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TAIWAN: FAITH AND ART MEET AT ITALIAN CHURCH-PAINTING EXHIBIT

The Graduate Institute of Museum Studies of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei and the Taiwan Catholic bishops' conference have helped organize an exhibit of religious paintings at the National Dr. Sun Yatsen Memorial Hall in Taipei from December 15, 2006 to March 15, 2007. Some 32 paintings from the Vatican Museum and five other museums and galleries in Italy were included in the exhibit. The exhibit aims to help art history students and bring about a positive impact on people especially those who somehow lost direction in life, the institute director said. (THE HERALD)

KOREA: THE BRAILLE BIBLE PUBLISHED

A Mass and congratulatory party were celebrated in Seoul September 28, 2006 to mark the publication of *The Braille Bible*. Present was Bishop Kwon Hyeok-ju, president of the Biblical Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCK) and representatives of the Catholic Blind Mission in Korea (CBMK), the group involved in the publication. The Korean bishops approved the publication of *The Braille Bible* at the 2005 Autumn General Assembly of CBCK and provided CBMK with 100 million won (about \$100,000) to help realize this project. The Braille Bible is a gift of the Church to the blind who, according to a CBMK official, "have been alienated by publishers." (CBCK NEWSLETTER)

PHILIPPINES: MASSES TRANSMITTED VIA INTERNET

The Catholic Charismatic Community of Edsa Shrine, the Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, in Quezon City plans to stream live Masses via the Internet in 2007. In February, the community will begin operations on their website at www.edsashrine.com. The aim is to spread the Christian message to as wide an audience as possible. The Edsa Shrine was erected in 1988 as a living memory of Our Lady's role in the 1986 peaceful revolution that overthrew the Marcos dictatorship. (CBCP MONITOR/OSC)

HONG KONG: CHRISTIAN CHURCHES JOIN AT CONCERT

Members of the Anglican, Catholic and Orthodox Churches participated in a concert December 14, 2006 at Cityplaza mall on Hong Kong island. The event named "Singspiration on Emmanuel Concert 2006" gathered a crowd of 150 people and featured songs from members of *Emmanuel Apostolatus*, the main concert organizer, as well as speeches from Anglican and Orthodox Church leaders. (UCANEWS)

'INFO' GOES ONLINE

The monthly issues of *FABC-OSC Communication INFO* are now available online via the FABC website <www.fabc.org>. The move seeks a more efficient distribution scheme and better archiving. Readers are advised to inform the FABC-OSC if they wish to continue receiving hard copies of the newsletter or opt for the online version. Thank you. - The Editor

INDIA: JESUIT BROTHER BRINGS CHRIST TO VILLAGERS THROUGH FOLKSONGS, SKITS

Jesuit Brother Sadhu Shilananda, 67, heads a seven-member Christian fellowship troupe called *Masihi satsang Mandali* which since 1998 leads meditative prayer sessions in villages in Patna archdiocese and Buxar diocese in northern India. The sessions are usually held in the evenings and include solemn chanting, folksongs and skits about village issues. Brother Sadhu leads the sessions dressed as a traditional Hindu ascetic. Over the years, the troupe has gained acceptance among Hindus in the area. (UCANEWS)

CHINA: 'THE RED BOOK OF CHINESE MARTYRS' RELEASED

"The Red Book of Chinese Martyrs" (*Il Libro Rosso dei Martiri Cinesi*) was released in late 2006 after years of collaboration among missionaries of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions who are experts on China. The 271-page book written in Italian is a collection of testimonials and autobiographical accounts of the persecution carried out by Maoists against Catholics between the 1950s and the 1970s. Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kium, Catholic Bishop of Hong Kong, wrote the Preface. (ASIANEWS)

PHILIPPINES: CATHOLIC TV NETWORK TEAMS UP WITH SATELLITE CORPORATION FOR WIDER REACH

INTV, formerly Cebu Catholic Television Network, has signed a satellite service agreement with Mabuhay Satellite Corporation on January 12 to reach more viewers not just in the central and southern Philippine regions but across Asia as well. INTV aims to be "inspiring," "informative," "in touch with the times" and "interactive" says its website at <www.intv.com.ph> (MISSION SCAN)

INDONESIA: ECUMENICAL CHRISTMAS MESSAGE URGES CHRISTIANS

The Indonesian Bishops' Conference (KWI, Indonesian acronym) and the Protestant Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) have issued a joint Christmas message in mid-November urging Christians to celebrate Christmas by building peace amid the country's problems. The message titled "He Is Our Peace Who Made Both One" was read out in Catholic churches on Dec. 3, the first Sunday of Advent. (UCANEWS)

PHILIPPINES: 'YOUNGSTER MAGAZINE' TURNS 50

"Youngster Magazine," published by Society of St. Paul (SSP) celebrated 50 years' publication on November 25, 2006 at the SSP compound in Makati city. Selected students from 25 Catholic schools joined the celebration with Mass, Bible quiz, pep-talk on personality development, cartooning and school organ layouting. (CBCP MONITOR)

INDIA: BOOK MARKS FOR RADIO VERITAS ASIA

The Nitika Don Bosco Centre in Kolkata started handing out multi-colored bookmarks in January 2007 to promote Radio Veritas Asia's Bengali Service. RVA is FABC's short-wave radio station based in Manila broadcasting in 16 languages across Asia. (NITIKA)

