

CONSISTORY OF JOSEPH CARDINAL RITTER

Vatican Photos from the Collection of the Cardinale Gentiluomo
(*Gentleman of the Cardinal*)

By Raymond P. Day

On a cold December 14, 1960, a personal letter from Pope John XXIII arrived in St. Louis addressed to Archbishop Joseph Ritter. It contained notice that he was selected to be elevated to the Sacred College of Cardinals at a *Vatican Consistory* in January 1961. Ritter, a native of New Albany, Indiana, who had been ordained priest, bishop, and archbishop of the Indianapolis archdiocese, would soon become *Joseph Cardinal Ritter*. Thus, he was destined to be counted among the 88 prelates around the world whose threefold job was to council the pope, aid in the governance of the Church, and when necessary, elect a new pope.



Twenty-seven days later, January 10, an entourage of dignitaries from the Archdiocese of St. Louis and a contingent from New Albany, Indiana that included family members and clergy, boarded a chartered flight for a 15-day odyssey to Rome. “The party from St. Louis included six bishops, 44 priests, six sisters, and some 100 laymen.” (New Albany Tribune, Jan 11, 1961). On the same day a flight departed from Indianapolis with religious sisters, priests, and lay persons from throughout Ritter’s former See.



Dr. Giorgio Salvaggi

Upon arrival, Archbishop Ritter was met by a group of Vatican dignitaries as well as representatives that would tend to his every need for the next two weeks. Chosen to serve as *Gentleman of Cardinal Ritter* (leader of Ritter’s Noble Antechamber) was Giorgio Salvaggi, a Vatican general accountant employed as Prefecture of the Economic Affairs of the Holy See. He would be at the Cardinal’s side throughout the three day Consistory and beyond.

Most of the photos presented here were taken at the Vatican between January 16 and January 19, and Giorgio Salvaggi is present in most of them. This family collection was treasured by

Salvaggi because, as his son Raniero would later write, “My father had a veneration for the Cardinal.”

Raniero Salvaggi continued; “Due to their sublime dignity, the Cardinals have their own Family, more or less numerous, as was customary for the Pontifical Family. The Noble Antechamber was composed of the Auditor, the Secretary, the Chamber Master, the Gentleman, and the Cup-bearer.”



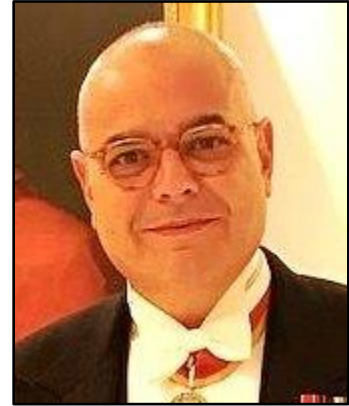
*Surrounded by Swiss Guards (left to right) are **Dr. Giorgio Salvaggi**, a nobleman who was the official “gentleman in waiting” appointed by the Vatican for the Cardinal during his stay; **Monsignor, Adone Terzariol**, Vatican-appointed Master of Ceremonies for Cardinal Ritter; **Lawrence Motzel**, seminarian from the St. Louis Archdiocese studying at the North American College in Rome; **Cardinal Ritter**; **Monsignor Adrian I. Dwyer**, his personal secretary; and **Robert Liss**, a St. Louis seminarian also attending the North American College in Rome. (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)*

FAST FORWARD SIX DECADES

For the next 59 years, these photos were deeply treasured by the Salvaggi family. Seemingly “out of the blue,” on the evening of Holy Saturday, April 11, 2020, Raniero Salvaggi sent an email to David Hock who was the founding Chairperson of the *Cardinal Ritter Birthplace*

Foundation Inc. He wrote, “I found the pages [meaning website on the internet] of the Foundation and I congratulate you.”

