

Video Transcript

“Beyond Ricci: Celebrating Four Hundred Years of the Chinese Catholic Church”

An hour-long documentary shot by Fr James McDermott, S.J. and narrated, directed and produced by Fr Jeremy Clarke, S.J.

Source: <http://beyondricci.bc.edu/about>

Introduction

[Church choir singing in the background. Phase into pictures of stone tablets. Fr. Clarke standing at Zhalan Cemetery, Beijing]

Fr. Jeremy Clarke, SJ: “Good day. My name's Jeremy Clarke. I'm a Catholic priest, a member of the Australian province of the Society of Jesus--the Jesuits. When I was a high school boy at Saint Ignatius College in Sydney in the early 1980s, I first heard about a Jesuit missionary to China in the 16th century, a man called Matteo Ricci. At about the same time, I also started studying Chinese language and culture. And then I went to China for the first time in 1985, and it's been true to say that ever since those days, Ricci and the Chinese Catholic Church and Chinese language and culture have been a constant in my life.

My students at Boston College have been great, but they do surprise me, I must admit, because when they study with me, there's not too many of them who know all that much about Ricci or about the history of the Catholic Church in China. That does surprise me because Ricci is a very significant world figure in history. He looms large in the history of East-West cultural exchange. Chinese students, however, Chinese people at large, do know about Ricci, do know about Li Madou. He appears in textbooks. There are annual conferences on him. People visit his cemetery. People know that he brought Western science and learning to China. But they also know that he was a missionary. That he was expounding upon the teachings of the Lord of heaven--of Christ. During his own lifetime, people came to him either for the science or to hear him talk about Jesus. Some people came to him for both.

What I want to do is tell you something about Ricci's life and his story. And in telling something about his life and story and his journey from the south of China, all the way up to Beijing in the North, to tell you something about how the Catholic churches developed also. Not just during his life but in the last 400 years as well. This is not the beginning. Ricci did not begin the story of the Catholic Church in China. That began actually centuries before him. But more particularly in a Jesuit stance it began with Francis Xavier, Alessandro Valignano, that began down south and that's where

we're going to go as well. It's important to come here to have a look, but we're going to come here at the end of our story as well.

It's also important to begin here, because I really want to tell you that this is not National Geographic, you know. This is not actually Lonely Planet, but hopefully one of those stations will want to pick it up, because it's a really interesting story. But this is two blokes, two Jesuits: Jim McDermott and myself, Jeremy Clarke, trying to tell you a story, dealing with all the messiness of what it is to kind of do guerilla filming in China. We've had people wandering around in the background, we've had traffic driving past, we've been dealing with shooting out of the backseat of taxis, or buses. We've been in trains, we've been dealing with hotels, we've been dealing with all that sort of stuff. So basically, all the problems, the day-to-day troubles that you actually do when you're filming on the road with two blokes, a camera, and a tripod. But come with us. It's kind of fun. It's got its moments. And let us tell you something of that history--of the history of Ricci and the Chinese Catholic Church.”

[Singing in the background.]

[More singing and short clips of China.]

["Beyond Ricci" title appears]

Macau [03:52]

[Fast-forwarded recording of someone writing something on board]

[Text on screen: Macau]

[Murmuring of background conversations]

[Birds chirping while map fades out to a view of the city]

[Footage of Macau]

Father Jeremy Clarke, SJ: “This place is huge in the story of Matteo Ricci and the story of the Catholic Church in China. Even though Ricci himself arrived here in the early 1580s, Jesuit presence began here earlier in about 1560, when the first Jesuit arrived to Macau. The first community, however, was not started until about 1565. In many ways, we can say the story started, however, when Alessandro Valignano, the visitor to the East, the architect of the Jesuit missions in the East arrived here in 1578. In that year, he decided we had to establish a college and a presence here in Macau to actually the serve the Church in Japan and to serve the Church in China. He immediately called Michele Ruggieri to here, to this place to learn Chinese--to then go into Chinese and talk about God in China.

Immediately after, not long after, Matteo Ricci joined him. This church was not actually here when Ricci himself lived in Macau. It was not designed until 1602 and was probably constructed and finished in the 1620s. The reason it is only a facade behind me is because it got burnt down by a fire in 1835. His complex around here consisted of a Jesuit college and this magnificent Jesuit church behind us.”