SRI LANKA: STUDENTS' PROJECT OFFERS ALTERNATIVE TO STANDARD TV PROGRAMMING

Students of the all-girl Holy Family Convent School in Kalutara, 40 kms south of Colombo, have produced a Sinhalese-language video titled *Savikalpa* (alternative) as an alternative to standard TV fare in Sri Lanka. The video was shown on December 6, 2006 to about 150 people including priests, nuns, teachers and students. It has 10 segments of educational, environmental, health, music, news, religious and social programming. The religious segment features spiritual teachings of the four main religions in the country - Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: CARTOON STEALS SHOW AT LATIN-RITE BISHOPS' MEETING

The January 4 to 9, 2007 plenary meeting of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) featured a cartoon presentation drawn by Holy Cross Bishop Stephen Rotluanga of Aizawl. The cartoon, which showed the seeming distance between laity and bishops, is a depiction of "the real situation of the Church," observed a journalist who was at the press conference after the meeting. Bishop Rotluanga, 54, says caricatures or cartoons "are a humorous way to get the pertinent points across without anyone taking offense." (UCANEWS)

TAJIKISTAN: A 'COMPUTERIZED' CHRISTMAS

Nuns and young people of St. Joseph Parish in Dushanbe have prepared a power-point presentation with details and facts about Jesus' birth. The presentation was first shown to parishioners of St. Joseph on January 1, 2007 and then to some 25 parishioners of St. Roch Parish in Kurgan-Tube, the second largest parish in the country, 80 kms south of Dushanbe. Catholics number about 250 in Tajikistan, where Muslims make up 96 percent of the 6.5 million people in the country. Members of the Russian Orthodox Church make up the second largest religious community at about 3 percent. (UCANEWS)

PHILIPPINES: CHURCH HELPS TEACH YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT A.I.D.S. THROUGH PLAY

The musical *Palipat-lipat, Pasalin-salin* (always moving, always transferring) was staged by Creative Collective Center Inc (CCCI) and Citadel Church in various places in Metro Manila between October and December last year. The play explained how HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus) is transmitted by sexual contact, and how it can be prevented. CCCI is an NGO that uses the arts to promote awareness of social issues, while Citadel Church in Quezon City is a group of Protestant, Evangelical, Methodist and other independent churches in the country. (UCANEWS)

INDONESIA: CATHOLIC COMPOSER LAUNCHES SPIRITUAL ALBUM TO HELP EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

Gregorius Djaduk Ferianto, a self taught Catholic composer with background in traditional Javanese music, has launched an album titled *Dia Sumber Gembira* (He is the source of my happiness) on December 3, 2006 at St. Anthony Church, Kotabaru, Yogyakarta. Proceeds from album sales will all go to communities and organizations needing help, Ferianto said. Ferianto lives in the area hardest hit by the May 2006 killer earthquake. (THE HERALD)

INDIA: ASIA'S TALLEST 'BIBLE TOWER' INAUGURATED

A 10-storey structure called the "Bible Tower" in Thrissur, Kerala was inaugurated in December by Papal Nuncio to India Archbishop Pedro Lopez Quintana. The event marked the fulfillment of a long-standing dream of the Catholic community in Thrissur. (THE HERALD)

KOREA: CATHOLIC MASS COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS HIGHLIGHT THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

The 16th Catholic Mass Communications Awards was held at Myeong-dong Cathedral of Seoul on December 5, 2006 under the auspices of the Committee for Social Communications of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea (CBCK). The Grand Prix Award was given to the film "Our Happy Time" by director Song Hae-seong which showcases the encounter between a condemned prisoner and a desperate woman. The film was recognized for showing the power of forgiveness and by providing an opportunity to think of the dignity of human persons. (CBCK NEWSLETTER)

PHILIPPINES: SEMINAR ON FILM

Some 110 priests, religious, educators and lay people attended a three-day seminar on "Faith and Film" January 15-17, 2007 at the Communication Foundation for Asia (CFA), Manila. The seminar was conducted by former OCIC (international Catholic organization for cinema) world president, Fr Peter Malone. The Sacred Heart missionary from Australia is a well-known film critic and was instrumental in the foundation of the Catholic Initiative for Enlightened Movie Appreciation (CINEMA) under the Women's Desk of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). (CFA)



KOREA: SCHOLARS URGE CHURCH TO PROTECT ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE

Some 40 priests, nuns and lay scholars who participated in the November 24, 2006 symposium "Preservation and Management of the Church's Cultural Heritage" underlined the need to protect and promote Catholic culture in the country. The gathering stressed that 45 of the 80 modern religious heritage sites listed as important cultural assets by the government belong to the Catholic Church. The Church also contributed to nation building by promoting the Korean language. Sadly, according to participants, there are no guidelines to help preservation efforts, and no experts assigned on the matter. The meeting was held in Seoul by the Korean bishops' Committee for Culture as recommended by the Holy See's Pontifical Council for Culture. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: WITH MUSIC AND LAUGHTER, PRIEST TELLS BIBLE STORIES

Jesuit Father Ignace Macwan, has adopted and adapted a local story-telling custom called *Katha* to share Bible stories to parishioners of Vatva parish in Ahmedabad. *Katha* is an all-night program of stories about Hindu gods told in songs and anecdotes. Fr Macwan mixes them with jokes, amusing his audience who are mainly Hindus. He says, this is the "best way" to make Christ relevant. (UCANEWS)

INDONESIA: JAVANESE EXORCISM RITUAL PERFORMED DURING MASS

Jesuit Father Yohanes Mardiwidayat has performed *ruwatan*, a traditional Javanese exorcism ritual, during Mass on November 26, 2006 Pringwulung, Sleman to symbolize purification of 89 mostly teenage Catholics. He told some 300 Catholics present at Mass that Baptism purifies us and unites us with Christ, whereas "a Catholic *ruwatan* helps us live our faith in accordance with local culture." He added that the ritual is necessary to encounter God within their Javanese culture. (UCANEWS)

