



The Holy See

LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS TO THE NEW CARDINALS

Dear Brother,

With your elevation to the College of Cardinals, you will become a member of the Roman clergy. Welcome! That membership is an expression of the Church's unity and of the bond that unites all the Churches with this Church of Rome.

I urge you to make every effort as a Cardinal to embody the three attitudes with which an Argentinian poet (Francisco Luis Bernárdez) once characterized Saint John of the Cross, and which are also applicable to us: "eyes raised, hands joined, feet bare".

Eyes raised, because your service will require you to lengthen your gaze and broaden your heart, in order to see farther and to love more expansively and with greater fervour. To sit with John of the Cross "at the school of his gaze" (Benedict XVI), which is the pierced side of Christ.

Hands joined, because what the Church most needs – together with the preaching of the Gospel – is your prayer to be able to shepherd well the flock of Christ. Prayer is the realm of discernment that helps me to seek and discover God's will for our people, and to follow it.

Feet bare, because they touch the harsh realities of all those parts of the world overwhelmed by the pain and suffering due to war, discrimination, persecution, hunger and many forms of poverty; these will demand from you great compassion and mercy.

I thank you for your generosity and I assure you of my prayers that the title of "servant" (deacon) will increasingly eclipse that of "eminence".

Pray for me, and may Jesus bless you and the Holy Virgin accompany you.

Fraternally,

FRANCIS

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 6 October 2024

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