

# **ALBERT, OF BRANDENBURG, ARCHBISHOP AND ELECTOR OF MAINZ, CARDINAL, 1490-1545.**

## **Albert, of Brandenburg, Archbishop and Elector of Mainz, Cardinal letter, 1540 July 30**

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### **Descriptive Summary**

**Creator:** Albert, of Brandenburg, Archbishop and Elector of Mainz, Cardinal, 1490-1545.  
**Title:** Albert, of Brandenburg, Archbishop and Elector of Mainz, Cardinal letter, 1540 July 30  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 132  
**Extent:** 0.01 cubic ft. (1 leaf)  
**Abstract:** Contains one signed letter addressed to Julius Plug.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in German.

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### **Administrative Information**

#### **Restrictions on Access**

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#### **Additional Physical Form**

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#### **Citation**

[after identification of item(s)], Albert, of Brandenburg, Archbishop and Elector of Mainz, Cardinal Letter, Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

#### **Processing**

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## Collection Description

### Biographical Note

Albert of Brandenburg, Cardinal and Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, b. 28 June, 1490; d. 24 September, 1545. As early as 1509 he was Prebendary in the Cathedral of Mainz; Archbishop of Magdeburg and Administrator of Halberstadt from 1513; Archbishop of Mainz from 1514; Cardinal-Priest from 1518. The Indulgence issued by Leo X in 1514 for the building of the new St. Peter's in Rome, was entrusted to Albert (1517) for publication in Saxony and Brandenburg. This commission has been made by d'Aubign, and others the ground of many accusation against Albert and Leo X, as though they had used the Indulgence as a means of enriching themselves personally, "dividing before-hand the spoils of the credulous souls of Germany" (d'Aubign,, History of the Reformation).

Albert employed Tetzl for the actual preaching of the Indulgence and furnished him a book of instructions: "Instructio summaria ad Subcommissarios P nitentiarum et Confessores." Later, Martin Luther addressed a letter of protest to Albert concerning the conduct of Tetzl, found fault with the Bishop's book of instructions and asked him to suppress it. Luther's charges are altogether groundless; the instructions of Albert to the preachers are both wise and edifying. Luther's letter was disregarded. Though many of the accusations against Albert's morals were doubtless, false, Luther was probably justified in thinking that he would find in Albert a strong partisan.

The young bishop was somewhat worldly-minded, extravagant, better trained in humanistic studies than in theology, too much given to the patronage of learned men and artists. His long intimacy with Ulrich von Hutten is especially reprehensible. Leo X was obliged to send an admonition to Mainz because so many books hostile to the Faith were being published under the Bishop's eye. In later life Albert changed his conduct. In his diocese celebrated defenders of Catholicism were engaged; at Speyer and Ratisbon he met Blessed Peter Faber, S.J., and kept him in his diocese (1542-43); after this he was always a friend to the new order. Albert strove earnestly to introduce a more perfect system of religious instruction and brought forward measures for that purpose in the Diet of Nuremberg. He became by the sincerity of his zeal the great defender of the Faith in Germany. As a temporal prince, he ruled his electorate well; he introduced reforms in the administration of justice, into the police system, and into commerce. He was buried in the Cathedral of Mainz. An artistic memorial marks the resting-place of his remains.

**Biographical Source:** *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Special edition; vol. I, Page 262. New York; The Encyclopedia Press, 1913.

### Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of a single, signed letter in German dated 30th July 1540. The letter is a request, addressed to Julius Plug, to translate from Latin into German some articles on religion by Luther. A translation of the letter is enclosed with the original.

