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Trip to Turkey served three levels of Pontifical mission, Pope says

Vatican City, December 06, 2006 (CNA) - Speaking to the thousands of pilgrims gathered in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall today, Pope Benedict XVI recalled his recent apostolic trip to Turkey and explained how the visit served what he called the three "concentric circles" of his Pontifical mission.

Benedict XVI recalls trip to Turkey, reminds Christians that Advent is a time of hope

Vatican City, December 04, 2006 (CNA) - Prior to praying the Angelus on Sunday, Pope Benedict XVI briefly recalled last week's trip to Turkey, expressing his thanks to the Turkish people and reminding Catholics to follow the example of Turkish Christians who, "always live the experience of Advent."

Turks surprised by Pope, says bishops' spokesman

Istanbul, December 01, 2006 (CNA) - The spokesman for the Bishops' Conference of Turkey, Msgr. Georges Marovitch, said Turks have been surprised by the Holy Father's visit to their country.

Holy Father says meeting with Armenian patriarch a sign of hope for Christian unity

Istanbul, December 01, 2006 (CNA) - After a day which began with the solemn celebration of the Feast of St. Andrew with the Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarch and continued with the signing of a joint Catholic-Orthodox statement, a visitation to the Museum of Hagia Sofia, as well as to Istanbul's Blue Mosque, Pope Benedict XVI traveled to the city's Armenian apostolic patriarchate, where he participated in a prayer service with His Beatitude Mesrob II, patriarch of Turkey's Armenian Apostolic Christians.

Pope says Church in Turkey asks to live with the freedom to reveal Christ

Istanbul, December 01, 2006 (CNA) - On the last day of his Apostolic voyage to Turkey, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated Mass for the country's Catholic community, affirming that the Church does not wish to impose its faith on anyone but, "merely asks to live in freedom," in order to reveal Christ Jesus.

Pope Benedict visits Hagia Sofia and becomes second Pope to enter a mosque

Istanbul, December 01, 2006 (CNA) - On the third day of his pastoral visit to Turkey, Pope Benedict XVI visited the historic Cathedral-turned-museum Hagia Sofia, one of the most important symbols of the country, as well as the Blue Mosque, the central Mosque of Istanbul. The Pope became only the second Pope to ever enter a Muslim house of prayer.

Pope and Patriarch sign common declaration on Orthodox-Catholic relations

Istanbul, November 30, 2006 (CNA) - Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle and Patron of the Church of Constantinople, Pope Benedict XVI and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I signed a common declaration on the relationship between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The two gave thanks to God, who by His work has given them the gift of this "fraternal encounter."

Pope Benedict recommit Church to working towards reunification with Orthodox

Istanbul, November 30, 2006 (CNA) - Pope Benedict XVI successfully completed his top objective today in Istanbul, joining Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I in celebrating one of the most solemn feasts of the Orthodox calendar, the Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle. Both the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Holy Father offered words during the Byzantine liturgy celebrating the Patron of the Church of Constantinople and brother of St. Peter. The Holy Father recommitted himself, during his homily, to seeking the reunification of the two Churches.

Pope meets with diplomatic corps, emphasizes need for intercultural cooperation

Ankara, November 29, 2006 (CNA) - Concluding his first day in Turkey, Pope Benedict XVI met this evening with members of the international diplomatic corps at the Apostolic Nunciature in Ankara. The Pope emphasized the need for continued intercultural and interreligious cooperation in order to bring an end to terrorism and regional conflicts as well as to find solutions to problems of economic inequality, oppression, and disease.

Vatican spokesman says question of Turkish entry into EU doesn't involve Holy See

Vatican City, November 29, 2006 (CNA) - In response to comments by Turkey's Prime Minister, Tayyip Erdogan, on the possibility of Turkish entry into the EU, Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi said the Holy See "has

neither the power, nor the specific or political role of intervening in the question of Turkey's entry into the European Union."

Knights of Columbus begin 'Spiritual Pilgrimage' with Pope

New Haven, November 28, 2006 (CNA) - International Catholic lay fraternal organization, the Knights of Columbus, have begun their "spiritual pilgrimage," with Pope Benedict XVI as he arrives in Turkey today. [As previously reported](#), the Knights will pray for the Pope's intentions as he makes his historic visit to the Muslim country.

Council of Russian Mufties slams protests in Istanbul against papal visit

Moscow, November 28, 2006 (CNA) - The Council of Muftis of Russia has criticized protests against the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Turkey organized by radical Islamic political parties.

Regensburg will have a positive influence on papal visit to Turkey, Vatican official says

Vatican City, November 28, 2006 (CNA) - The Vatican's Secretary for Relations with States, Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, said he was confident the Turkish people, "will not fail to demonstrate once again their traditional hospitality" during the Pope's visit to their country, and he said the Pontiff's discourse in Regensburg last September would end up having a positive influence on the visit.

Lets us live together in harmony, peace, and trust, Pope tells Turkish religious affairs minister

Ankara, November 28, 2006 (CNA) - Pope Benedict XVI met today with the President of the Religious Affairs Directorate of Turkey, Ali Bardakoglu. The Holy Father remarked on the tremendous history of Turkey and offered his esteem for and desire to work together with the Muslim nation and Islam as a whole, "to live together in harmony, peace, and mutual trust."

