

Pope Francis & The Question of Christianity in China

Historical Background

@Source: Michel Chambon 2024. "Chinese Christians and the Post-Maoist Polities"
in *Christian Minorities and Transforming States, Mapping Varied Christian Experiences
and Responses*. pp.35-52 D. Singh, Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

1949 – 1979

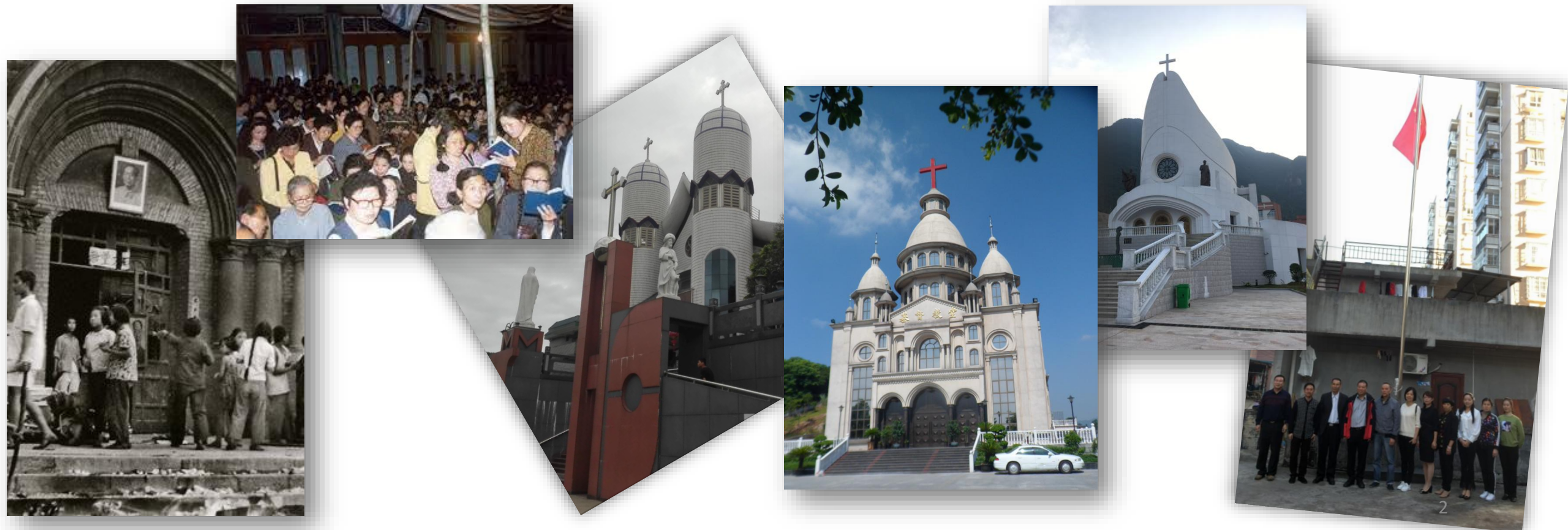
1980 – 1989

1990 – 1999

2000 – 2009

2010 – 2019

2020 ---



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1949 – 1979

- Hardline Maoism
 - Atheism
 - Collectivism
- Christian Responses:
 - Denominational
 - Catholic Family Clans
 - Protestant women
 - Regional:
 - Wenzhou dynamics



Red Guards attacking the Catholic South Church – Beijing 1966

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1949 – 1979

1980 – 1989

- Deng Xiaoping Reopening Era (from 1977)
- Religious revival
- Christian Responses:
 - Reopening of churches
 - Denominational features:
 - Urban Cathedrals and Rural Catholicism
 - Protestant healing and biblical networks



