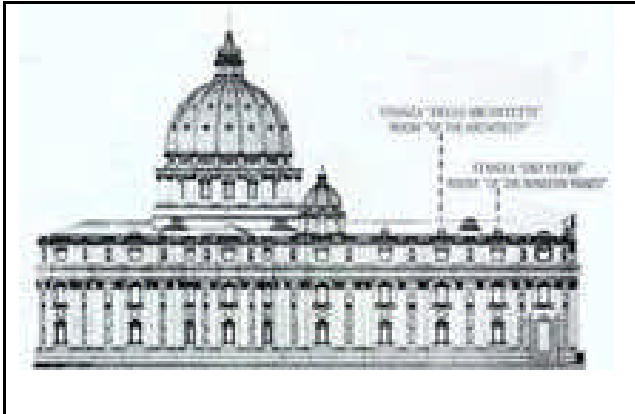


RESTRUCTURING OF THE TWO ANCIENT ROOMS CALLED "OF THE ARCHITECTS AND "OF THE WINDOW PANES"

In the upper part of the Vatican basilica, along the southern side of Carlo Maderno's extension there are two large rooms, one called the "Stanza degli Architetti" (of the Architects), the other the "Stanza dei Vetri" (of the Window panes). The two "Stanze" (rooms), created out of the hollow space in the external walls of the basilica are found at approximately 45 meters in height above the level of the Protomartyr's Square, at the south-east end of the basilica. The two



rooms occupy an overall space of approximately 1,000 cubic meters; the "Stanza dei Vetri" is 11.50 meters in height while the "Stanza degli Architetti" is about 15.50 meters high. Two large windows, approximately 18 square meters, light each room. They are accessed through the ancient helicoidal South ramp (or "snail") or by the elevator that runs from the basilica level to the terrace.

The two large spaces had been used in the 18th century as the workrooms of Luigi Vanvitelli (1700-1773) and his collaborators, called upon to fix the static disorder that had been noticed in the Dome. Later all documents pertaining to periodic visits by architects to the Fabbrica di San Pietro and to plans and measures to be taken for the maintenance of the basilica were kept in the closets of the "Stanze".

In 1987, Mons. Lino Zanini, Delegate Archbishop of the Reverenda Fabbrica di San Pietro, considering the crumbling state of the two rooms, promoted an intervention of restoration for these rooms, carried out according to the design drawn up by the Technical Office of the Fabbrica and under the patronage of the Order of the Knights of Columbus, who sustained all the restructuring costs, in memory of the 10th anniversary of the Universal Pastoral Ministry of the Church of the Holy Father John Paul II.

The work program was set up to start with the removal of the old wooden floors and their replacement with new iron floors. The executive design, also illustrated by a 1:50-scale wooden model, called for the construction of another new floor in each of the two spaces, thus increasing the over-all work area from 135 square meters to approximately 405 square meters, which would prove to be extremely useful for the growing technical-administrative needs of the Fabbrica.

Three superimposed rooms were made from the ancient «Stanza degli Architetti», each independent of the other, each with its own entrance from the "snail," 5.80 - 5.60 - 3.60 meters in

height, respectively. Similarly the «Stanza dei Vetri» was divided into three rooms, 5.00 - 3.00 and 3.00 meters high; the two smaller ones were joined by an inner helicoidal stairway with a diameter of 2.10 meters. The old wooden window frames were disassembled and new windows panes were mounted, equipped with double-paned glass, in "Alluzinker", adhering to the design of the wood originals. The same wood was reused to fashion the tables that today furnish the "Stanze". The electrical system runs in the two upper rooms above the plaster frame at the impost of the vault, while in the other locations it is hidden by a metallic false ceiling.

The restructuring, which took place over a period of fifteen months, from July 1987 to September 1988, created new functional spaces through a project which took advantage of and utilized the large rooms located along the suggestive path that unwinds above the basilica at the height of Michelangelo's attic.