

Pope says, sex abuse crisis 'terrifying'

John L. Allen Jr. | May. 11, 2010



A man prays as he holds a picture of Pope Benedict XVI May 5 in a Lisbon, Portugal, church anticipating Pope Benedict's May 11-14 trip. (CNS/Nacho Doce, Reuters)

Lisbon, Portugal -- En route to a May 11-14 visit to Portugal, Benedict XVI called the reality of the sexual abuse crisis "terrifying" and said that the greatest persecution of the church comes not from external attacks but from sin within the church.

Benedict's insistence that the real problem is internal rather than outside attacks seemed to distance the pope from other senior Vatican officials, who in recent weeks have blamed the media and other parties for unjust criticism of the Catholic church.

While those comments came in response to a question, the questions were submitted to the Vatican by reporters covering the trip several days in advance, suggesting that Benedict wanted to address the crisis and chose his words carefully, rather than being caught off guard.

Benedict also said that while forgiveness must be part of the church's response to the crisis, that must not come at the expense of justice.

Read the full story here: [Sex abuse crisis 'terrifying,' pope says](#) [1]

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