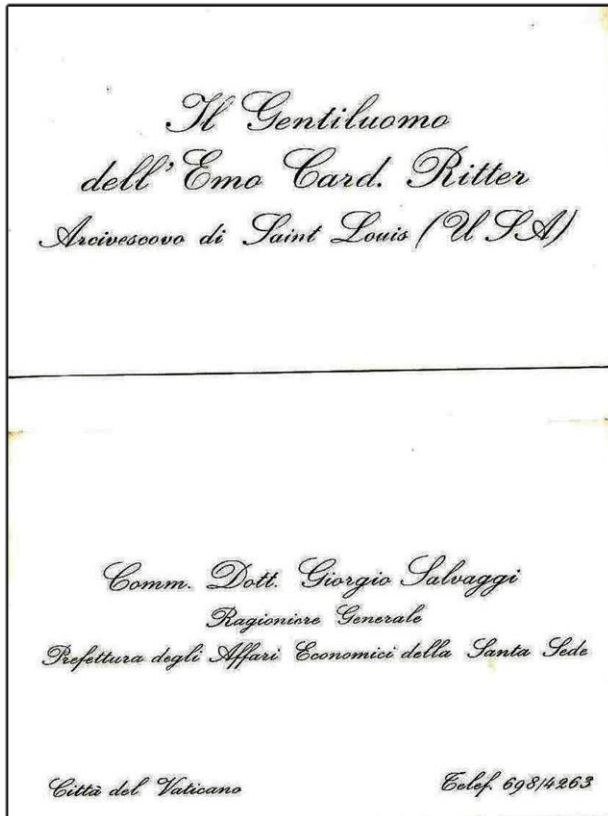
Raniero wondered if we had any “photos of the Consistory,” and attached the image on the previous page that shows his father (dressed in black to the left) with Cardinal Ritter, along with the other members of the Cardinal’s Noble Antechamber. What an amazing Easter gift from our new-found friend in Rome! David immediately responded with gratitude and added, “If you have additional pictures we would love to see them also!”



Raniero Salvaggi, son of Dr. Giorgio Salvaggi, and caretaker of the Salvaggi archive.

Nearly one year later, on March 5, 2021, David received a second email from Raniero stating, “I finally managed to scan the photos of Cardinal Ritter’s Consistory! With great pleasure I send them to you, hoping to please you.” Attached was a collection of 12 black & white images and one in full-color. Truly, another Easter gift!

To whom should we send our thanks? Raniero Salvaggi? Cardinal Ritter? The Holy Spirit? Ah yes....perhaps all three!