[Footage of a square bustling with people]

[Footage of the Crypt of the martyrs, St. Paul's]

[Close-up of the Crypt]

Clarke: “So here we have on the top of the Church of St. Paul's, there are various levels and as I've said, it's a sermon in stone. It's been described by many people as one of the most beautiful churches in the world, except perhaps for St. Peter's in Rome. But here we actually have on the second level, we have four saints. We have - over here on my right - we have far aside, as the third general of the Society of Jesus, Francis Borgia. It might be a surprise that he's actually one of the one's listed there. At the time, he was only blessed. He hadn't yet been canonized. But he was put up there because he gave great impetus to the missions in the East and so he was a great supporter of the work in Japan and China.

On the end, because this was the college church--the college of the mother of God--Saint Paul's College, it was the college for the Jesuit missionaries and students--people who liked learning about everything from science, mathematics, philosophy--all the things they would have learned back in Europe. Things that they took around this region that they used in Japan, that they used in China, that they used in CochinChina, or Vietnam. Well, so this was a college. It was a school and hence we have blessed Aloysius Gonzaga, Louis Gonzaga, and he's the final one up there, because he's the patron saint of youth and thereby, also of students.

Just as they were great friends in life, so too do we have reunited on the front of this church facade, we have Ignatius and his great friend Francis Xavier. There was that gospel line that Ignatius loved, which was "I have come to set fire on the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already." Well, Francis Xavier actually was the one who took that flame around the world from Goa, through the Malaccas, to Japan, and to China. He never actually made it here, but nevertheless, his memory lives on because of the great work that he did--how he brought the society to the doorway of China, to the doorway of Macau. And so he is remembered forever in this sermon on the stone.”

Shangchuan Island Trip [08:14]

Clarke: “Well today, we're actually trying to go to Shangchuan Island, which is also known as Sancian Island, and also known as St. John's Island. This is where Francis Xavier tried to get into China. He tried to hitch a ride on a boat going up to China, and unfortunately it didn't work, and not only did it not work, he also died in the attempt. All the boats left and he got a fever and he died. I frankly think he died of sheer exhaustion. But anyway, he died there in 1552 and that really began the whole history of the endeavors of trying to get into China by the Church and the missionaries, which ultimately was successful with Matteo Ricci, later in 1583.

But as you can see, today, there's a lot of rain around, and in fact, we're in the middle of a thing called tropical storm Goni, which has a temperature, which has a predicted, consistent wind speed of 75 kilometers an hour. Now, we know that's not as fast as New York taxi--probably actually a little bit quicker than Macau taxi, but frankly, it's fast enough to stop the ferries going to Shangchuan. All the boats are in safely from the sea; they're safe in the harbor here, and a lot of traffic is stopped. That's why the roads are real and utterly empty. People are staying at home, shops have got

their shutters closed down, and the ferry is, at least as we've heard, not running. But anyway, we're gonna give it a go and what are our chances? Well, you know, I'm an Aussie! I think we'll give it a go anyway.”

[Footage of driving on the road in heavy rain]

[Noisy / Speedometer reads 60 mph / Difficult to see the road because of the heavy rain]

[Loud sounds of rain and windshield wipers while driving on highway / Voice shouting]

[Voice speaking Chinese as man outside gives direction]

[Voice, belonging to passenger, speaking Chinese]

Clarke: “This is great!”

[Sound of car travelling on rough terrain]

[Sounds of heavy rain]

[Sounds of struggle with umbrella in heavy rain]

Clarke: “Now we have actually made it to the wharf and Shangchuan is actually over that way. As you can see, it's fair enough to say we are in a tropical storm, and I think it's also probably fair to say if Noel Coward said that "mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun," I think you can probably say only ducks and Jesuits on pilgrimage probably come out to this little wharf. Anyway, we tried. We did have a go. Everything is locked down. We can't even get our car into the car part. We can't even go out here and at least gaze out like Xavier. So the legend of course is that Francis Xavier was gazing out to China and never got there. Well, we're in China, but we actually can't even gaze out to Shangchuan at the moment. At least we tried, and it's a reminder actually of the 600 Jesuits who were sent to China. Only 200 made it. They died at sea because of shipwreck, died because of storms, died because of pirates, and so on. So anyway, we had a go, but as you can see, it's very wet.”

