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EXCERPTS FROM CANON LAW ON THE APPOINTMENT OF DIOCESAN BISHOPS

Can. 377

§1. The Supreme Pontiff freely appoints bishops or confirms those legitimately elected.

§2. At least every three years, bishops of an ecclesiastical province or, where circumstances suggest it, of a conference of bishops, are in common counsel and in secret to compose a list of presbyters, even including members of institutes of consecrated life, who are more suitable for the episcopate. They are to send it to the Apostolic See, without prejudice to the right of each bishop individually to make known to the Apostolic See the names of presbyters whom he considers worthy of and suited to the episcopal function.

§3. Unless it is legitimately established otherwise, whenever a diocesan or coadjutor bishop must be appointed, as regards what is called the *ternus* to be proposed to the Apostolic See, the pontifical legate is to seek individually and to communicate to the Apostolic See together with his own opinion the suggestions of the metropolitan and suffragans of the province to which the diocese to be provided for belongs or with which it is joined in some grouping, and the suggestions of the president of the conference of bishops. The pontifical legate, moreover, is to hear some members of the college of consultors and cathedral chapter and, if he judges it expedient, is also to seek individually and in secret the opinion of others from both the secular and non-secular clergy and from laity outstanding in wisdom.

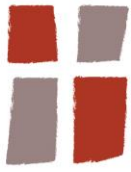
§4. Unless other provision has been legitimately made, a diocesan bishop who judges that an auxiliary should be given to his diocese is to propose to the Apostolic See a list of at least three presbyters more suitable for this office.

§5. In the future, no rights and privileges of election, nomination, presentation, or designation of bishops are granted to civil authorities.

Can. 378

§1. In regard to the suitability of a candidate for the episcopacy, it is required that he is:

1. outstanding in solid faith, good morals, piety, zeal for souls, wisdom, prudence, and human virtues, and endowed with other qualities which make him suitable to fulfill the office in question;



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2. of good reputation;
3. at least thirty-Five years old;
4. ordained to the presbyterate for at least Five years;
5. in possession of a doctorate or at least a licentiate in sacred scripture, theology, or canon law from an institute of higher studies approved by the Apostolic See, or at least truly expert in the same disciplines.

§2. The definitive judgment concerning the suitability of the one to be promoted pertains to the Apostolic See.

Can. 379

Unless he is prevented by a legitimate impediment, whoever has been promoted to the episcopacy must receive episcopal consecration within three months from the receipt of the apostolic letter and before he takes possession of his office.

Can. 380

Before he takes canonical possession of his office, the one promoted is to make the profession of faith and take the oath of fidelity to the Apostolic See according to the formula approved by the Apostolic See.