



# The Holy See

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## **ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER TO SUPERIORS AND OFFICIALS OF THE SECRETARIAT OF STATE**

*Clementine Hall*

*Thursday, 5 June 2025*

**[Multimedia]**

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*Your Eminence, Cardinal Parolin  
Your Excellencies, dear bishops and priests,  
Sisters and brothers!*

First of all, I thank the Secretary of State for his words of introduction and for the ongoing assistance that he is providing me as I take the first steps of my Pontificate.

I am pleased to be here with you, who offer a precious service to the life of the Church by helping to carry out the mission entrusted to me. Indeed, as *[Praedicate Evangelium](#)* affirms, the Secretariat of State, as the Papal Secretariat directed by the Secretary of State, provides close assistance to the Roman Pontiff in the exercise of his supreme mission” (cf. nn. 44-45).

I am comforted by the knowledge that I am not alone and that I can share the responsibility of my universal ministry with you.

This is not in the prepared text, but I can say with great sincerity that in these few weeks – a month has not even passed yet since beginning my Petrine ministry – it is evident to me that the Pope cannot work alone. There is great necessity to rely on the assistance of many people in the Holy See, and in a special way on all of you in the Secretariat of State. I offer my heartfelt thanks!

The history of this institution dates back, as we know, to the end of the fifteenth century. Over time, it has taken on an increasingly universal character and has grown considerably, acquiring

additional tasks in response to emerging needs both within the Church and in relations with States and international organizations. Currently, almost half of you are lay faithful. And there are more than fifty women, both lay and religious.

This development means that, today, the Secretariat of State itself reflects the face of the Church. It is a large community working alongside the Pope: together we share the questions, difficulties, challenges and hopes of the People of God throughout the world. In doing so, we always express two essential dimensions: *incarnation* and *catholicity*.

We are incarnate in time and history since God chose the human condition and the languages of humanity. The Church, therefore, is called to follow the same path, in order that the joy of the Gospel may reach everyone, mediated through today's cultures and languages. At the same time, we always seek to maintain a Catholic, universal outlook that allows us to appreciate different cultures and sensibilities. In this way, we can be a driving force committed to building communion between the Church of Rome and the local Churches, as well as friendly relationships in the international community.

In recent decades, these two dimensions — being incarnate in time and having a universal outlook — have become increasingly constitutive of the Curia's work. We have been guided along this path by the reform of the Roman Curia carried out by Saint [Paul VI](#) who, inspired by the vision of the [Second Vatican Council](#), strongly felt the urgency for the Church to be attentive to the challenges of history, taking into account “the rapid pace of modern life” and “the changed conditions of our times” (*Regimini Ecclesiae Universae*, 15 August 1967). At the same time, he reaffirmed the need for a service that expresses the catholicity of the Church, and to this end he decreed that “those present in the Apostolic See to govern it, should be called from all parts of the world” (ibid.).

*Incarnation* reminds us, then, of the concreteness of reality and the specific, particular issues dealt with by the various curial institutions. At the same time, *universality* evokes the mystery of the multifaceted unity of the Church and requires a subsequent effort of synthesis to assist the Pope's mission. It is precisely the Secretariat of State that offers this service of unification and synthesis. Indeed, [Paul VI](#) — well versed in the Roman Curia — chose to restructure this office, effectively designating it as a point of connection, and thus establishing its fundamental role of coordinating the other Dicasteries and Institutions of the Apostolic See.

The recent Apostolic Constitution [Praedicate Evangelium](#) speaks of the coordinating role of the Secretariat of State as one of the many responsibilities entrusted to the Section for General Affairs, under the direction of the Substitute with the assistance of the Assessor (cf. 45-46). Along with the Section for General Affairs, the Constitution also includes the Section for Relations with States and International Organizations, which is directed by the Secretary with the help of two Undersecretaries. This Section is responsible, particularly in this delicate moment of history, for

the diplomatic and political relations of the Holy See with States and other subjects of international law. The Section for Diplomatic Personnel, with its Secretary and Undersecretary, is tasked for its part with assisting Pontifical Representations and the members of the Diplomatic Corps in Rome and throughout the world.

I know that these tasks are very demanding and, at times, may not be well understood. This is why I wish to express my closeness to you and, above all, my heartfelt gratitude. Thank you for the skills you place at the service of the Church, for your work — which almost always goes unnoticed — and for the evangelical spirit that inspires it. And allow me, as a result of my gratitude, to make an appeal, referring once again to Saint [Paul VI](#): let this place not be clouded by ambition or rivalry; instead, let it be a true community of faith and charity, of “brothers and sisters, and children of the Pope,” who give themselves generously for the good of the Church (cf. *Address to the Roman Curia*, 21 September 1963).

I entrust you all to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church. I thank you because I know that you pray for me – I hope! – every day, and I warmly bless each of you, your loved ones, and your work. Thank you!