



The oldest Chinese priest dies



On 2 June 2015, the Rev. Michael Wang Quansheng, the oldest priest of the Chinese Autonomous Orthodox Church died at the age of 90.

He was born on 27 January 1924. Bishop Simeon (Du) of Shanghai ordained him in 1958.

On Pentecost In 2008, the Rev. Michael Wang attended divine service at the Russian Consulate with the permission of the Chinese authorities. He was awarded with the Me4dal of St. Sergius of Radonezh, 1st class. Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia awarded him in connection with the 50th anniversary of the autonomous status of the Chinese Orthodox Church. Since that time, Father Michael took part in the services celebrated by archpriest Alexy Kiselev in Shanghai.

Despite his advanced years and being retired, Father Michael took an active part in the revival of Orthodoxy in China. In September of 2009 he consecrated the church of St., Innocent of Irkutsk in Labudalin in the Inner Mongolia. When the Rev. Gregory Zhu Shipu, rector of the Church of Intercession in Harbin died in 2000, Father Michael celebrated the Divine Liturgy on Easter in 2010.

In June of 2011 he concelebrated with Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations at St. Nicholas' church in Shanghai. The DECR chairman thanked him and other Orthodox Chinese, saying that 'they have kept the Orthodox faith despites all hardships and obstacles.'

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia paid his first official visit to China in 2013. On May 15, he celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the cathedral church in Shanghai. Father Michael Wang Quansheng concelebrated in attendance of many worshippers. His Holiness addressed clergymen of the Chinese Autonomous Orthodox Church, Rev. Michael Wang, protodeacon Evangel Lu Yafu and sub-deacon Papy Fu Xiliang, saying that notwithstanding their advanced age, they possess a great inner power and added that together with all the Chinese they had experienced many trials in history and were witnessing the revival of China and of this holy church. Rev. Michael Wang was a spiritual leader of the Orthodox community in Shanghai and assisted in training of the new Chinese priests.

Rev. Wang will be buried on June 6. Arriving from all over China to pay last respects to the oldest Chinese priest are Orthodox Christians, including deacon Alexander Yu Shi, a student of the St. Petersburg Theological Seminary.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and the DECR chairman, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, who have known Father Wang personally, sent their condolences to the widow.

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