



Cardinal Siri: "I don't even know what Collegiality is"

Excerpt from an interview in 1978

"Before the cardinals were locked into the conclave [in October of 1978], one more drama would be played out, a Renaissance drama of pride, intrigue, and treachery, starring, in his last great performance, the would-be pope and lion of the right Giuseppe Siri.

On the very eve of the conclave Italian journalist Gianni Licheri, an old acquaintance of Siri's, contacted the archbishop of Genoa for an interview. Siri knew that the men about to elect the pope were hypersensitive, so he stipulated that the story not be published until October 15, when the doors of the conclave would already be shut and none of the cardinals could read it.

The reporter apparently agreed, and Siri spoke frankly. He made no secret of his hostility to the democratization of the Church. He mocked collegiality, one of the principal doctrines of Vatican II, which called for responsible power sharing between Rome and its bishops. 'I don't even know what episcopal collegiality is,' he declared, indifferent to the fact that his every word was being taken down by the tape recorder. 'The synod can never become a deliberative body.'"

--taken from Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *His Holiness: John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 165-66

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