[Zoom into the crashing ocean waves]

[Footage of the waves before blackout]

Zhaoqing [12:25]

[Text on screen: Zhaoqing]

[Footage of Zhaoqing scenery]

Clarke: “So here we are. We're actually in Zhaoqing, just on the outskirts, the other side of the river to where Ricci would have lived. And we're going to a pagoda called the Wenming Pagoda, which is actually the cultured, civilized pagoda, and it was actually built in 1588. The Jesuits were here from late 1582. We're kicked out. Then 1583 to 1589. So, what we're seeing in fact, is something that's quite contemporaneous with the first period of Jesuit residence in this town, which was also the first period of the newest age of Christian history in China.”

[Footage of the pagoda]
[Footage of writing on wall]

Clarke: “Well, here we are at this more-than-400-year-old-temple. It was reconstructed actually only in 1996, and what's kind of ironic is that now in this place of great antiquity, it's actually become a lover's message wall. All these characters and all this graffiti here next to me actually say, "I love you." Now, in the context of the Ricci story and the history of the Catholic Church in China, Ricci grew to love China immensely. He loved the culture, the food, the language. He developed very deep and intimate friendships with many, many people. And his contributions are greatly respected by the Chinese people. But it's fair to say he didn't grow to love Zhaoqing. This was a difficult place, a difficult post. There was the heat, the humidity. There was the opposition from townsfolk who didn't want these foreigners here. They thought they were too closely linked with the Portuguese in Macau and were perhaps the outriders of a foreign invasion. Ricci and Ruggieri's house was attacked. Ruggieri was accused of adultery, which he was subsequently cleared from. The constant opposition made Ricci and Ruggieri feel really isolated, lonely, and opposed. They were also disconsolate because in the whole of this time, they managed to convert one person. So they came to set the world on fire, but in fact, it seems as though their dreams were smoldering around their feet. So people here love each other and send their messages of love, and for Ricci, he didn't really end up liking, loving, Zhaoqing.”

[Footage of Zhaoqing. Footage of man riding down a quiet road in Zhaoqing]

Clarke: “This street, Shi Zi Da Xiang, or the Street of the Cross, the street not only contained character, but also the Street of the Cross was indeed where the first Jesuit residence was and where we can say the modern Chinese Catholic history began. While Zhaoqing was a difficult place for the early missionaries, it was nevertheless a place that Ricci and Ruggieri realized they could make a go of it. They realized by immersing themselves in language and culture, they could become part of the Chinese scene. So, it is here that Ricci made his first world map. It is here that he wrote his first catechism, as Ruggieri did before him. And it was here too that they began to become proficient in language and culture to the extent that they became aware of what they had to do to keep moving forward. So while it was a place of loneliness, it was nevertheless a place where seeds were planted, and the seeds were planted here on this street.”

Train to Nanchang [16:18]

Clarke: “I'm on the train from Guangzhou to Nanchang. It's not so long as Chinese train rides go. It's a 14-hour train trip. We leave at about 7 in the evening and get in there 8 the next day. We are doing hard sleeper, which is a three bed bunk scenario, so there are cabins of 6 and about 120 person train ride. It's not luxurious but I find it very comfortable and we're on the top bunk, which gives us a chance to reflect on what we have experienced in Guanghai, which is near Guangzhou and Zhaoqing as we now travel

to Nanchang where Ricci really made a mark and really where the mission began to take off.

Reflecting on the journey so far, it's nice to be on a train where you don't have to worry about driving - where the people do the driving for you. It was great to drive around Zhaoqing with my brother, and my niece, and Jim, but when my car broke down it was a bit of a saga. We've seen a few things. We've done some good filming in the morning, and then the car just doesn't start, and what to do. So, anyway, I had to go. We had to check out, we had to go back there. There were problems with paying for the hotels and then actually going to get a 10 liter gallon of petrol. We didn't have a gallon drum so we had to go to 3 petrol stations, and the petrol stations were on the far side of town. At this stage the taxi meter is tick-tick-tick and I'm thinking, my God, my budget is blown. What are we going to do? We get back to the car, but we don't have anything to put it in the petrol tank. We have to think like Aussies and solve a few things on the spot. So we get the water bottle, we do that, we pour it in. I'm smelling of petrol, my shoes are smelling of petrol. I'm thinking, Thank God I don't smoke.