*The Gentleman
of the Esteemed Cardinal Ritter
Archbishop of Saint Louis (USA)*

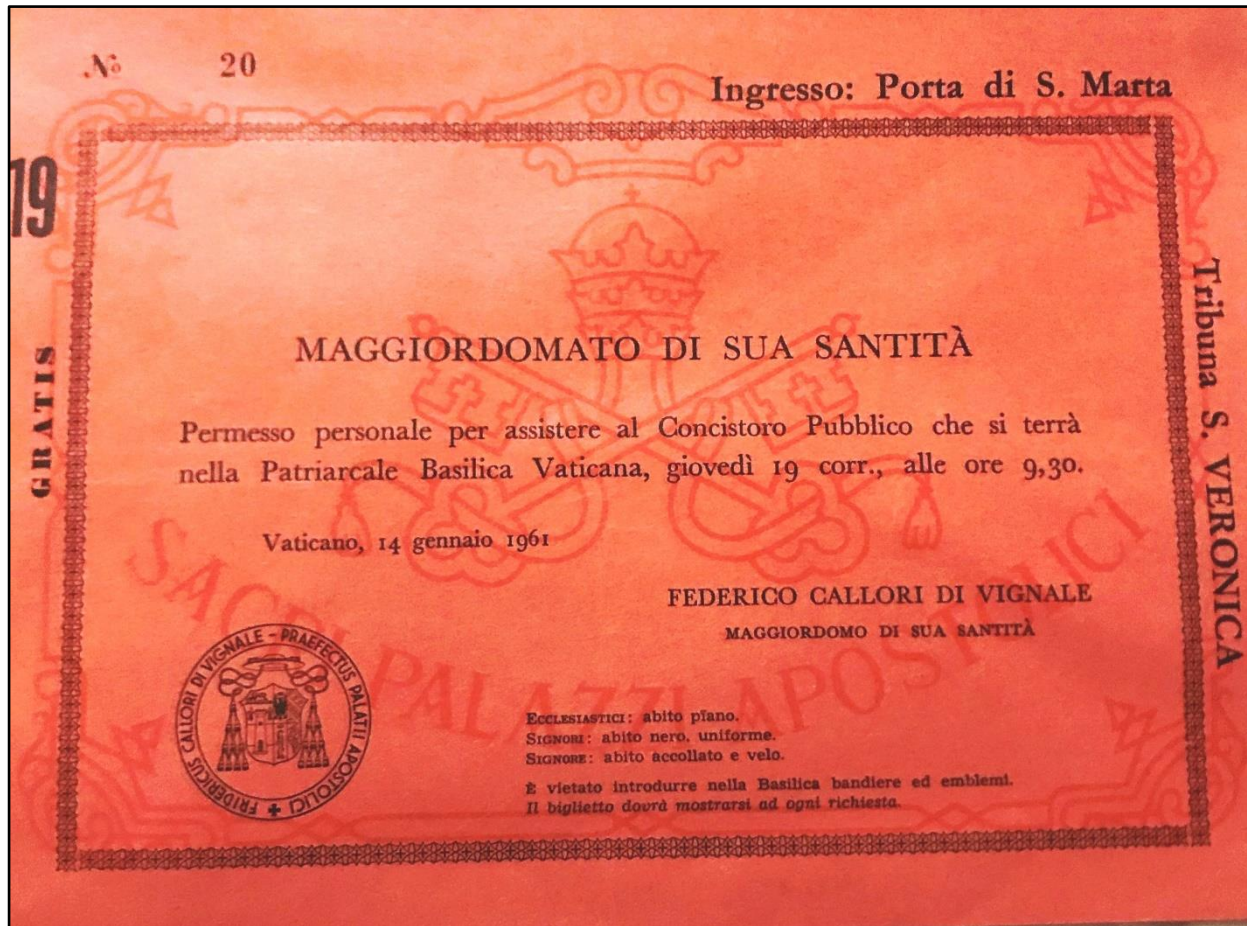
*Comm. Dr. Giorgio Salvaggi
General Accountant
Prefecture of the Economic Affairs of the Holy See*

Vatican City

Tel. 698/4263

Business card of Giorgio Salvaggi, a rare item from the Salvaggi Family Archive.

Despite possessing his title, *Gentleman of the Cardinal*, Giorgio Salvaggi, was required to carry his complimentary entry ticket to attend the Consistory proceedings.



Entrance: Door di S Marta

MAJORITY OF HIS HOLINESS

Personal permission to attend the Public Consistory to be held in the Patriarchal Vatican Basilica, Thursday 19 at 9:30 am.

Vatican, January 14, 1961

FEDERICO CALLORI DI VIGNALE,
Butler of his holiness.

Ecclesiastics: dress flat

Ladies: black suit, uniform

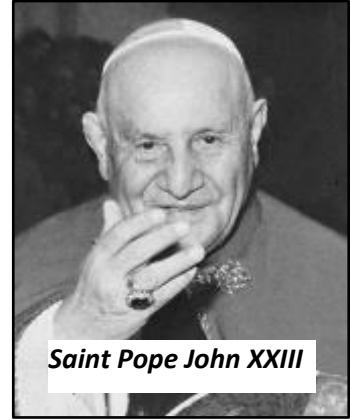
Ladies: high-necked dress and veil

It is forbidden to bring flags and emblems into the Basilica

The ticket should be shown by each applicant

(Translation via Google Translate)

What exactly is a Consistory? Monsignor Nicholas A. Schneider, author of *Cardinal Ritter, His Life and Times*, describes a Consistory as “a formal meeting of the Sacred College of Cardinals of the Catholic Church, except when the cardinals are convened to elect a new pope (then the name is a *Conclave*). Consistories are held in Vatican City to take care of the business of the college, which usually involves advising the pope on important matters concerning the Church.”



