

## Pope tells nuncios to select bishops close to the people they will serve



Holy Father addressed more than 400 pontifical representatives this morning. Pope Francis has told his ambassadors to the world's nations to always carry Christ with them.

At a meeting in the Vatican this morning, the Holy Father also told the more than 400 gathered Pontifical representatives to help select new bishops that are close to the people they will serve.

Scotland is expecting a Vatican Episcopal appointment for St Andrews and Edinburgh Archdiocese this month—according to Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the Holy See's Nuncio to the UK—and further appointments to Paisley and Dunkeld Dioceses after the summer. The Vatican also recently accepted Bishop Joseph Devine of Motherwell's resignation shortly after his 75th birthday, leaving an empty bishop's chair in that diocese too.

Be attentive that they aren't ambitious, that they don't seek the episcopate—*volentes nolumus*—and that they are spouses of a Church without constantly seeking another.

### **Bearing Christ**

The Holy Father told the nuncios today that they should be 'truly aware of bearing Christ' with them and warned 'the goods and perspectives of this world end up disappointing, they push and are never satisfied. The Lord is the good that does not disappoint.'

The Pope added that, even as they travelled the world, the religious diplomats should never overlook the spiritual side of their work.

"We are shepherds and we must never forget this!" he said. "Dear pontifical representatives, you are Christ's presence, you are a priestly presence, as pastors. Always do everything with profound love! Even in dealing with the civil authorities and colleagues: always seek the good, the good in everyone, the good of the Church, and of every person."

## **Episcopal appointments**

The Pope conclude his address by highlighting one of the most delicate tasks of the representatives, to look for episcopal appointments:

“Be attentive that the candidates are pastors who are close to the people, fathers and brothers; that they are gentle, patient, and merciful; that they love poverty, interior poverty as freedom for the Lord and exterior poverty as simplicity and austerity of life; that they don’t have a ‘principles’ psychology,” he said. “Be attentive that they aren’t ambitious, that they don’t seek the episcopate—volentes nolimus—and that they are spouses of a Church without constantly seeking another.

“That they are capable of ‘keeping an eye on’ the flock that will be entrusted to them, that is, of caring for everything that keeps it united; of being ‘vigilant’ over it; of being attentive to dangers that threaten it; but above all that they are capable of ‘keeping an eye over’ the flock; of keeping watch; of tending hope, that there is sun and light in their hearts; of sustaining with love and patience the plans that God has for his people.”

Scottish Catholic Observer - Ian Dunn