Revival in Henan - @Paul Hattaway

Historical Background

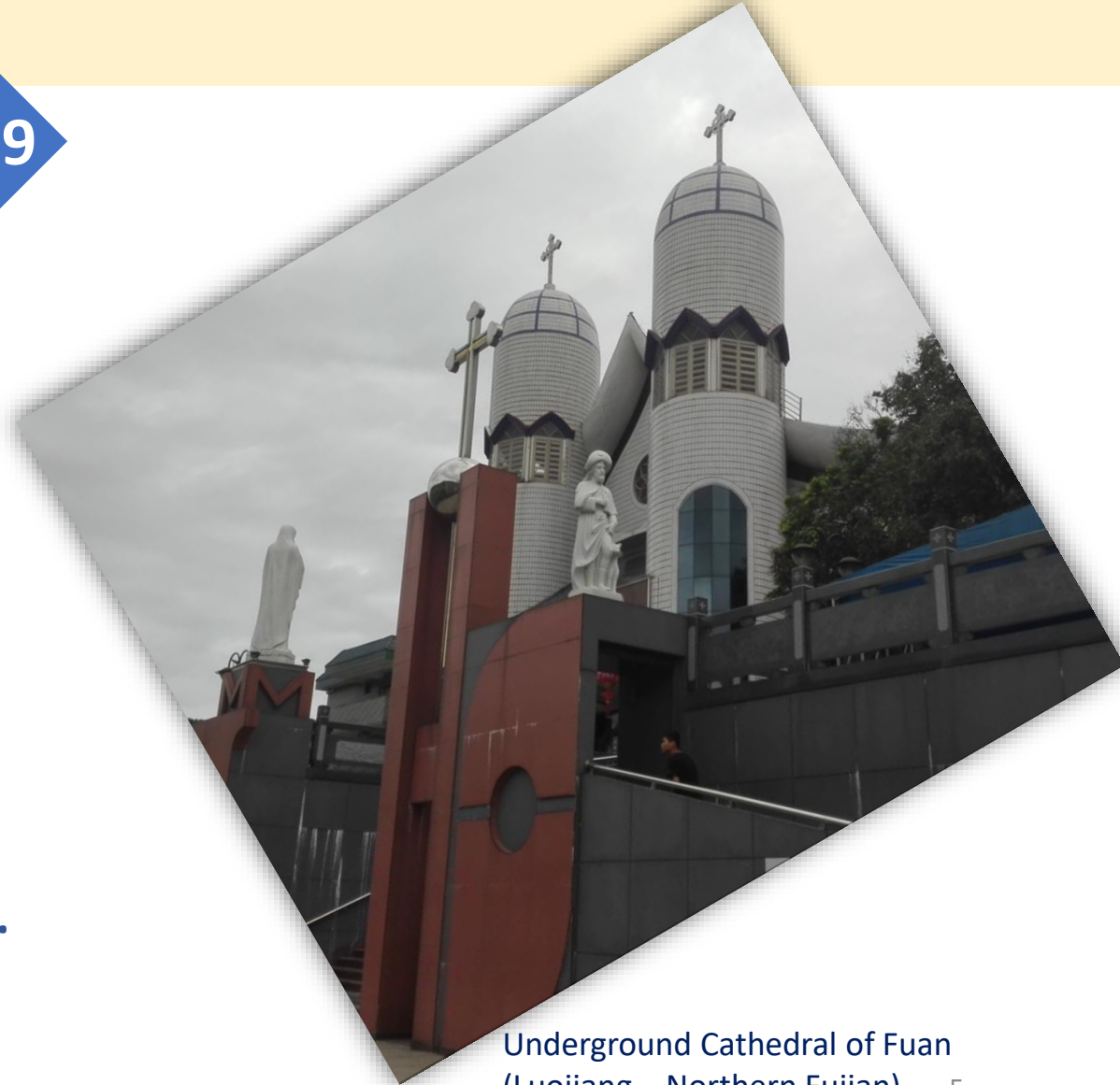
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- Economic and Religious Boom
- Sectarian Movements (Falungong)
- Christian Responses:
 - Re-structuring of Chinese Christianity (territory, seminaries, policies)
 - Denominational features:
 - Strong Rural Catholicism / stronger official-underground divide.
 - Return of Protestant Churches



