

Pope Benedict condemns sex abuse en route to Portugal

By KREMENA KRUMOVA
Epoch Times Staff

Speaking to reporters on a flight to Lisbon on Tuesday, Pope Benedict made one of his sternest comments yet of the sex abuse scandal, saying the biggest threat to the Roman Catholic Church comes from "sins inside the church" and that "forgiveness does not substitute for justice."

The pontiff referred to widespread revelations involving sexual abuse of minors committed by clergy that led to the resignation or suspension of numerous bishops and priests in Ireland, Belgium, and Germany, the pope's homeland.

"The church has a profound need to relearn penance, to accept purification, to learn on the one hand forgiveness, but also the necessity of justice," he said, placing blame for the scandal on the church.

Last week, the Vatican took control of the Legionaries of Christ, a Catholic worldwide congregation, after its founder was confirmed to have abused seminary students and fathered several children.

During his four-day official and pastoral visit in largely Catholic Portugal, the pope said he would mostly pray for the church, "in particular its priests," and for world peace.

The 83-year-old pope also commented on the economic plight of Portugal, which is threatened to become one of the next EU states to suffer from huge public debt.

"The events of the last two or three years have demonstrated that the ethical dimension must enter into economic activity," he



MANAGING CRISIS: Pope Benedict XVI (C) arrives for vespers at the Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Fatima on May 12, 2010. The pontiff urged priests to take a "firm stand" for their vocation at a time when the Catholic Church is facing a succession of scandals over paedophile priests. Benedict, the third pope to visit Fatima, one of Christianity's most popular shrines, addressed priests, deacons, and seminarians after the evening prayer service. VINCENTO PINTO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

said. "Now is the time to see that ethics is not something external but internal to economic rationality and pragmatism."

The pope's schedule in Portugal included attending a festive open-air mass in Lisbon on Tuesday. On Wednesday he honoured the landmark Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in Europe, situated about 108 kilometres northeast of Lisbon.

There, a large celebration was

held on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the beatification of two of the three children who claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary in 1917.

According to the shepherd children, Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco, who were cousins, the Virgin Mary appeared to them six times, the first time on May 13. They believe she predicted the end of World War I, the start of World War II, the rise and fall of communism,

and another secret, which was disclosed in the year 2000.

That secret was interpreted to have predicted the suffering of John Paul II during the assassination attempt by Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turkish national, on May 13, 1981, in St. Peter's Square.

Pope Benedict said the mystery should not be taken so literally and that it might instead refer to the suffering of the entire Catholic Church.

Obama and Karzai talk despite tense relations

By SHAHRZAD NOORBALOOCHI
Epoch Times Staff

Following what has been reported as tensions between President Barack Obama and Afghan President Hamid Karzai, discussions convened between the two Wednesday morning at the White House.

Obama had hoped to portray relations with the Afghani president in a positive light. When asked by Forbes magazine about tensions between the two leaders, Obama said, "A lot of them were simply overstated."

Commentators suspect the strained relations are because the eight-year war in Afghanistan is proving difficult for the U.S. to quit. As the final strategies on how to exit Afghanistan are being formulated, Obama and Karzai seem to at least agree that some sort of settlement with the Taliban is in order.

While Karzai has already undertaken talks with Taliban leaders in the region, the talks will be fruitless unless a compromise can be

reached between America's stringent peace conditions and the Taliban's violent past.

The conditions for a settlement between the Taliban and the U.S. were put forth by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton earlier this month in an interview on NBC's

"They have to renounce violence. They have to give up their arms. And they have to be willing to abide by the Afghan Constitution."

— Hillary Clinton

"Meet the Press," in which she said a settlement could be reached if Taliban officials were willing to reject al-Qaeda. "They have to renounce violence. They have to give up their arms. And they have to be willing to abide by the Afghan Constitution," Clinton said.

The talk Wednesday seemed relaxed. The White House released a joint statement in which both presidents expressed amity.

"President Obama and President Karzai reaffirmed their growing cooperation and their commitment to the solid, broad, and enduring strategic partnership between the governments and peoples of the United States and Afghanistan," the statement said.

Iceland volcanic ash cloud problems persist

By IAN RITZ
Epoch Times Staff

The volcano beside Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull glacier continues to spew out ash in lingering clouds that are causing trouble in parts of Africa and Western Europe. The volcano was recently seen shooting lava into the air, creating concern that another eruption may be imminent.

The ash cloud from Iceland's volcanic eruption in April dissipated slightly last month, allowing the opening of most European airports that were closed due to unsafe flying conditions. The airport closures, which affected the majority of European airspace, were the second largest series of shut-downs since World War II.

The continuing ash plumes from the volcano have added to the troublesome cloud that is currently causing concern in for Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Turkey, Spain, and Portugal.

"We really don't know when it will settle down. So even if the volcano stops, we can look at this problem for a couple of weeks after," Bjoern Oddsson of the Institute of Earth Sciences told the Associated Press.

Eurocontrol, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, has been discussing the adoption of American guidelines regarding flight safety, which would open up more space for flights. American air safety officials suggest a 120-mile no-fly zone around ash clouds while the

European restriction is much greater, reported AP.