Saint Pope John XXIII

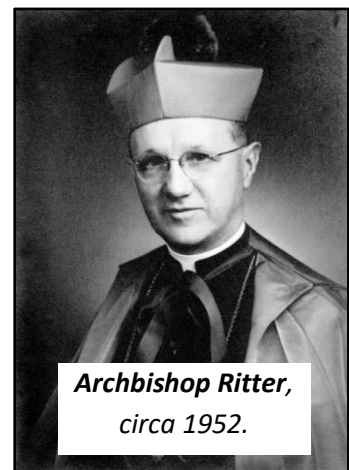
During such a solemn gathering in 1961, called by and presided over by Pope John XXIII, four holy servants of the church were named to the Sacred College of Cardinals. (*NOTE; The following numbered photographs are presented in the chronological order in which they occurred during the Consistory.*)



ONE: Cardinal Ritter receives the GALERO – the cardinal’s hat, a symbol of his Cardinalate. Three of his Noble Antechamber are in attendance: **Msgr. Terzariol** (partially hidden behind the presenter at left), **Dr. Giorgio Salvaggi**, (center rear), and **Msgr. Dwyer**, (center right).

(Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

Elmer Joseph Ritter was born in 1892 in New Albany, Indiana, and attended primary school at St. Mary of the Annunciation Parish. He once stated, “My home and St. Mary’s were the greatest factors in my life.” His high school years were spent at St. Meinrad Abbey Seminary where his goal was “simply to become a priest.” That dream came true on May 30, 1917, at the hands of Bishop Joseph Chartrand. As a priest in Indianapolis diocese, Fr. Ritter was ordained Auxiliary Bishop (1933) and Bishop (1934). When the diocese became an archdiocese, Ritter was installed as its first Archbishop (1944). Two years later he was installed the Archbishop



Archbishop Ritter,
circa 1952.

of St. Louis (1946) where he served for nearly 21 years. It was during his forty-third year as a priest that Joseph Elmer Ritter was elevated to the rank of Cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church (1961).

TWO: *Cardinal Ritter “receives his Nomination Ticket” that accompanied the delivery of the GALERO. The Gentleman of the Cardinal, **Giorgio Salvaggi**, is seen behind Cardinal Ritter. The two prelates standing left and right of the cardinal are unidentified.* (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)



THREE (Below): *Cardinal Ritter (center right) and his personal entourage pass through the “Raphael Loggias” in the Apostolic Palace during the Vatican Consistory of 1961. To the left of Cardinal Ritter is **Cardinale Eugenio Tisserant**, Dean of the Sacred College.* (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)





FOUR: All four new cardinals, dressed in ermine capes and flanked by the Vatican City's Swiss Guards are, (counter-clockwise from lower left): **Louis Concha Cordoba**, Archbishop of Bogota, Columbia; **Giuseppe Ferretto** from Italy; **José Humberto Quintero**, Archbishop of Caracas, Venezuela (the first ever Humberto Quintero from that country); and **Joseph Ritter**, Archbishop of St. Louis (in row three left of center). (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

FIVE: Cardinal Ritter is shown with members of his "noble antechamber family" and dressed in the Cappa Magna. In the photo from left to right: St. Louis seminarian, **Lawrence Motzel**; Personal Secretary **Monsignor Adrian I. Dwyer**; St. Louis seminarian, **Robert Liss** (partially



hidden behind the cardinal); **Cardinal Ritter**; Master of Ceremonies **Monsignor Adone Terzariol**; and Gentleman of the Noble Antechamber **Dr. Giorgio Salvaggi**. (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

SIX:

For photo number SIX in the sequence, see large image on page 2.

