

Jean-Louis Tauran, Vatican's Interfaith Point Man, Is Dead at 75

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Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, a champion of interfaith dialogue as a top Vatican diplomat and the man who announced Pope Francis's election to the world, died on July 5 in Hartford. He was 75.

The Vatican, which announced his death, said he had been treated for Parkinson's disease for years.

At his death, Cardinal Tauran was camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, the official who takes care of the church's administration during the transition between the death or resignation of a pope and the election of his successor.

But he was best known for his work as the Vatican's foreign minister, from 1975 to 1983, which gained him a reputation as a tireless behind-the-scenes diplomat. That reputation persuaded Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 to appoint him president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, shortly after the pope gave a speech in which he quoted a 14th-century Byzantine emperor as calling Islam "evil and inhuman," offending Muslims and spurring protests against the Roman Catholic Church all over the world.

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