Underground Cathedral of Fuan
(Luojiang – Northern Fujian) 5

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2000 – 2009

- WTO 2001 - growing corruption and the Confucian option
- Christian Responses:
 - Cultural Christians
 - Denominational features:
 - Wenzhou Churches
 - Protestant Education
 - Semi-Urbanization of Chinese Catholicism



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2000 – 2009

2010 – 2019

- The Xi Jinping Era and the return of Nationalism
- New Silk Road and Sinicization of religions
- Christian Responses:
 - Urban Catholicism
 - Digital Christianity
 - Protestant Social Services
 - End of Wenzhou Model



New Catholic Cathedral of Ningde (Fujian)

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2020 ---

- Post Covid era – bouncing back
- New Cold War
- Protestant uncertainties
- Catholic agreement



Three Self & True Jesus

The Catholic Question

- Statistic / Geography
- Double allegiance?
- Official (patriotic) Church
- Underground Church



The Pope Francis Factor

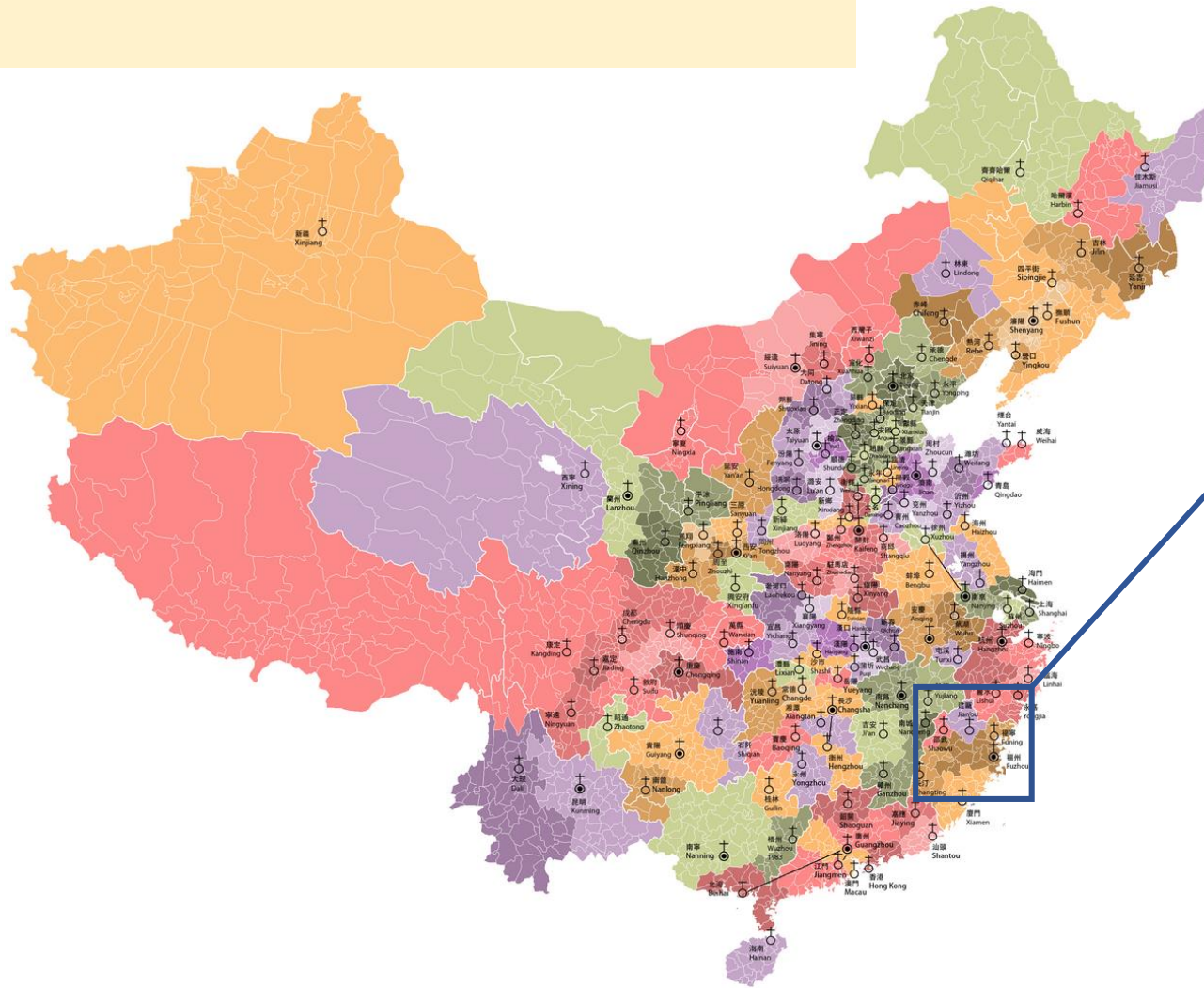
- 13 March 2013 – Election of Francis
- Reframing the Sino-Vatican dialogue