SEVEN: *Cardinal Ritter during the “heat visits” immediately after the 1961 Consistory in the Vatican. **Giorgio Salvaggi** is standing on the left behind the Cardinal, and **Monsignor Dwyer** is in the back center. The others present are not identified. (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)*



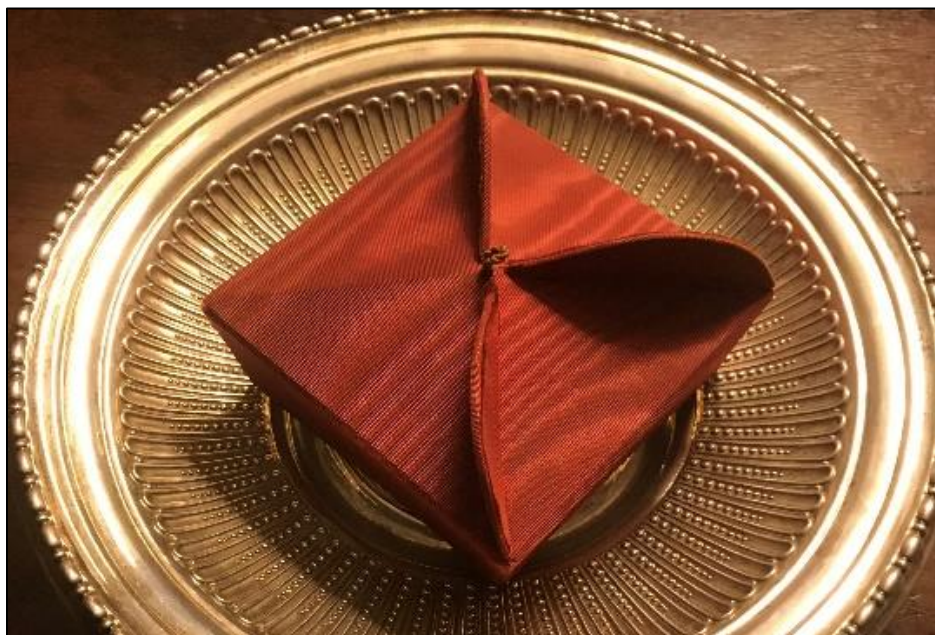
EIGHT: *The new Cardinal, seated in center, receives congratulations from the “brother cardinals” during the “heat visits.” He is assisted by the omnipresent **Giorgio Salvaggi**, top left, and **Msgr. Dwyer** top right. (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)*

NINE: *Cardinal Ritter, during the “heat visits” with two dignitaries in the presence of his Gentleman of the Noble Anteroom.”*

(Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)



Cardinal Ritter’s investiture occurred on January 16, 1961. He received the red hat and his Titular Church assignment on January 19. At that moment, the College of Cardinals numbered 88 members, of which 32 were Italians.



Beretta Rosa, in miniature, was a gift from Cardinal Ritter to Giorgio Salvaggi “as a symbol of his office as Cardinal Gentiluomo, and was exhibited at his house” for many years. Now it is in the possession of his son, Raniero.

(Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

Ritter's stature among the four candidates at the Consistory was not lost on the officials of the Vatican. For example, "Cardinal Ritter was the first American to act as speaker on the occasion of the bestowing of the red hat." (*Cardinal Ritter, His Life and Times*) by Monsignor Nicholas A. Schneider)

Following his investiture, Cardinal Ritter responded to the Pope with the following words.

"Your great goodness and condescension which constantly extends to all parts of the world seems at this moment to be addressed in particular to the two Americas. Two of us, in fact, are from South America, José Cardinal [Humberto Quintero] Parra [1902-1984], Archbishop of Caracas, Venezuela; and Luis Cardinal Concha Cordoba [1891-1975], Archbishop of Bogota, Columbia. I am from North America, and His Eminence Giuseppe Cardinal Ferretto [1899-1973], although of Italian nationality, is closely bound to our religious life in as much as he has worked diligently and fruitfully on the Commission for Latin America of which he is the Secretary. In certain areas of our continent religious needs require help from every side, so that they may be met quickly and efficiently. Above all, it is more than essential that one America extend a helping hand to the other America, its sister through the nobility of a common name, so that both together can push away the common threats and dangers with even greater strength in the observance of the Catholic Faith and law." (*Cardinal Ritter, His Life and Times* by Monsignor Nicholas A. Schneider)

