



D. António Marto Created Cardinal



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D. António Marto received from the hands of Pope Francis the insignia of cardinal at 3:40 pm (Lisbon time)

Pope Francis pronounced today around 3:40 pm (Lisbon time) the name of the Bishop of Leiria-Fátima, D. António Marto, as new cardinal of the Catholic Church, during a ceremony held at Saint Peter's Basilica.

The celebration started with a brief moment of silent prayer from the part of the Holy Father, followed by a greeting said by His Beatitude Louis Sako, Chaldean Patriarch of Iraq, in the name of all the presents. The prelate began by thanking for "the trust" placed in all the new cardinals and underlined the fact that the Pope's choice to nominate cardinals from 11 different countries emphasises the "universality" of the Church.

The “special attention for the Eastern Churches and the minorities they represent and where there are still many martyrs” was also key in the choice of the Pope.

“These nominations on the day of Pentecost did not come by chance and call for a commitment of faith, which is meant to meet the demands of the contemporary world” he claimed, remembering that the commitment of the new Cardinals will be largely anchored in the “culture of dialogue, respect and peace.”

After this greeting, Pope Francis said a prayer that preceded the reading of the Gospel and a homily.

In the course of his reflection, the Holy Father reminded that “at important and crucial times in life, the heart can speak and reveal the intentions and tensions within us.”

“These turning points in life challenge us; they bring out questions and desires not always evident to our human hearts,” he added.

The Pope then explained that “Jesus teaches us that conversion, change of heart and Church reform is and ever shall be in a missionary key, which demands an end to looking out for and protecting our own interests, in order to look out for and protect those of the Father.”

To the new Cardinals, Pope Francis said that “Conversion from our sins and from selfishness will never be an end in itself, but is always a means of growing in fidelity and willingness to embrace the mission”, so that “at the moment of truth, especially when we see the distress of our brothers and sisters, we will be completely prepared to accompany and embrace them, one and all. In this way, we avoid becoming effective “roadblocks”, whether because of our short-sightedness or our useless wrangling about who is most important.”

“When we forget the mission, when we lose sight of the real faces of our brothers and sisters, our life gets locked up in the pursuit of our own interests and securities”, warned Pope Francis, who explained that it is how “resentment begins to grow, together with sadness and revulsion”, which leads to a diminution of the “room for others, for the Church community, for the poor, for hearing the Lord’s voice.”

Thus “joy fades and the heart withers,” he concluded.

The Holy Father spoke about the invitation of the Lord: “not to forget that the Church’s authority grows with this ability to defend the dignity of others, to anoint them and to heal their wounds and their frequently dashed hopes.”

“The Lord walks ahead of us, to keep reminding us that the only credible form of authority is born of sitting at the feet of others in order to serve Christ”, he said to the new Cardinals.

Pope Francis then drew attention to what he considers “the greatest promotion that can be awarded us: to serve Christ in God’s faithful people”, “in those who are hungry, neglected, imprisoned, sick, suffering, addicted to drugs, cast aside. In real people, each with his or her own life story and experiences, hopes and disappointments, hurts and wounds. Only in this way, can the authority of the Shepherd have the flavour of Gospel.”

“None of us must feel ‘superior’ to anyone. None of us should look down at others from above. The only time we can look at a person in this way is when we are helping them to stand up,” he added.

After this, the Pope read the formula of the creation and proclaimed in Latin the names of the new cardinals to bound them with “a closer link” to his mission.

Next, the new cardinals made their profession of faith and took the oath of fidelity and obedience to the Pope and his successors.

Each one of the 14 cardinals knelt to receive the cardinals’ biretta respecting the order of their creation: D António Marto was the seventh.

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