And anyway we eventually get the thing started. So then the question is do we what? Do we stop at the scenery? Enjoy the view? Or do we just high-tail it out of Zhaoqing like Ricci and the Jesuits before and make our way basically just straight to Guangzhou? Get our tickets and wipe the dust - wipe the southern dust from our feet and head off to Nanchang. Turns out we're heading into another tropical storm, but we'll leave that for tomorrow. Tonight I'm going to get some sleep, enjoy the what we've experienced, give it up to God and say, Tomorrow is a new day.”

Nanchang [18:34]

[Text on screen: Nanchang] [Music and sounds of people playing tennis]

[Text on screen: Ricci established a community in Nanchang in 1595, having unsuccessfully tried to settle in Nanjing in the same year.]

[Music from instrument]

[Music and voices shouting]

[Text on screen: Here the Jesuits wear scholar clothing, rather than Buddhist robes, and Ricci wrote several books, including his famous and influential "Jiaoyou Lun, On Friendship."]

[Sounds of city]

[Footage of city]

Clarke: “Ni hao. Ni hao.”

Voices Offscreen: “Ni hao. Ni hao.” [Laughter]

Clarke: “Even though the time in the south had places like Zhaoqing and Shaozhou were difficult for Ricci and his companions, it nevertheless afforded them the opportunity to learn Chinese language and culture, and most importantly make a few significant and powerful benefactors, patrons. However, when they arrived in Nanjing, ironically at that time, Korea was invaded by Japan, and China thought that Japan - the Japanese troops - might also invade China. At that time the Japanese troops, most feared of the Japanese troops, in a rather strange quirk of history were the Japanese

Christian soldiers. These men had been converted by Ricci's Jesuit confreres and here they were invading Korea and making his own movement furthermore north all the more difficult.

So they had to leave. Ricci and his Chinese Jesuit brother, Zhong Mingren, one of the first Chinese to join the Society in 1589. They had to leave Nanjing, and this is in like the late 1594, early 1595. And they're fearful, Nanjing is fearful, they have taken on some of that fear themselves and hop on the boat traveling south. With the tail between their legs, they're a little bit dismayed, a little bit lonely, a little bit upset yet again because another dream just seems to have sailed on by.

Anyway, they hop on the boat. It's cold, it's dark, and Ricci has a vision, and in this vision he imagines he sees a guy who is standing there, a stranger, who is standing in the crowd on the boat standing next to him, someone he's never seen. And this stranger turns to him and says, "Hey you! Master Ricci! Are you the guy who is actually coming here to do away with all of our old traditions, our ancient ways, and bring this new message?" And Ricci is like, "Who are you? How do you know my true intentions? You know? Are you the devil? Or are you God?" and the guy says to him, "Look, I'm not the Devil. I am God." So Ricci is like, "Well, mate, where have you been? It's been thirteen really hard yards, I've sprained my ankle, my house has been attacked, I've been shipwrecked, the language is really tough and the culture's difficult. No one likes us, no one likes my message, where have you been?!"

And the guy says, "Ricci, let me tell you, Matteo, Li Madou, go to this big city", and he shows him this vision of a big city, and Ricci doesn't know it, so he presumes that it's maybe actually Beijing and he says, "oh great, that's where I want to go, Beijing!" The guy says, "Go to that city, and I will be favorable to you there."

Those of us, you know, those of us who know Ignatius spirituality, well we hear the echoes of Ignatius' own story at La Storta, when he has this vision that he goes to Jerusalem, he goes to Rome, he is in Jerusalem already and he wants to get to Rome, and he has this vision that God says, Jesus says to him, "Go to Rome, I will be favorable to you there."

So Ricci and Zhong Mingren, they come to Nanchang, and they, where they had been really downhearted, and they are lifted up. Where they had been dismal, and they are joyous. Where they had been fearful, and now they are hope-filled. And they come to Nanchang and there they have an amazing time of cross-cultural exchange, great friendship, mutual learning. God was favorable to them in Nanchang. And Ricci believed that God would be favorable to them again in Beijing."