Pope John XXIII responded by thanking the cardinal "for the noble and considered words which you have expressed to us in the language of Rome [Latin]." (*Cardinal Ritter, His Life and Times* by Monsignor Nicholas A. Schneider)

"Cardinal Ritter was [also] appointed a member of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and the Sacred Congregation for the Basilica of St. Peter. He was proclaimed a Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church under the title of Most Holy Redeemer and St. Alphonsus on the Esquiline Hill." (*Cardinal Ritter, His Life and Times* by Monsignor Nicholas A. Schneider)



Thus, St. Alphonsus (where the original miraculous picture of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is venerated) became his *Titular Church*, an honorary designation symbolizing the relationship of Cardinal Ritter to Pope John XXIII, the Bishop of Rome. It was made official in a public

ceremony on Sunday afternoon, January 22, with 250 pilgrims from America and 50 American youths studying for the priesthood in Rome.



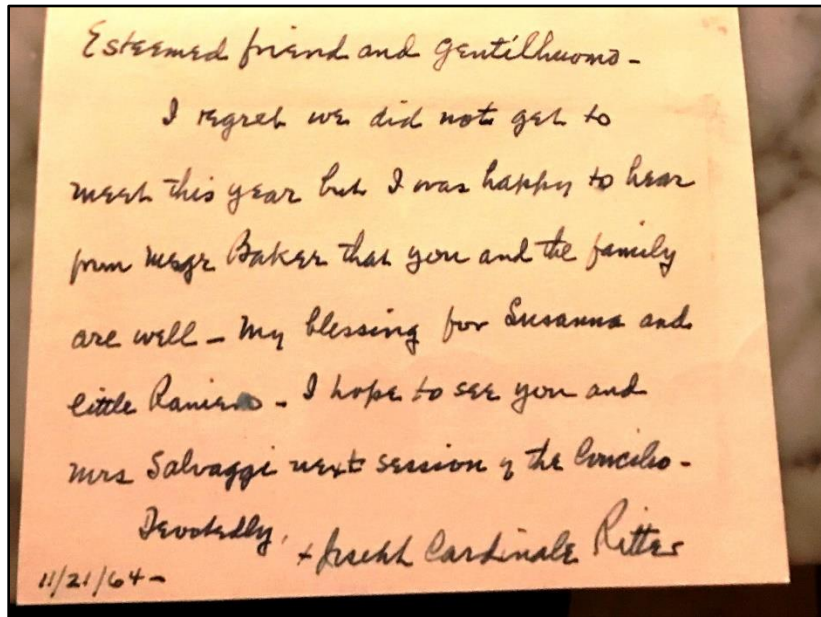
A story and photo published in the St. Louis Review on February 3, 1961 celebrates Cardinal Ritter's January 22 arrival at his Titular Church in Rome, St. Alphonsus.

(Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

“I am not unconscious of the fact that in conferring the princely dignity of the cardinalate upon me, our Holy Father, Pope John XXIII, now gloriously reigning, has in mind not myself alone, but rather the recognition of the magnificence in the service of God and the church displayed by our American Catholic people – and in particular by those of the archdioceses of Indianapolis and St. Louis which, in God’s providence, I have been so closely associated.”

(Indianapolis Star, January 23, 1961)





Cardinal Ritter soon became actively involved in the Second Vatican Council, 1962-1965. Following the death of Pope John XXIII in early June 1962, Ritter returned to Rome to participate in the selection of a new pope. Giovanni Battista Montini was elected Pope Paul VI on June 21, 1963.