The concern around flying near ash clouds is more than merely a matter of visibility. Volcanic ash clouds usually contain small particles of glass and pulverized rock, and the sandpaper-like abrasive material can damage aircraft and clog or stop engines, which are risks that most airline companies are unwilling to take.

No official decision has been announced regarding a change in policy.

Airports in Spain and Portugal were closed on Tuesday due to the ash cloud that is currently hovering over the Iberian Peninsula. The Christian Science Monitor has confirmed that the cloud is accompanied by smaller clouds over France, Ireland, and Spain.

Lava, fire, and ash were seen shooting out of the volcano on Wednesday, which caught the attention of scientists monitoring the volcano. There have been reports that another eruption could be coming but no advisories or evacuations have been announced, according to UK Today News.

The ash cloud from the initial eruption closed multiple European airports last month causing cancelled flights in and out of regions such as the U.K., France, Germany, and Russia. Travellers were stranded around the world waiting to get back into Europe. The cancellations led to millions of dollars of lost business for the European airline industry.

Coalition decides UK prime minister

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Brown said that as prime minister he had learned much about the best in human nature and the frailties of human nature—some of them his own.

He said that he "loved the job" and it had been "a privilege to serve."

"I wish the next prime minister well as he makes the important choices for the future," he said.

Speaking later at party headquarters, Brown said that he was also stepping down as Labour leader, with Harriet Harman taking his place before leadership elections.

"I wish the next prime minister well as he makes the important choices for the future."

— Gordon Brown

President Obama was the first world leader to talk to Cameron.

"I reiterated my deep and personal commitment to the special relationship between our two countries—a bond that has endured for generations and across party lines, and that is essential

to the security and prosperity of our two countries, and the world," he said in a statement.

Obama also praised Brown's "strong leadership during challenging times." NDP leader Jack Layton, whose party is the rough equivalent of the Liberal Democrats, the party that played king-

maker in the UK election, said Canada could learn something from the coalition government formed by the Tories and Liberal Democrats.

"I think there's lots of lessons that Canadians can draw from what's been happening in the United Kingdom and one is that the people of the United Kingdom seemed to encourage the notion that parties should work together in the interests of everybody. That's something the New Democrats have believed for a long time."

When asked if the NDP would consider doing the same in the next election in Canada, Layton said they have always been open to working with other parties.

"The problem has been to find a dancing partner."

GLOBAL Q&A

'What impact is migration having on family life in your community or country?'

May 15 is the International Day of Families. Cultural enrichment, job insecurity, and discrimination are among the positive and negative changes impacting family life. This is what Epoch Times reporters from London to Kyiv discovered when they asked locals: "What impact is migration having on family life in your community or country?"

RIO DE JANEIRO BRAZIL
EDUARDO BRANDÃO, 40, PSYCHOANALYST, PROFESSOR



I think there is discrimination. Usually, when you come to Brazil, you don't see that many people from other Latin American countries who do not speak Portuguese performing menial tasks, but you can notice blacks, northeasterners, and so on. I think that migrants, whether internal within the country or foreigners, depending on where they come from and their destination, may face hardships.

LONDON, BRITAIN (VISITING AUSTRALIA)
NICHOLAS FOLEY, 30, SOUND ENGINEER



Migration in the U.K. is changing the dynamics of the community for the worse. I am of the belief that if you move to another country, you should respect its beliefs, not try to change them to adhere to yours. Be happy that you have been accepted into their country and respect the beliefs of that country, and don't try to change it.

KYIV, UKRAINE
VLADYSLAVA PODZIGUN, 23, TRAVELING STUDENT



I come from the Ukraine and I think it's a big problem, especially in the western part of the country. Mothers leave their children and go to Poland, go to Slovakia, or Hungary to work for months, and sometimes for a year when they go to Italy. And it impacts their families a lot because children don't see their mothers for a very long time.

CANARY ISLANDS, SPAIN
MELI MEDINA, 59, FORMER BUSINESSWOMAN



To my understanding and what I've experienced is that the impact [of migration] is positive, it benefits all, the main reason being that they are ready to assume jobs that local people don't want. So I think overall, without forgetting that in some cases there exists less than ideal situations, I think that, as a whole, it's been positive.

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
JAMAL, 35, BUSINESSMAN



I came to Dubai, like aged 20 years. When I came to Dubai, I had no family, so my family was created in Dubai, and my children were born in Dubai, so there is no impact, only positives, that's it.

ZLIN, CZECH REPUBLIC
ANNA KLOUDOVA, 17, STUDENT



I think migration across different cultures can enrich. However, if people migrate to countries where they don't want to adjust to local traditions and culture, they can actually harm that culture. In terms of family life, it's hard to say. If one returns back, then it can either unite the family or break it.

VICTORIA, B.C. CANADA
TARA GIBSON, 22, UNIVERSITY MUSIC STUDENT, ORIGINS BEAUTY ADVISER



Migration is causing issues for born residents in our community. There is a lack of jobs, which makes it harder for immigrants and non-immigrants to find a steady income. In B.C., there is a lot of controversy in the growing population of Asians. That is a concern for some people. It is predicted in 2022 that Caucasian people in B.C., Vancouver Island, will be a minority.

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Look for the Global Q&A column every week, when Epoch Times correspondents interview people around the world to learn about their lives and perspective on local and global realities.

Next week's global question: Do you think you live in a tolerant society? Explain.