

*A short introduction by Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D. Passionist historian at the University of Scranton [spring 2023]*

Aidan Guarnuccio, class of 2024, was a student in my History: 245 course - Modern China, during the fall semester of 2022. All students were assigned three issues of *Sign Magazine*, a Passionist publication. Within each issue is the series “With the Passionists in China.”

Each student was asked to compose a short bibliographic review of the respective articles pertaining to China based upon two questions. What perspective was gained on daily missionary life and Chinese society? Also, if the article had a photo, in what way did the student believe it humanized China? Students were asked to consider these questions in a way that would assist a person to read and engage with the article. In doing so, the hope is that this effort introduces an appreciation of the larger implications as how the Passionists, the Sisters of Charity from Convent Station, New Jersey, the Sisters of Saint Joseph from Baden, Pennsylvania and political and social actors of China crossed paths with each other. Spelling used in this bibliographic review were those used at the time when the *Sign* magazine published the articles.

Upon reading this bibliographic review, what did you find interesting about the Passionists and Catholic missionaries’ experiences and relationships in 1930s China?

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## **January, 1936**

### Article 1: Terror over Yungshun

Bonaventure Griffiths. CP., “Terror over Yungshun,” Vol. 15 No. 6 *Sign* (January 1936): 351-354.

- A) Regarding the missionaries: This article provides insight of the fear many missionaries experienced on a day to day basis. The author spoke a significant amount about a specific Chinese warlord, Ho Lung, who was notorious in the Yungshun region. The article opened my eyes to the risk the missionaries were putting themselves in, and how willing they were to put themselves in danger in order to do the significant work they were doing. These acts of courage are truly inspiring, and this article dives deep into the fear that these individuals experienced. The photo of one missionary, Fr. Timothy, shows the fear these people had at this time, as he looks warily over the water, waiting for “approaching storm.”
- B) Regarding the Chinese people: While this article focused mostly on the missionaries, the Chinese people were still at risk. Warlords ran rampant during this time, and the Chinese people were as much victims of the raids as the missionaries. The Communist takeover was a fearful time for many, including Chinese people, and the apprehension expressed by the missionaries was surely felt by many Chinese during this time as well.

### Article 2: Campaigning for Christ in Supu

Raphael Vance, CP., "Campaigning for Christ in Supu," Vol. 15 No. 6 *Sign* (January 1936): 354-357.

- A) Regarding the missionaries: This article provides a significant amount of insight on how the missionaries prepared for their missions and how they went about spreading Christianity in a region. The article went in-depth with its analysis, showing the intense preparation made by Chinese missionaries in how they went about the process of spreading the faith. The journey described in the article demonstrates the commitment to the mission, as it was not an easy journey these individuals embarked on. The photo on page 355 shows two missionaries with Chinese citizens, and it seems to have been a successful journey, as the Chinese people embraced the faith.
- B) Regarding the people: With the long description of the journey, the Chinese people seemed to have been open to the faith and enjoyed learning about Christianity. The people of the many villages they visited were always welcoming and embraced the lessons being taught, showing the Chinese people's willingness to embrace this new faith. The image on page 356 shows the joy of children with their pastor, and this happiness is key to spreading the faith, and shows the joy the people felt when approached by the religion. However, bandit attacks were brought up a significant amount, still showing the instability and dangerousness of rural China.