Often, when Ritter returned to Rome, he attempted to meet with or at least communicate with Giorgio Salvaggi and the

other members of the Noble Antechamber. On November 21, 1964, he addressed the following message to Giorgio: *“Esteemed friend and gentiluomo – I regret we did not get to meet this year but I was happy to hear from Msgr. Baker that you and the family are well – My blessing for Susanna and little Raniero. I hope to see you and Mrs. Salvaggi next session of the Concilio – Sincerely, +Joseph Cardinale Ritter”* (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

Upon the death of Joseph Cardinal Ritter on June 10, 1967, his “Gentleman of the Antechamber” sent a message of condolence to the Archdiocese of St. Louis. *Dear Dott. Salvaggi: The clergy, religious, and laity of the Archdiocese of St. Louis join me in expressing appreciation to you for your message of condolence at the loss of our beloved Cardinal and Archbishop. Your being one with us on this sad occasion was a consolation for all of us. Thanking you and with deep esteem, I am, Sincerely yours in Christ, Most Rev. George J. Gottwald, Administrator, S.V.* (Courtesy of the Salvaggi Family Archive)

The Cardinal’s death was the result of a heart attack suffered on June 5. Attendees at his funeral included four cardinals, ten archbishops, forty-eight bishops, and four abbots. Some fifty Protestant, Jewish, and Orthodox leaders were present, representing the Episcopal Church, Missouri-Synod Lutheran, United Church of Christ, Greek Orthodox, Baptist, Disciples of Christ, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Salvation Army.

Cardinal Ritter’s elevation to the Sacred College of Cardinals had a deep impact on the Catholic Church during the 1960s in America. He garnered respect from bishops around the world as reflected in the following statement by James Johnson, author of *Men Who Made the Council*, cements Ritter’s legacy firmly in the annals of American Catholic history.

“Overshadowed in the eyes of the public by the Cardinals of the East – the powerful [Francis Joseph] Spellman in New York and the colorful [Richard James] Cushing in Boston – Cardinal Ritter is nevertheless the most consistent, systematic, reflective leader of the modern renewal of the American Church. Honest, open, devoted to the Gospels, Cardinal Ritter has become in the eyes of bishops of the world the most respected of the American prelates of his generation, and in the eyes of his people in St. Louis a pastor in the spirit of Pope John [XXIII].” (James Johnson, author of *Men Who Made the Council*, as quoted in *Cardinal Ritter, His Life and Times* by Monsignor Nicholas A. Schneider)

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ADDENDUM

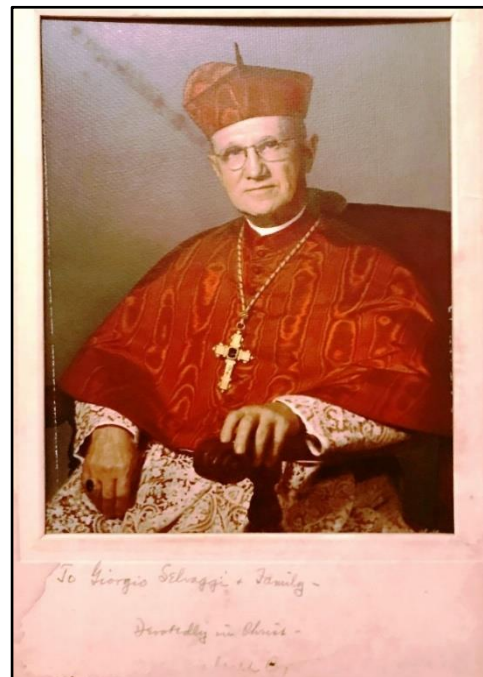
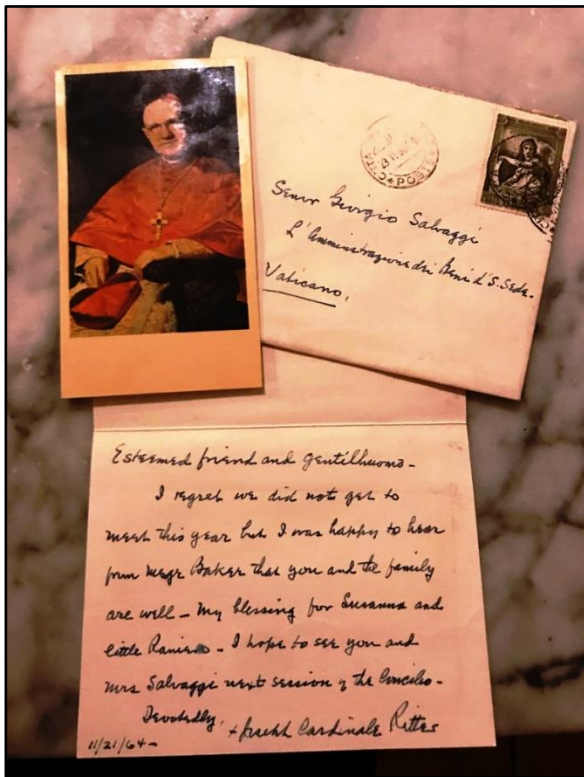
Raniero Salvaggi shared several additional photos not included in the above text. I present them here and on the following pages