Pope Benedict XVI arrives in Turkey, "a bridge between Asia and Europe"

Ankara, November 28, 2006 (CNA) - At 1pm Turkish-time today Pope Benedict XVI arrived at Ankara, Turkey's Esemboğa International Airport, for his historic visit. The Pontiff was greeted by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and, after a brief welcome, traveled by motorcade to the Ataturk Mausoleum.

Turkish Prime Minister Changes Schedule to receive Pope Benedict XVI

Vatican City, November 27, 2006 (CNA) - The Holy See announced today that the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will meet with Pope Benedict XVI tomorrow as the Holy Father arrives at the Ankara airport. Erdogan had announced previously that scheduling conflicts would not allow him to meet with the Pope.

Pope's trip will encourage and strengthen Turkish Catholics bishop says

Rome, November 24, 2006 (CNA) - The Pope's upcoming trip to Turkey will serve to encourage and strengthen the small minority of Catholics in the country, Bishop Luigi Padovese, Apostolic Vicar of Anatolia, said this week.

Patriarch cautions Turks against violent protests during Pope's visit

Istanbul, November 20, 2006 (CNA) - The spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians cautioned Turks, in an interview published in Sunday's Sabah newspaper, against creating potential "unpleasant incidents" during Pope Benedict XVI's trip to Turkey next week.

Pope Benedict receives photos of Turkish destroyed churches from the President of Cyprus

Vatican City, November 10, 2006 (CNA) - On the eve of Pope Benedict XVI's highly anticipated trip to Turkey, President Tassos Papadopoulos, head of the divided island of Cyprus, which is now partially occupied by the Turkish army, visited with the Holy Father and presented him with two gifts, one of which was an album containing photographs of numerous Orthodox churches destroyed by the Turks since their most recent invasion of the Mediterranean Island.

Bishops say Catholics anxiously awaiting papal visit to Turkey

Istanbul, November 07, 2006 (CNA) - "The Church in Turkey awaits the encounter with Benedict XVI. We are preparing for the celebration in December, when the Pontiff will meet with the Catholic faithful and their pastors at the Cathedral of Istanbul," said Father Georges Marovitch, the official spokesman of the Bishops' Conference of Turkey.

Turkish man shoots at Italian consulate to protest Papal visit

Istanbul, November 03, 2006 (CNA) - A young man was arrested yesterday after firing three shots into the air in front of the Italian consulate in Istanbul in protest of Pope Benedict's scheduled visit to Turkey later this month. Ibrahim Ak, 26, was immediately arrested.

Turkey denies "snubbing" Pope after announcing prime minister will not meet Benedict

Rome, November 02, 2006 (CNA) - Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan will no longer be available to meet with Pope Benedict XVI when the pontiff visits the Muslim country later this month. But, Turkish officials are denying that the cancelled meeting was not a intentional slight.

Knights sponsor spiritual pilgrimage with Pope during visit to Turkey

New Haven, October 27, 2006 (CNA) - The Knights of Columbus announced yesterday that it will sponsor a spiritual pilgrimage with Pope Benedict XVI as he travels to Turkey next month.

As Vatican "officially" announces trip to Turkey, Cardinal Bertone calls for Christian-Muslim dialogue 'in favor of man'

Rome, October 16, 2006 (CNA) - This morning the Vatican released a schedule for Pope Benedict XVI's trip to Turkey. Thus making official rumors that the Pontiff would continue his trip despite threats from the Muslim world. Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone had confirmed the trip on Italian national television last week, saying also that the Pope will continue to "give new momentum" to improving the dialogue between cultures and religions.

Vatican says preparations for papal trip to Turkey continue

Vatican City, October 04, 2006 (CNA) - Despite continuing threats from Islamic extremist groups and warnings from Muslim clerics and politicians in Turkey, preparations for Pope Benedict XVI's first Papal trip to Turkey are continuing, Vatican officials said this week.

Turkish officials say plane hijacker was seeking help from the Pope

Rome, October 03, 2006 (CNA) - New light has been shed on the hijacking of a Turkish Airlines plane which was overtaken Tuesday. Reports have now surfaced that a single, unarmed Turkish man hijacked the plane, saying that he had a message to deliver to Pope Benedict. Initial reports indicated that two men had hijacked the plane in protest to the Pontiff's upcoming trip to the country, the message now appears to be one seeking the Pope's help.

Pope's trip to Turkey still on

Istanbul, September 18, 2006 (CNA) - According to parties on both sides, Pope Benedict XVI's November trip to Turkey will continue as planned, despite violent reactions on the part of many Muslims to a [speech](#) he made last week.

Pope to extend visit to Turkey to spend time with Catholics, visit Hagia Sophia

Rome, August 24, 2006 (CNA) - Pope Benedict XVI will extend his planned trip to Turkey, from three days to four, in order to celebrate Mass with Turkish Catholics and pay a visit to Hagia Sophia, the former seat of the Church of Constantinople, which was transformed into a mosque and is now a Turkish Museum, Italian news service APCom has reported today.

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