

Vatican official: 'If someone needs aid, the pope is close to him'

Joshua J. McElwee | Oct. 11, 2013 | The Francis Chronicles

The newly appointed archbishop to a traditionally ceremonial Vatican office has reportedly said Pope Francis wants him to redirect the office to show the pontiff's personal care for those experiencing poverty.

Archbishop Konrad Krajewski, a Poland native who was appointed to be the "Almoner of His Holiness" in August, says the pope told him upon his appointment he "will not stay behind a desk signing parchments."

Instead, says Krajewski, Francis told him: "I want you always among the people. In Buenos Aires I often went out in the evening to go find the poor. Now I no longer can: it is difficult for me to leave the Vatican. You will do it for me.?"

Krajewski made his comments in the Oct. 4 edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's semi-official Italian-language newspaper. They were reported in English Friday by veteran Italian journalist [Sandro Magister](#) [1].

Traditionally, the papal almoner was largely responsible for distributing official papal blessings to those making requests. He would then allocate a portion of the proceeds from those requests to charitable causes in the pope's name.

From now on, Krajewski says, the donations to charity will be a bit more personal.

"I will give an example," says the archbishop, according to Magister's translation. "If someone asks for aid to pay a bill [electricity or gas], it is good that I should go, if possible, to the home to bring the aid materially, in order to make him understand that the pope, through the almoner, is close to him."

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