[Scenery]

[Scenery of stained glass window]

[Scenery of church]

[Text on screen, "Nanchang"]

Jiujiang [24:30]

Clarke: “Here we are at Jiujiang, which is along the Chang Jiang, or the Yangtze River. It's a very significant port, cause not only does it connect the east part of the country with the inland western part by the riverway, it also connects the south with the north. Bay water come up through the inland rivers like the Gan, going through Nanchang where we've just been, and then connected a little bit further east of us with the Grand Canal. And that indeed is the way that Ricci went up to Beijing; certainly how he went to Nanjing before he had to go back to Nanchang, and then once he was in Nanjing, a bit further east of here, he would have then taken the Grand Canal, he did take the Grand Canal up to Beijing.

We had hoped ourselves to actually catch a boat down this mighty river, the mighty Yangtze, and uh, it would have taken us down that way to Nanjing. But unfortunately, because of the importance of this port, and the rise of economic development, the very economic strength of this board has also been its demise because it is a big export place, but it's now quicker to transport things by the very efficient roadways and trainways. So while there's a lot of traffic on the river, it's no longer tourist traffic. The tourist traffic is much further west, and the only traffic that happens here is sort of intercity transportation of things like coal and sand and gravel and those sort of things, not necessarily the export of goods. So sadly, while we had actually hoped to do this and meander and enjoy the sunset, unfortunately it's not actually going to occur. We're going to have to get on a bus, travel about 6/7 hours east, cross the river by a bridge, not the one behind us, but one like it. And we'll actually end up in Nanjing and resume Ricci's story there.”

[26:23] Nanjing

[Text on screen, "Nanjing"]
[Scenery]

Clarke: “Nanjing. Although Ricci had visited Nanjing in 1595, and again in 1598, he only established the first community here in 1599, he befriended many more scholar officials in Nanjing, including Xu Guangqi, who he first met in 1599. Ricci enjoyed the city, attracted by the charms of its scenery and pleased by the welcome he now received.

The first Chinese bishop, the Dominican, Luo Wenzao, who was ordained in 1685, was in charge of this diocese. In 1688, he also ordained three Chinese Jesuits, Wu Li, also known as Wu Yushan, Liu Yunde, and Wan Qiyuan. They were the first to be ordained in China. Wu Li was a well known painter, regarded as one of the six masters of the earlier Qing period. He also wrote significant Chinese Christian poetry, among the earliest of its kind. In the 20th century, the church in Nanjing, was an important center for Catholicism, especially when the city became the nation's capital. Thus, the Nanjing community traced their roots back a long way. In the following poem, Wu Li imagines the life of the earliest Nanjing Christians, as seen through the eyes of a poor fisherman.”

[Chinese voice reads poem; translation on screen]

“From patching rips in tattered nets his eyes have gotten blurred

He scours the river, does not disdain the tiniest fish and shrimp.
Selecting the freshest, he has supplied the feasts of sovereigns
all four limbs exhausted now, dare he refuse the work?
Spreading nets he gets confused by water just like sky
song lingering, still drunk, approaches dragons as they sleep.
Now hairs and whiskers are all white, his face has aged with time
he's startled by the wind and waves and fears an early autumn.
Some friends of his have changed their job: they are now fishers of men
he hears, compared to fishing fish, this task is tougher still.
Of late he finds the Heavenly Learning has come into the city
to customers now happily add families that fast.”

[sounds of city]
[buzzing]

Clarke: “We're here outside the Xuanwu Lake Park and the gate you've just seen, Xuanwu Men. Outside that park, we had this massive panorama of what the city of Nanjing would have looked like during the Ming Dynasty. Where I'm crouching here now, is in fact, a square-rectangle behind this rectangle behind me, is actually the old imperial city of the Ming Dynasty. This was where the Ming Palace was situated, and you can see all the huge number of buildings within this actual palace ground.

A reasonable question is to ask why'd they come to Nanjing anyway as opposed to maybe going to Suzhou? Or why did they go to Nanchang as opposed to going to the Clay capital Jingdezhen. And I think there's probably two main reasons for this. First of all, they were practicing what has been referred to as an apostolate by radiation, whereby they would meet scholars and they would engage in conversation and be accepted by them. And remember they're now wearing scholarly clothing, which they donned in 1595. And having been welcomed by the scholars and befriended by them, when these scholar officials were moved to another post elsewhere throughout the empire, often they invited the Jesuits to accompany them. And so they were able to spread out, and radiate out through the empire because of these relationships, these friendships they had established.

