

The Pandemic Highlights the Vatican's Ties With the Chinese Regime

Chen Han

May 11, 2020, Updated May 12, 2020

Since the Vatican City (the Holy See) confirmed its first case of the CCP virus on March 5, a total of 12 people have been infected. Why did the small city fall prey to the pandemic?

The virus's spread has highlighted countries' ties to the Chinese regime. Let's examine the Vatican's developing relations with Beijing in recent years.

The Vatican has a population of approximately 800 people. On May 6, the Holy See press office announced that a 12th person tested positive for the CCP virus. The first cardinal to test positive was Angelo De Donatis, the Vicar General for the Diocese of Rome, on March 30.

On the evening of March 27, Pope Francis stood alone in St. Peter's Square and during the prayer service he said,

“We find ourselves afraid and lost.” The service was livestreamed around the world.

Why has the Vatican, the highest authority of the Catholic Church, been affected by the CCP virus?

The Vatican and Beijing severed ties in 1951 after the communist takeover. The Vatican does not recognize the so-called Catholic bishops appointed by the CCP through its “self-selection” and “self-consecration” procedures.

However, in the past few years, the situation has begun to change.

In September 2018, the Vatican signed an agreement with Beijing, allowing Chinese authorities to appoint China’s bishops. The Holy See endorsed the legitimacy of these Beijing-appointed bishops.

Cardinal Joseph Zen, a former bishop of Hong Kong, criticized the Holy See for surrendering completely to the CCP and keeping silent about the CCP’s record of human rights violations.

The BBC published an article stating that the Vatican signed the agreement with Beijing in order to promote good

relations and to attract more mainland Chinese to join the Christian faith in the future.

In an exclusive interview with Hong Kong-based newspaper Asia Times in February 2016, Pope Francis urged the world not to fear China's "growing power" and he conveyed a message of friendship to Chinese leader Xi Jinping for the Lunar New Year. Francis avoided talking about human rights and the CCP's persecution of Catholics in China.

During the Hong Kong protests over a since-shelved extradition bill last year, the Vatican chose to remain silent on the issue.

In a blogpost, Cardinal Zen wrote that he flew to Rome to meet the Pope in June last year to plead with him in person to take a stance against Beijing's erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy. But five months later, the Vatican did not make any statement about the protests.

The Vatican's compromise with the CCP is not limited to the above.

In February 2017, the World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong (WOIPFG) wrote a letter to the

Pope, urging him to prevent two Chinese officials from attending the Vatican's Pontifical Academy Summit on Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism. Dr. Huang Jiefu and Dr. Wang Haibo have been heavily involved in organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience in China, according to research by the WOIPFG. Huang was a former vice minister in charge of organ transplantation in the CCP's Ministry of National Health and Family Planning Commission. Wang was responsible for creating China's organ transplant database.

Huang himself later revealed in an interview with Phoenix TV that his invitation to the Vatican's Pontifical Academy of Sciences was condemned by 12 medical ethics experts from various countries who raised concerns about China's forced organ harvesting.

Huang also bragged to the reporter about the support he received from Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, president of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, and the Pope, for his participation in the conference.

Bishop Sorondo not only welcomed Huang to the Vatican, but also looked forward to being invited to visit China. His wish was quickly fulfilled, and in subsequent interviews

with the media, he praised the CCP and downplayed the CCP's organ transplant abuses.

In the past few years, Pope Francis has repeatedly extended an olive branch to Beijing, expressing his willingness to visit China. This may also be the next goal of the Holy See after signing the appointment agreement for bishops between China and the Vatican in 2018. The South China Morning Post reported in August 2014 that Francis told a group of reporters who traveled with him to South Korea and were flying back with him to Europe: “Do I want to go to China? Of course, even tomorrow.”

The CCP's coverup and delayed response to the CCP virus outbreak caused the pandemic and now the world is suffering from the consequences. However, Pope Francis publicly praised the CCP for its efforts in containing the CCP virus within its borders.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-pandemic-highlights-the-vaticans-ties-with-the-chinese-regime_3342850.html