22 Sept. 2018 – Provisional Agreement

- Re-integration of a few bishops
+ co-appointment of a few more
- A secret agreement?
- A pastoral agreement?



Bishops & Their Territories



BEIJING	ROME
Archdiocese Fuzhou	Archd. Fuzhou - a few parishes
Diocese of Mindong (Ningde)	Diocese of Funing + a few parishes of Archd. Fuzhou
Diocese of Minbei (Jianyang)	A.P. Jianou + A.P. Shaowu + a few parishes of Archd. Fuzhou

2019: Annus Horribilis



The Sino-Vatican Agreement

- Oct. 2020 – Renewal
 - May 2022 – brief arrest of Cardinal Zen / no more silence
 - Sept. 2022 – Visits in Kazakhstan
- Oct. 2022 – Renewal
 - Nov. 2022 – One unilateral transfer in Jiangxi
 - April. 2023 – One unilateral transfer in Shanghai
 - Aug. 2023 – Pope Francis in Mongolia
 - Oct. 2023 – Synod on Synodality
 - Jan. 2024 – 3 joint ordinations
 - May 2024 – Anniversary of the Council of Shanghai
 - Aug. 2024 – USCCA + One recognition from Beijing
 - Sept. 2024 – Card Zuppi in Beijing /San Egidio Peace Summit
 - Oct. 2024 – Synod on Synodality



Towards a 2.0 Agreement?

- The productivity of the agreement (20% in 6 years)
- Renewal versus upgrading
 - The Vietnam model
 - Taipei versus Beijing?
 - Religious Orders
 - Global Affairs
- The Protestant Question



Crux | Taking the Catholic Pulse

<https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2024/05/vatican-wan...>

Vatican wants China deal to be renewed

22 May 2024 — The **deal** he referred to is a controversial provisional **agreement** between the **Holy See** and Chinese authorities on the appointment of bishops.



The Tablet

<https://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/taiwan-wary-of-va...>

Taiwan wary of Vatican hopes for renewed China relations

30 May 2024 — The **Vatican's** secretary of state said the **Holy See** hoped to renew its 2018 provisional **agreement** with the **Chinese** government for the third time this year.

ANALYSIS — VATICAN-CHINA

Is the Vatican's China diplomacy strategy, or chaos?

ED. CONDON

August 20, 2024 . 5:00 AM — 10 min read



CNA

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/east-asia/china-va...>

Analysis: As China-Vatican deal nears renewal, warming ...

15 Sept 2024 — As a 2018 landmark **pact** between **China** and the **Vatican** nears another renewal in October, analysts believe it's likely the bilateral **deal** will continue.



THANK
YOU