

# *Prayer for China*

## *in particular on 21-28 May*

### **Introduction**

In 2007 Pope Benedict XVI designated 24 May, the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians as an annual worldwide Day of Prayer for the Church in China.

Cardinal Bo, president of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference, has called on the faithful to extend this to a Week of Prayer for the Church in China and the peoples of China: Sunday 21 – Sunday 28 May 2023.

### **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 unfailing 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**

- Cardinal Bo calls for a Week of Prayer for China [<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/cardinal-bo-calls-for-a-week-of-prayer-for-china/>]
- Message of Pope Francis to the Catholics of China and to the Universal Church, 2018 [<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/09/26/180926b.html>]
- Letter of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI to Chinese Catholics, 2007 [[https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2007/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_let\\_20070527\\_china.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20070527_china.html)]

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