



The Holy See

***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO CARDINAL GIOVANNI VILLOT
FOR THE NOMINATION OF SECRETARY OF STATE***

*To Our Revered Brother
Cardinal Giovanni Villot
Titular Bishop of the Suburbicarian See of Frascati*

From the moment when the trust of the Cardinals of Holy Roman Church elected us as the successor of Peter in the See of Rome, it has been our deep concern to provide for the choice of our most direct collaborator in the daily cares of our ministry, that is, the Secretary of State. With a gesture of profound delicacy you, Lord Cardinal, expressed to us at once the opinion that for this high office it would seem opportune, in view of the present circumstances, to take into consideration a Cardinal of Italian origin.

We sincerely appreciated this gesture of placing yourself completely at our disposal, which does you honour, but after mature reflection we are of the opinion that it is necessary—for the initial period of our Pontificate—to have recourse to your valuable work. The merits you have acquired by serving the Holy See with praiseworthy dedication are, in fact, well known, nor can we fail to take into account your almost ten years' experience at the side of Pope Paul VI of venerated memory, and your brief but no less intense experience alongside our lamented Predecessor John Paul I, as well as your pastoral experience and wisdom.

Therefore we nominate you, "donec aliter provideatur", our Secretary of State and at the same time we entrust to you, Lord Cardinal, the office of Prefect of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church, President of the Pontifical Commission for the State of Vatican City, and President of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See.

We are sure that you, trusting in him who strengthens (cf. Phil 4:13), will continue to give to the Successor of Peter, to the Holy See and to the whole Church those interior riches that won you the

esteem, affection and confidence of our Predecessors and of all those who have had the joy and honour of approaching you.

With these wishes we invoke on your person and on your delicate task the grace of the Lord and the protection of the Blessed Virgin, while we willingly impart to you a special Apostolic Blessing. .

From the Apostolic Palace, 24 October 1978, the first of our Pontificate.

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