of China asked that 24 May the Feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians, which is venerated with great devotion at the Marian shrine at Sheshan in Shanghai, be marked as day of prayer for the Church in China.

Scripture

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.

He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!

His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.

He puts forth his arm in strength
and scatters the proud-hearted.

He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly.

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.

He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his sons for ever

Luke 1:44–55

Prayer to Our Lady of Sheshan

Virgin Most Holy, Mother of the Incarnate
Word and our Mother,
venerated in the Shrine of Sheshan
under the title “Help of Christians”,
the entire Church in China
looks to you with devout affection.

We come before you today
to implore your protection.

Look upon the People of God
and, with a mother’s care, guide them
along the paths of truth and love,
so that they may always be
a leaven of harmonious coexistence
among all citizens.

When you obediently said ‘yes’
in the house of Nazareth,
you allowed God’s eternal Son
to take flesh in your virginal womb
and thus to begin in history
the work of our redemption.

You willingly and generously cooperated
in that work,
allowing the sword of pain to pierce your soul,
until the supreme hour of the Cross,

when you kept watch on Calvary,
standing beside your Son,
who died that we might live.

From that moment, you became, in a new way,
the Mother of all those
who receive your Son Jesus in faith
and choose to follow in his footsteps
by taking up his Cross.

Mother of hope,
in the darkness of Holy Saturday you journeyed
with unflinching trust towards the dawn of Easter.
Grant that your children
may discern at all times,
even those that are darkest,
the signs of God’s loving presence.

Our Lady of Sheshan,
sustain all those in China,
who, amid their daily trials,
continue to believe, to hope, to love.

May they never be afraid
to speak of Jesus to the world,
and of the world to Jesus.

In the statue overlooking the Shrine
you lift your Son on high,
offering him to the world with open arms
in a gesture of love.

Help Catholics always to be credible witnesses
to this love,
ever clinging to the rock of Peter
on which the Church is built.
Mother of China and all Asia,
pray for us, now and for ever.
Amen!

Pope Benedict XVI

Intercessions

For the Church in China;
may it persevere in witness to the faith.

For the Church throughout the world;
may it be a visible sign of unity.

Links

- Letter of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to Chinese Catholics
[http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/letters/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20070527_china_en.html]
- Explanatory Note
[http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/letters/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20070527_china-note_en.html]
- Aid to the Church in Need
[<http://www.acn.org.uk/>]

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