The second reason I think is the most important reason: No matter how Chinese the European Jesuits had become—and remember they now had Chinese Jesuits in their number—they were still affected by their understandings they had learned in Europe. That is to get things done, it's going to need the imperial throne. So just as they had Jesuits working in the court of France, and Portugal, and Spain, so too did they think they had to work in the imperial port here in China. And for them at that time that meant Beijing.

Nanjing therefore was an important stepping-stone. It was the old imperial city. The Ming had left here in the mid 1400s, but it still had a number of ministries that were quite significant. Scholars who were working here were powerful people with good connections with the imperial court, up north, in Beijing. Whether or not Ricci knew these scholars, the scholars knew him as the wise man from the west. They knew him either personally, and that is possible by the number of people he met in his time, or they knew him because of his writings. In 1595 he had written a very influential book on friendship which he had written in Nanchang. He had written a book on memory

learning and memory techniques and the famous memory palace, and his world map that he had produced all those years ago in Zhaoqing had been reproduced many a time. It had even been pirated, such that this wise man from the west was well known to scholar officials.

Thus while they were happy to be here, and work here, and to go out and meet scholars and continue their apostolate of conversation and radiation, Ricci certainly still always had his eye on moving further north to Beijing. By being here he hoped that they could get to that imperial throne.”

[33:07] Hangzhou

[Water and horizon backdrop]]

[Text on-screen: In heaven there is paradise, on earth there is Suzhou and Hangzhou]

Clarke: “Beautiful Hangzhou. Hangzhou was a very important city for the early Chinese Catholic community and particularly for the Jesuits in their midst. It was a place that they trained their men. It was a place where they printed books. And in times of difficulty and persecution, the Chinese Catholic community provided a safe haven for the European Jesuits.”

[Scene in office with Clarke and Fr. Paul]

Clark: “Father Paul, thank you for having us in your church. Can you please tell us something about this church here, the church of the Immaculate Conception.”

[Fr. Paul speaks over shots of the church and on-screen translation: “Church of the Immaculate Conception built by Martino Martini in 1659 and finished in 1661.”]

[Some muffled conversation between Clarke and Fr. Paul]

[Back in office, Fr. Paul speaks. On-screen text: “Father Paul's community welcomed between 70 and 80 young people for baptism this past year mostly college and university students.”]

Clarke: "And one of the things that people overseas are very struck by is the growth of the church in China, and uh, how many baptisms did you have at Easter this year?"

Fr. Paul: “Uh...not many, about 80, 70 or 80.”

Clarke: “70 or 80? So, not many baptisms this year, but 70 or 80 baptisms! [Laughter] And were they young, or were they old?”

Fr. Paul: “Most of them are young. Young people.”

Clarke: “University students?”

Fr. Paul: “Yes, [muffled]”

Clarke: “And I believe they have to do a long catechism.”

Fr. Paul: [Mixed Chinese and English, Clarke translates]

Clarke: At least three months...one year...some of them three years, okay.”

[Transition with text: “The Catholic Cemetery at Hangzhou, where Jesuits like Martino Martini and Zhong Mingren were buried. During the Cultural Revolution much of the surrounding land was used by a beer-factory, which is still here, and the tombs were disturbed.”]

Clarke: “One of the greatest of the early Chinese Christians, Chinese Catholics was a man known as Zhong Mingren, also known as Sebastian Fernandez. He had joined the Jesuits at the end of the 1580s, early 1590s. He did his novitiate with Ricci and another Chinese Jesuit, Huang Mingsha down south in Shaozhou. But then he was involved in establishing pretty much all the major communities in the early part of the 17th century. In the late 16th century, he was with Ricci at Nanchang, then at Nanjing, then at Beijing, and then finally he came down and established with Lazzaro Cattaneo the first community here in 1611.

