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« Pope Benedict XVI waves to the general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. (Vincenzo Pinto/AFP/Getty Images)

Vatican Reverts to Setting Its Own Laws

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Pope Benedict XVI is cleverly positioning the Vatican to be the legal standard for European law. **BY RON FRASER**

In a move that has taken the Italian government by surprise, the pope has **divorced the Vatican State** from Italian national law, effective from January 1. With this move the Vatican State immediately reverts to its pre-1929 status, meaning that the pope now becomes the supreme authority on judging which of those laws enacted by the Italian government the Vatican State will choose to abide by and which it will reject.

This is a clever ploy with tremendous consequences for the future.

As *Newsweek* observed in its most recent edition, the **pope firmly believes** that "his is the one true church" (January 5). To underline this, the pope declared last year that the only way for man to gain salvation is through conversion to the Catholic faith. Twice during the last quarter of 2008, Benedict referred to the need for the masses to prepare for the return of Christ. His influence was behind a failed effort during 2008 to write the celebration of Sunday, the renowned sign of global Catholicism, into EU law as a compulsory day of rest. Further, observing the current worldwide economic chaos, he indicated that the only way to establish a sound foundation for a global economy is through attachment to a religion, the implication being his "one true church."

In addition to undertaking these initiatives, the pope has, from the earliest days of his pontificate, strengthened Pope John Paul II's cry for Europe to return to its religious and cultural roots, inferring that is the only way that Europe will regain the unity that it once knew under the old Holy Roman Empire.

Students of biblical prophecy ought to really make a strong connection between all of these papal pronouncements, in particular the most recent decision to become judge and jury over Italian law. These acts are all part of a masterful plan—one that European elites have been committed to since the close of World War II: to indeed resurrect that ancient, ever-reviving institution of the Holy Roman Empire.

With a goodly number of committed Roman Catholics embedded within the legal and policy formulation echelons of the European Union, it is guaranteed that the EU legislative body, the European Parliament, will now increasingly take note of papal judgments on not only Italian law, but also, more significantly, EU law.

This latest move by Benedict sets a highly dangerous precedent for Europe. It is one more step toward the Vatican encouraging the imposition of a legal system that is destined to not only control the practice of religion throughout Europe, but also to control the lives of the masses to the point of life-and-death issues such as whether members of the general public will receive their daily bread! (Revelation 13: 16-17).

We have been warning of this for over 70 years, most of that period under the leadership of Herbert W. Armstrong and, for the past 19 years, under the leadership of Gerald Flurry. The amazing thing is that now, with so much evidence accumulated to substantiate the veracity of the Bible prophecies for these times as expounded by both Herbert W. Armstrong and Gerald Flurry, the naysayers continue with their ostrich-like, head-in-the-

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sand, willfully ignorant denials of reality.

But such was always the case.

Jesus Christ, in the great revelation that He delivered to us through the Apostle John, had to continually emphasize that His prophecies would be only open to those who had an ear ready to hear "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." And sadly, when delivering a message to the *final* era of the Church, He prophesied that, amid all the powerful signs of global events so rapidly fulfilling prophecies leading up to His return, that final era of the Church would be the most blind! (Revelation 3: 14-18).

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