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Cardinal Scola to Milan

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Distinctly Catholic

There is no more important appointment a Pope makes than picking an Archbishop of Milan. One of the five largest dioceses in the world, with an illustrious history and its own Ambrosian Rite, Milan has given two of its sons to the papacy in the past century, Pope Pius XI and Pope Paul VI. So, the news that the Patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Angelo Scola, is headed to Milan is very big news. There is an irony here too: Scola was considered too close to the ecclesial group *Communione e Liberazione* as a young man and, so, was denied admission to the Milanese seminary!

Scola is brilliant by all accounts but he is also one of the least "clerical" cardinals on the planet. When he was the head of the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family, he would stay with a layman friend when visiting Washington, not at the nunciature or with other clerics. His involvement with CL, a group that does not blur the distinction between the priesthood of all believers and the ordained priesthood to be sure, but nonetheless brings the two together in real fraternity, is further evidence of his non-clericalist sentiments. His interest in and study of Islam is another significant, and distinguishing, characteristic of Scola.

The appointment, in short, is very good news and very compelling news. Let's hope the Holy Father has a similarly stunning appointment in mind for Philadelphia!

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