



介紹中國天主教祭祖之緣由

中國天主教「祭祖」典禮在教宗庇護十二世時正式獲得批准實施，但中國天主教會並沒有積極的推行，直到一九七一年，已故于斌樞機主教正式在台灣提倡農曆新年舉行敬天祭祖。並於一九七二年擴大推行，當時受到國內外各界人士熱烈響應。于樞機說：「敬天是對神的『崇拜』，『祭祖』是對祖先的『追念』。敬天祭祖是中國的傳統文化，特別在今天提倡敬天祭祖，可以『敦教化，厚風俗』，這也是從事宗教活動的人所追求的理念之一。」

Ancestor Veneration: A Brief History

Since ancient times, the Chinese have practiced ancestor veneration (or veneration of the dead) based on the Confucian principle of *Filial piety* – a belief that deceased family members have a continued existence and their welfare in the afterlife must be provided for. In 1939, after almost three centuries of debate in the Holy See, Pope Pius XII declared that Ancestor Veneration was not a superstition in conflict with Catholicism, but an honorable way of showing esteem towards one's deceased relatives. This ritual was not fully adopted into the Chinese Catholic Church until 1971, when Cardinal Yu Pin encouraged the practice in Taiwan and suggested to hold this ceremony during Chinese New Year instead of the traditional Tomb-Sweeping Day. This was well received with enthusiasm by the Chinese Catholics in Taiwan. The reason for integrating this ceremony with the New Year liturgy from Cardinal Yu was: *“Worshipping God and venerating ancestors are both rooted in traditional Chinese culture and custom. Carrying on this tradition can improve education and morality. This conveys a special meaning in today's Chinese society, and it is one of the goals that any religion should seek and pursue.”*