But he was more than one of those early pioneers that assisted Jesuits. He was kind of like a Jackie Chan with a breviary. I mean, this guy was imprisoned, he was shipwrecked, he was tortured. He also helped work on a dictionary, a Portuguese-Chinese dictionary, one of the first. He dove into the turbulent rivers after one shipwreck to actually rescue their Plantin Bible, this fantastic multi-language bible that had these beautiful pictures that Ricci valued more than words themselves, because he could show the pictures to the Chinese and thereby evangelize when his language was not up to the task. Zhong Mingren used to go to all the countryside and would visit all the people in the villages and preach to them and then the priest would come after him and baptize. So he was one of these intermediaries between the European missionaries and their neophytes, the new Catholics. It was truly a pillar of the early church, even though we remember more of the Western missionaries. But when we come to a cemetery like this, I am very conscious that a guy like Martino Martini who is buried here and after whom the cemetery is named, well, he was so lucky to be buried alongside a great like Zhong Mingren.

[Scenery, text on screen: “The peak-that-flew-from-afar pagoda.” Clarke walking, untranslated conversation with Chinese man]

Clarke: “Shaolin temple monk...he comes from Burma.”

[Music playing over scenery montage: caves, statues, temple, etc.]

Clarke: “One scholar who became a famous Christian of Hangzhou was a man called Yang Tingyun who took the name of Michael when he was baptized. He saw in the Christianity that was presented by the Jesuit missionaries a lot that was already familiar to him. In Buddhism there is daily prayer rituals, and there are sets of prayer beads and the Jesuits introduced confraternities and marian sodalities with rosaries. In Buddhism people look after the poor in their midst, the widows, those who can't afford to pay for their funerals, and so too were the early Christians encouraged to actually practice social ministry where they would go out and help others and look after the poor and the destitute. One of the things that he found difficult however about converting to Christianity and something that was a block for some time for him and many scholar officials was the demand that he be monogamous. As a scholar, he was actually able to have a number of wives, and did have a second wife. He asked the Jesuits, he said,

"Where is the justice in sending away this woman who has only ever been loyal and faithful to me, who has been an intimate and chaste companion? It just doesn't seem fair or right."

But anyway he did convert and did send her away and that's the historical record. His conversion was very significant for the Church in China as a whole because here in Hangzhou, where he was a powerful and influential scholar, he was able to protect the Jesuits during a time of persecution. He gave the land upon which the church, the Church of the Savior, now the Church of the Immaculate Conception, was built. And he also wrote treatises and books that defended Christianity from attacks from other scholars. So much so that Yang Tingyun, Michael, Yang Tingyun is known as one of the three pillars of the Chinese Church. The church would not be here today if he had not converted. But when we remember him, and all his great acts, I think it is indeed only just to recall that faceless, nameless woman who bore the cost of his conversion."

[41:52] Shanghai

[Shanghai city scenery, on-screen text: "Shanghai, home of Xu Guangqi, the Catholic statesman and friend and co-worker of Matteo Ricci."]

[Food montage]

[On-screen text: "Xu Guangqi Park," then transition to: "He invited the Jesuits to Shanghai in 1608, thus beginning the Catholic Church there."]

[Statue of Xu Guangqi]

[Night shots of city, some muffled Chinese spoken]

[Shot of people praying, on-screen text: "Pilgrims at the Marian shrine at Sheshan, Shanghai"]

[Zoomed in shot on window saying, "Welcome to St. Ignatius Cathedral"]

[Shows interior of Cathedral, chorus singing in background]

[Text on black accompanied by singing: "Some years ago the Bishop of Shanghai, Aloysius Jin Luxian, a Jesuit, began replacing the stained-glass windows that were damaged during the Cultural Revolution.]"

[More text: "He invited Californian Jesuit Father Thomas Lucas SJ, Professor of Art and Architecture at the University of San Francisco, and a Chinese artist, Teresa Wo Ye, to undertake the task."]

[More text: "They have also been assisted by a team of religious sisters."]

[More text: "The use of Chinese motifs and emblems makes the beautiful windows stirring and prayerful expressions of a Chinese Catholic church."]