Raniero was, until 2020, General Treasurer of the Circolo San Pietro, an ancient Roman association of charity founded by Blessed Pope Pius IX. Today he is Advisor and Delegate of the Committee for the historiography and the legacy of the Circolo San Pietro.

Pope Francis appointed him *Anteroom Clerk to his Holiness*. In the photo at right, and on the next page, Raniero is pictured in tails, and wearing the silver anteroom clerk’s necklace.



The Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, Inc. is deeply indebted to Raniero Salvaggi for providing for us a window into the Salvaggi Family Archive. He has been most gracious in sharing photos and telling the story of his father’s association with Cardinal Ritter – including the 1961 Consistory, his visits to Rome for the Second Vatican Council, the conclave for the election of Pope Paul VI and beyond.



A signed souvenir photo card that reads, "Giorgio Salvaggi & Family Decidedly in Christ. Cardinal Ritter"

THE HISTORY OF THE GENTLEMAN OF THE CARDINAL AND THE NOBLE ANTECHAMBERGER

Raniero Salvaggi shared a drawing of the attire traditionally worn by the Gentleman of the Cardinal. Following the quote is an index of terms “translated” for the reader.



“The Gentleman wore the sword or city dress (*meaning attire or regalia*) which consisted of a short dress in the shape of a long tunic, buckled trousers, bodice and skirt all black, behind the cloak...of black silk. In addition to this, the black feathered hat decorated with a button and a steel bow. The stockings are of black silk and the shoes with buckles. The sword with steel handle and ornaments. The white lace tie, while the lace sleeves come out from the sleeve ends.

The Gentleman has the task of carrying the cardinal's hat and torch in procession, with the Cardinal only, the Gentleman with the torch walked and the Caudatario supported the flap of the Cardinal's jacket.

The Gentleman congratulated [*presented*] the new Cardinals for the opening of the Tribunal of the Rota [*The Roman Tribunal*],

complimenting [*announcing*] a name of the Cardinal, with two Servé in gala livery [*two servers in elegant vestments*]. He would go to [*be introduced to*] the new Ambassadors, would bring greetings to the Ministers of the Sovereigns, and would go to the anteroom of the Apostolic Palace to receive news about the Pontiff's health. When he [*the Pope*] is ill, when he [*the Cardinal*] returns to Rome from his journey, [*the Gentleman will*] always call [*on*] him with the Frullone wagon.

The cardinal's Gentleman had the privilege of displaying a miniature cardinal's hat [*beretta*] placed on a silver platter at the entrance to his house, as is customary in the cardinal's house.”



A historical reference sketch sent by Ranerio documenting the formality of the attention given to a new cardinal by members of his Noble Antechamber in years past.

Researched and Written by
Raymond P. Day
Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation, Incorporated
Board of Director's Secretary and Archivist
April 2022

For more information regarding Cardinal Ritter, visit www.cardinalritterhouse.org

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