

# In His Own Words

Pope Benedict XVI

**P**ope Benedict XVI, formerly known as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, has become famous for his conservative stance on many issues. Here are some of his stated opinions.



## **ON RELATIVISM**

Having a clear faith based on the creed of the Church is often labeled today as fundamentalism. Relativism, which is letting oneself be tossed and swept along by every wind of teaching, looks like the only attitude acceptable to today's standards... We are moving toward a dictatorship of relativism, which does not recognize anything as definitive and has as its highest value one's own ego and one's own desires. Homily in St Peter's Square before the conclave, April 2005

## **ON POPE JOHN PAUL II**

We can be sure our beloved Pope is now at the window of the house of his Father and he sees us and he blesses us. Homily during Pope John Paul II's funeral, April 2005

## **ON MARRIAGE**

Men and women were created to be jointly the guarantee of the future of the humanity - not only a physical guarantee, but also a moral one. Interview with Italian newspaper La Repubblica, 2004

## **ON CHURCH SCANDALS**

How much filth there is in the Church, even among those who, in the priesthood, should belong entirely to Him. How much pride, how much self-sufficiency. Good Friday Mass, 2005

## **ON CHURCH SEX ABUSE CASES**

In the Church, priests also are sinners. But I am personally convinced that the constant presence in the press of the sins of Catholic priests, especially in the United States, is a planned campaign, as the percentage of these offences among priests is not higher than in other categories, and perhaps it is even lower. Quoted in Zenit.org, December 2002

## **ON HOMOSEXUALITY**

Although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered to an intrinsic moral evil, and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder...It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or in action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs. Letter to the Bishops, 1986, quoted in National Catholic Reporter

## **ON GAY MARRIAGE**

Above all, we must have great respect for these people who also suffer and who want to find their own way of correct living. On the other hand, to create a legal form of a kind of homosexual marriage, in reality, does not help these people. Interview with Italian newspaper La Repubblica, 2004

## **ON ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA**

Manifest grave sin. Address to US bishops, 2004

## **ON EUROPEAN MULTICULTURALISM**

Fleeing from what is one's own. Values in a Time of Upheavals, 2005

## **ON JEWS AND ISRAEL**

That the Jews are connected with God in a special way and that God does not allow that bond to fail is entirely obvious. We wait for the instant in which Israel will say yes to Christ, but we know that it has a special mission in history now... God and the World, 2000

## **ISLAM**

It is true that the Muslim world is not totally mistaken when it reproaches the West of Christian tradition of moral decadence and the manipulation of human life... Islam has also had moments of great splendor and decadence in the course of its history. From a conference on Faith, Truth and Tolerance, March 2002 (reported by Zenit.org)

## **ON MODERN ACTIVISM**

Greenpeace and Amnesty International seem to have taken over mankind's concerns, which formerly would have radiated from the impulses of Raphael, Michelangelo or Bach. From Salt of the Earth, 1997 (quoted in The Tablet)

## **EXPERIENCE AFTER NAZI DEFEAT**

In three days of marching, we hiked down the empty highway, in a column that gradually became endless... The American soldiers photographed us, the young ones, most of all, in order to take home souvenirs of the defeated army and its desolate personnel. Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977

## **ON TURKEY AND THE EU**

Turkey has always represented a different continent... Making the two continents identical would be a mistake. It would mean a loss of richness, the disappearance of the cultural to the benefit of economics. Interview with Le Figaro magazine, 2004

## **CELIBACY AND THE PRIESTHOOD**

Celibacy is not a matter of compulsion. Someone is accepted as a priest only when he does it of his own accord. Salt of the Earth, 1997

## **ON THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN**

The fact that the Church is convinced of not having the right to confer priestly ordination on women is now considered by some as irreconcilable with the European Constitution. Address at the Subaico Foundation for Life and the Family, April 2005 (reported by Zenit.org)

## **FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY**

Christianity must rise again like the mustard seed, in insignificantly small groups whose members intensively live in combat with what is evil in the world while demonstrating what is good... They are the salt of the earth, the vessels of the faith. From Salt of the Earth, 1997 (quoted in The Tablet)

## **LIBERATION THEOLOGY**

Religion must not be turned into the handmaiden of political ideologies. The autonomy of Christianity must be defended against the armed enthusiasts of world revolution, however nobly intentioned they may be. From Salt of the Earth, 1997 (quoted in The Tablet)

## **ROCK MUSIC**

"Rock"... is the expression of the elemental passions, and at rock festivals it assumes a sometimes cultic character, a form of worship, in fact, in opposition to Christian worship.