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Seven days that shook the Vatican

by John L. Allen Jr.



Pope Benedict XVI leaves a prayer service at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome June 28. The service marked the vigil of the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, the Vatican's patron saints and symbols of the church's unity and its universality. (CNS photo/Tony Gentile, Reuters)

Rome -- It's customary for the Vatican to empty its pipeline of pending business before the pope heads for his annual summer retreat in Castel Gandolfo. That usually makes for a flurry of news in late June. It was turbo-charged this year by dramatic events breaking in on the Vatican from the outside. Faced with such a deluge of news, the obvious temptation is to miss the forest for the trees. Here, I'd like to step back from the details and ponder the question, "What does it all mean?"

Read the full report: **[Seven days that shook the Vatican](#)**

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