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MOSCOW THINK TANK HONORS JOHN XXIII AIDE

Russian Academy of Sciences Confers Honorary Doctorate to Archbishop Capovilla

ROME, JAN. 12, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences is honoring a secretary of Blessed Pope John XXIII for his contribution to research on the Pontiff's legacy as a leader of the 20th century, and a promoter of religious dialogue and peace.

The institute conferred an honorary doctorate on Archbishop Loris Francesco Capovilla, 95, who was the Holy Father's personal secretary.

Loris Capovilla was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Venice in 1940. When Cardinal Roncalli (the future Pope) was appointed patriarch there, the two began to collaborate and Father Capovilla continued this work after the cardinal was elected to the See of Peter in 1958.

Four years after John XXIII's death in 1963, Father Capovilla was appointed the bishop of Chieti and then for 17 years served as the papal delegate to the shrine of Loreto. He retired to Sotto il Monte, Italy, the birthplace of John XXIII.

The director of the think tank, Smelyev Nikolay Petrovich, a former adviser of Mikhail Gorbachev, chose to confer the honor.

The Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IE RAS) is one of Russia's leading think tanks. It was founded in 1987 and works on economic, political, social and security issues, established or emerging across Europe.

The Russian Orthodox Church in the person of Archbishop Hilarion Alfeyev of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department of External Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, expressed its approval of the honor.

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