

# Chinese bishop said to work well in delicate situations

GUANGZHOU, China – The new bishop of the Guangzhou Diocese has been described as an “amiable person” who knows how to work in delicate situations.

A layman who attended the Dec. 4 ordination of Bishop Joseph Gan Junqiu told the Asian church news agency UCA News that about 1,500 people witnessed the ceremony inside the Sacred Heart Cathedral and on a TV screen in a temporary chapel. Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong province, is more than 1,000 miles south of Beijing.

When the new bishop was giving his blessing to the faithful as he left the altar, Bishop Gan approached and embraced a young Catholic who has a mental disability, he said.

“We were all moved,” said the layman, who requested anonymity. He described Bishop Gan as an “amiable person who gets along well with the laypeople.”

He said the prelate knows how to work in a low-key manner in delicate situations, such as contacting church people from overseas and protecting clergy who approached him from Catholic communities not registered with the government.

When UCA News tried to contact Bishop Gan, the prelate said he was busy visiting a critically ill priest.

The ordination of the new bishop was the fourth in China this year. The new bishops, all of whom are in their 40s, were approved by both the Vatican and the Chinese government.

Bishop Francis Lu Shouwang of Yichang was ordained Nov. 30, and the Guizhou and Beijing dioceses ordained their new bishops in September.

Bishop Gan, 43, received an episcopal ring, miter and staff from the ordaining prelate, Bishop Johan Fang Xingyao of Linyi.

Bishops Joseph Liao Hongqing of Meizhou and Paul Su Yongda of Zhanjiang and Bishop Lu were the new bishop's seminary classmates at the Central and Southern China Theological and Philosophical Seminary in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province.

Beijing-based officials of the State Administration for Religious Affairs and Guangdong provincial government officials attended the ceremony, according to the Guangdong-based Catholic Web site Tianzhujiao ([www.cncatholic.org](http://www.cncatholic.org)).

"The government has utilized human and financial resources to ensure the security of the Guangzhou ordination," the Web site said Dec. 3.

Media outside China were not allowed to enter the church to report on the event. Part of the main road and public square in front of the cathedral also were closed for the occasion.

The 120-year-old cathedral, one of the largest Gothic churches in China, commonly is known as "Stone House Church." The building, inspired by Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, reopened in February after a two-year renovation.

Bishop Gan was born in 1964 and ordained a priest in 1991. He taught and served as dean of studies and general affairs in the Wuhan seminary until 2000. He then returned to the Diocese of Guangzhou to become diocesan chancellor and director of the church property management committee.

Five years after the death of his predecessor, Bishop James Lin Bingliang of Guangzhou, he was elected a bishop in October 2006 and later confirmed by the Vatican.