

"I urge all Catholics around the world to join in prayer with our brothers and sisters who are in China, to implore from God the grace to proclaim with humility and joy Christ, who died and rose again; to be faithful to His Church and the Successor of Peter and to live everyday life in service to their country and their fellow citizens in a way that is consistent with the faith they profess". (Pope Francis)

"All Catholics throughout the world have a duty to pray for the Church in China: those members of the faithful have a right to our prayers, they need our prayers". (Benedict XVI)

Blessings

Prayer of His Holiness Benedict XVI
to Our Lady of Sheshan
on the Occasion of the World Day of Prayer
for the Church in China,
24 May



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 forever. Amen!