[Images of stained-glass windows]

[Montage of various sights, with text "Shanghai"]

Beijing [45:15]

[Montage continues, with text "Beijing"]

[Shot of church, with text: "The Church Nantang, where Ricci built a church in 1605"]

[Shot of observatory, with text: "Ancient Observatory"]

[Shot of East Church, with text: "East Church"]

[Shows Chinese symbols saying, 'God is Love']

[Montage of sights as Clarke speaks]

Clarke: “But just over one hundred years after Ruggieri and Ricci began their mission in the South of Guangdong, European missionaries who came to China after them continued to have to leave from Portugal. They left on Portuguese ships, and they were under the authority of the Portuguese throne. That all changed, however, in the 1680s, when the king of France, Louis XIV, decided to send six Jesuit missionaries on a scientific mission to the East. They were going to use their scientific expertise for the glory of his throne, and they were going to work as religious missionaries in China to further the kingdom of God in the East. His bold move of sending these missionaries without any reference to Portugal, effectively broke the Portuguese monopoly on the way that missionaries could travel to the East, so much so that in the century afterwards, there were other French congregations that traveled to China—such people as, for instance, the Vincentians and the Paris Foreign Missionaries Society. The members of those missions, those French missions who died in Beijing, were buried Northwest of here, at a place called the Wuta Si Temple.

[Clarke seen now, with text: "Stone Carving Museum, Beijing"]

Clarke: “The stones you see all around me here, are all that remains of that Christian cemetery. Working for the imperial court was not a soft and cushy job. The hours were long, the missionaries often felt lonely and put-upon, and the political intrigues could be deadly—after all, Adam Schall had died as a result of one.

One man who was well known was the French Jesuit brother, Jean Denis Attiret, who was a painter for the emperors. He followed the emperor on a number of journeys and his paintings have become famous, some even so that you can find them in museums in Europe, as well as in China. He willingly self-effaced himself, that is, he willingly used his gifts and talents in a way that for him was tedious, dull, and boring. In a letter that has subsequently become famous he said, 'Here I am, chained as though from one sum to another. I have to paint only what the Emperor wants according to his tastes and characteristics, and they're not my tastes. I have a thousand other encumbrances that would be too tedious to tell you. And what am I given for this? Merely a few bolts of silk and cloth. I would willingly go back to Europe, were it not that I thought that my brush was used for the good of religion, and enable the missionaries elsewhere to preach. That's the only reason I stay here, in this place.'

That poignant quote from a letter from Jean Denis Attiret is picked up in some strange way by these tombstones, these memorial stones around me, because they are solemn witnesses to the lives of more than thirty missionaries, both Chinese and European, Vincentian and Jesuit, who worked for the church in the 18th and 19th centuries in China. It's a witness because, as in the case of Attiret's stone here, while we can make out his name, we can't make out the name of the society of Jesus and we certainly can't make out the Chinese history, that tells the same story, the story of Attiret's humble and willing service. This tombstone is a reminder that the Chinese church has been built on just such self-effacing service.”

[Zoom on burial stone, text: "Zhalan Cemetery- The site of Ricci's burial"]

[Cemetery montage]

[Images of Chinese city, singing in background]

Clarke: “The early Jesuit's dream of traveling to the end of the world is most personified by Francis Xavier. His demise off the coast of China in 1552, however, did not mean that the early Jesuit dream of re-establishing the church in China also died. Rather, in one of those quirks of history, the man most synonymous with the early Jesuit mission in China, Matteo Ricci, actually was born in the same year as Xavier died. Just before his own death, after about 28 years in China, Matteo Ricci said to those gathered around him in 1610, he said something like, 'I leave you before an open door through which lie many challenges, and a road fraught with great difficulties.' The thousands of women and men, the missionaries who came to China in the years since, certainly faced many challenges, as have the hundreds and thousands and millions of Chinese Catholics and Chinese Christians in the centuries as well.

Now, about 400 years later, the church is still faced with challenges and difficulties. For instance, how do they remain true to the spirit of the gospel in such a rapidly changing society and culture? How do they negotiate such things as ongoing formation programs or international exchanges, with the numerous and varied government agencies and bodies that actually are responsible for religious affairs? More importantly, how do they share their story, how do they go through the open door and talk about the experiences they've had in these past centuries? How do they talk about their joys and their hopes, their griefs and their anxieties? They're not the only ones who face this challenge, of course. You, and I, also have to consider: are we able to stop and leave aside our preconceptions about the Chinese church, about Chinese history in general, and listen to the voices, heed those voices of the China church—this generous people and this storied community.”

Credits

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The English translation of Wu Li's poem Song of the Fisherman, is taken from page 158 of Jonothan Crave's work Singing of the Source: Nature and God in the Poetry of the Chinese Painter Wu Li. University of Hawaii Press Copyright- Jeremy Clarke SJ, 2010."]