

origins

CNS documentary service

Homily at Consistory Creating 13 New Cardinals

Pope Francis

One by one 11 senior churchmen, including two U.S. citizens — Cardinals Wilton D. Gregory of Washington and Silvano M. Tomasi, a former Vatican diplomat — knelt before Pope Francis to receive their red hats, a cardinal's ring and a scroll formally declaring their new status and assigning them a titular church in Rome. But with the consistory Nov. 28 occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic, Pope Francis actually created 13 new cardinals. Cardinals Jose F. Advincula of Capiz, Philippines, and Cornelius Sim, apostolic vicar of Brunei, did not attend the consistory because of COVID-19 travel restrictions; however, they are officially cardinals

“Conversion means precisely this: that we pass from being ‘off the road’ to journeying ‘on God’s road.’”

and will receive their birettas and rings at a later date, the Vatican said. In his homily at the prayer service, Pope Francis told the new cardinals that “the scarlet of a cardinal’s robes, which is the color of blood, can, for a worldly spirit, become the color of a secular ‘eminence,’” the traditional title of respect for a cardinal. If that happens, he said, “you will no longer be a pastor close to your people. You will simply think that you are an ‘eminence.’ Once you feel that way, you are already off the road.” According to canon law, cardinals are created when their names are made public “in the presence of the College of Cardinals.” While many Rome-based cardinals attended the consistory, more members of the college were “present” online. The pope spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his homily follows, copyright © 2020 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Jesus and his disciples were on the road. The road is the setting for the scene just recounted by the evangelist Mark (10:32-45). It is always the setting, too, for the church’s journey: the road of life and history, which is salvation history insofar as it is traveled *with Christ* and leads to his paschal mystery. Jerusalem always lies ahead of us. The cross and the resurrection are part of our history; they are our “today” but also and always the goal of our journey.

This Gospel passage has often accompanied consistories for the creation of new cardinals. It is not merely a “backdrop” but also a “road sign” for us who today are jour-

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