

## **Buddhist Patriarch visits the graves of Korean Church founders**

by Joseph Yun Li-sun

*The venerable Jinje leads the Jogye Order , the largest in the country with 20 million faithful. During the visit to the shrine of Chon Jin Am, which houses the remains of the first Korean Catholic laity, he stopped under a large statue of Mary Queen of Peace: "Very happy to be here."*



Seoul (AsiaNews, 15 November 2013 ) - The Patriarch of the Buddhist Jogye Order has made a courtesy visit to Chon Jin Am, the Korean shrine that houses the tombs of five lay martyrs "founders" of the Catholic Church in the country. The venerable Jinje, who leads the largest religious denomination in South Korea with 20 million followers, was welcomed by the rector of the Shrine, Msgr. Peter Byon , and other priests resident in Chon Jin Am.

The Monk said he was " very happy " to be able to stand under the large statue of the Virgin Mary "Queen of Peace", installed a few months ago in the sanctuary : Ven. Jinje said that the Virgin "is a tool for peace in the world." Soon after he described a pilgrimage to the tomb of the five martyrs as "impressive". The five are Yi Byok, Yi Seung-houn, Kwon Yil-shin, Kwon Cheol-sin, Cheong Yak-jon: they are part of the group of 103 Korean martyrs canonized by John Paul II in 1984. Today, the Korean Church also looks forward to

canonization of another group, Yi Byok, Yi Seung-houn, Kwon Yil-shin, Kwon Cheol-sin, Cheong Yak-jon Paul Yun and his 123 companions martyrs.

The visit is an interreligious courtesy call to dampen the tensions that arose in 2011 between the Order and the South Korean Christians. According to the Buddhists, the then government led by Lee Myung -bak had launched too many "pro -Christian policies": the accusations were followed by dozens of popular protests led by monks. Shortly after the Order has changed leaders: Jinje was elected in December 2011 and entered the office (for five years ) in March 2012.