

Vatican's Mass infused with defense of pope

By Frances D'Emilio
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

VATICAN CITY — It was the Catholic calendar's holiest moment — the Mass celebrating the resurrection of Christ. But with Pope Benedict XVI accused of failing to protect children from abusive priests, Easter Sunday also was a high-profile opportunity to play defense.

"Holy Father, on your side are the people of God," Cardinal Angelo Sodano told the pontiff, whom victims of clergy sexual abuse accuse of helping to shape and perpetuate a climate of cover-up. Sodano, dean of the College of Cardinals, dismissed those claims as "petty gossip."

The ringing tribute at the start of a Mass attended by tens of thousands in St. Peter's Square marked an unusual departure from the Vatican's Easter rituals, infusing the tradition-steeped religious ceremony with an air of a papal pep rally.

Dressed in gold robes and shielded from a cool drizzle by a canopy, Benedict looked weary during much of the Mass, the highlight of a heavy Holy Week schedule. But as he listened intently to Sodano's paean, a smile broke across the pope's face, and when the cardinal finished speak-

ing, Benedict rose from his chair in front of the altar to embrace him.

The pontiff hasn't responded to accusations that he did too little to protect children from pedophile priests, even as sex abuse scandals threaten to overshadow his papacy.

Sodano's praise for Benedict as well as the church's 400,000 priests worldwide cranked up a vigorous campaign by the Holy See to counter what it calls a "vile" smear operation orchestrated by anti-Vatican media aimed at weakening the papacy and its moral authority.

Sodano said the faithful came to "rally close around you, successor to (St.) Peter, bishop of Rome, the unfailing rock of the holy church" amid the joy of Easter.

"We are deeply grateful to you for the strength of spirit and apostolic courage with which you announce the Gospel," said Sodano, who sought to assure Benedict that the scandals were not costing him credibility among his flock.

"Holy Father, on your side are the people of God, who do not allow themselves to be influenced by the petty gossip of the moment, by the trials which sometimes buffet the community of believers," Sodano said.



Pope Benedict XVI addresses the faithful during the "Urbi et Orb" (To the city and the World) message, at the end of the Easter Mass in St. Peter's square, at the Vatican, on Sunday. The pope has faced criticism recently that he did too little to protect children from pedophile priests.

The cardinal also rushed to the defense of all the Catholic priests who "generously serve the people of God, in parishes, recreation centers, schools, hospitals and many other places, as well as in

the missions in the most remote parts of the world."

Benedict, who turns 83 on April 16, was holding up well against the campaign of "deceitful accusations" against him, Venice

Cardinal Angelo Scola said in an interview on Italian state TV on Sunday. Scola said he recently had dined with the pope, who was drawing on his "usual spiritual energy."

Apple fans greet iPad

By Jessica Mintz
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SEATTLE — Now that the iPad is in the hands of early adopters, the hard work for Apple Inc. begins.

Eager customers intent on being among the first owners of this new class of gadgetry stood in long lines across the country Saturday. They seemed willing to buy first — and discover uses for the iPad later.

In some ways, it was reminiscent of the lines and hoopla surrounding the 2007 launch of the first iPhone. The difference: People knew then that the iPhone would replace their existing cell phone, an appliance that has become a must-have for everyone from uber-geeks to stay-at-home moms.

With the iPad, which fits somewhere between phone and computer, Apple must convince people who already have smart phones, laptops, e-book readers, set-top boxes and home broadband connections that they need another device that serves many of the same purposes.

Many of the earliest iPad buyers say they will have a better idea of what they'll use it for only after they've had it for a while.

That didn't stop them from imagining, though.

Beth Goza has had iPhones and other smart phones, along with a MacBook Air laptop, yet she believes



Andres Schobel, right, celebrates as one of the first customers to buy an iPad on the first day of sales at an Apple Store in San Francisco on Saturday.

the iPad has a place in her digital lineup. She likened it to a professional tennis player owning different sneakers for grass, clay and concrete courts.

"At the end of the day, you can get by with one or the other," she said outside an Apple store in Seattle's University Village mall.

But she clearly doesn't want to just "get by." She's already dreaming up specific uses for her iPad, such as knitting applications to help her keep track of her place in a complicated pattern.

Danita Shneidman, a woman in her

60s, wanted one to look at photos and videos of her first grandchild, born this week in Boston.

And then there's Ray Majewski, who went to an Apple store in Freehold, N.J., with his 10-year-old daughter, Julia. The iPad is partly as a reward for her straight A's in school, and partly a present for himself.

"I like the electronic books, and my daughter is really getting into them as well," Majewski said. "I was thinking of getting a Kindle (e-book reader) but then said to myself, 'Why not get an iPad because I can get so much more from that than just reading books?'"

Bombers target embassies in Iraq

By Elizabeth A Kennedy
and Qassim Abdul-Zahra
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

BAGHDAD — Suicide attackers detonated three car bombs in quick succession near foreign embassies in Baghdad on Sunday, killing more than 40 people in coordinated strikes that Iraqi officials said were intended to disrupt efforts to form a new government.

The bombings followed the execution-style killings of 24 villagers in a Sunni area two days earlier, a spike in violence that suggests insurgents are seizing on the political uncertainty after the recent election to try to destabilize the country as U.S. troops prepare to leave. No clear winner emerged from the March 7 vote.

Sunday's explosions went off within minutes of each other, starting shortly after 11 a.m. One struck near the Iranian Embassy and two others hit an area that houses several diplomat-

ic missions, including the Egyptian Consulate and the German and Spanish embassies. It was not immediately known whether diplomatic staff were among the victims.

Authorities said they foiled two other attacks aimed at diplomatic targets by stopping the would-be bombers' vehicles and defusing the explosives. Stunned victims in bloody clothes were loaded into ambulances as gray smoke rose over Baghdad.

"I saw children screaming," Hassan Karim, 32, who owns a clothing shop in Baghdad, told the Associated Press. "Cars were crashing into each other in streets, trying to find a way to flee."

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, although multiple, coordinated bombings in the capital are a hallmark of al-Qaida in Iraq.

The violence suggests insurgents are trying to regroup in the political vacuum left after the elections.

Former Prime Minister Ayad

Allawi's cross-sectarian bloc tapped into heavy Sunni support to come in just two seats ahead of the mainly Shiite list of the incumbent, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. But neither side has enough seats to govern alone, which means they are scrambling to cobble together enough parliamentary support to form a government. Iraq's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the bombings were an attempt to inject more turmoil into the political scene as the election front-runners try to forge a coalition government.

"These terrorists will not be able to stop Iraqis and friends of the Iraqi people from building a free, secure and prosperous future," the ministry said.

Several Iraqi guards from the German and Egyptian missions were confirmed dead, authorities said. One police official said many of the victims were employees at a state-run bank near the Iranian Embassy.

Police: ND recruit 'drunk' on fatal fall

By Joe Kay
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

CINCINNATI — A "drunk and belligerent" 17-year-old Notre Dame football recruit was killed in a fall from a fifth-floor hotel balcony during his senior-year spring break in Florida, authorities said Saturday.

Matt James died Friday around 6:30 p.m. at the Days Inn Motel in Panama City Beach. Police said he was dead when officers arrived.

"It appears to be a tragic accident," Panama City Beach police Maj. David Humphreys said.

James' former teammates at St. Xavier High School gathered for a private prayer service in the school's chapel, mourning the second death of an athlete this school year. James, an all-state offensive lineman, had been the first top signing for new Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly.

James was part of a group of about 40 St. Xavier students and a half-dozen parents on the trip.

"Witnesses and friends indicate he had become drunk and belligerent," Humphreys said. "He had leaned over the balcony rail, was shaking his finger at the people in the next room over. He fell over."

Humphreys said the railing at the hotel met the standards for proper height. He said police would be interested in pursuing charges if they learn who provided the underage teen with alcohol.

Police said an autopsy on James would be done later. Toxicology results were pending. James' parents went to Florida on Friday night, returned to Cincinnati and released a statement Saturday evening asking for privacy while they make funeral arrangements and grieve.

"We would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support during this tragic time, particularly the family at St. X," Jerry and Peggy James said. "Matt was a very special young man, and it is gratifying to us that you all could see that as well. We are touched by this outpouring of love."

The 6-foot-6, 290-pound offensive lineman also was on St. Xavier's varsity basketball team.

"This is just such a tragedy because he was just a wonderful, wonderful kid," said Mary Massa, the mother of St. Xavier quarterback Luke Massa, who also has committed to Notre Dame.



James

Look fabulous this season!

ULTIMATE TANS
Graduation Special
20% Off
Any 10 Tan Package

ULTIMATE TANS
\$5 Off
UV FREE INSTANT TAN

111 W. Beaver Ave. (Next to Panera Bread)
DOWNTOWN STATE COLLEGE
814-272-4826

ULTIMATE TANS

MONDAY MANIA
9 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT
Rent a lane for **ONLY \$18 per hour!**
Up to 8 people per lane
*Includes shoe rental
Become a Fan on Facebook!

1521 Martin St.
State College, PA 16803
along the N Bus Route
(814) 237-1500 www.northlandbowl.com

The ENDZONE
SPORTS/SHOW CLUB

FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE
Call for pickups 814-692-8867

HALF OFF
Tuesday 6pm - 10pm
WITH VALID STUDENT ID

\$5 OFF
Price of 10+ every
Wednesday & Thursday

FREE BEER
out back of the End Zone is available for anyone 21 and over with proper ID regardless of cover charge
EVERY night is 18 and over night!!!
www.theendzonestowclub.com
100 Lion Lane Rt. 322 W. State College FOR INFO Call 814-692-8877