

Q & A: Elena Curti

Michael Sean Winters | Sep. 8, 2010 | Distinctly Catholic

In anticipation of Pope Benedict's visit to the UK next week, here at Q & A, we are discussing what the Pope should say and do when he is there. Our commentators are editors at the British Catholic weekly *The Tablet*, and today we hear from Elena Curti, the deputy editor.

The question: What is the most important thing for Pope Benedict to say or do when he is in the UK?

Elena Curti: While the Church in England and Wales now has solid procedures in place aimed at protecting children, as Catholics we still feel tainted by the cover-ups and evasiveness that have characterised the Church's response to the scandal.

I would like to see the Pope express in clear, unambiguous language his abject sorrow at the treatment meted out to survivors. He should meet them and listen attentively to them but he should also make a significant public gesture that communicates the Church's penitence and humility. The pomp and grandeur that characterise the papacy jars horribly with these sentiments.

If Pope Benedict could set aside time in one of his liturgies to stand humbly at the altar simply clad, frankly admit the Church's errors and acknowledge what caused them: pride, fear and the determination to prevent scandal at all costs. What would follow on naturally is an announcement about a programme of action aimed at preventing this happening again. This would mean breaking up the strictly hierarchical brotherhood in Rome that rules with a rod of iron and is instinctively secretive. Simply blaming the bishops - as Pope Benedict did in his letter to Ireland - is not good enough. He needs to acknowledge that the problem is one of culture and that bishops take their cue from Rome.

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- [Ian Ker, Professor at Oxford University and author of a Newman biography](#) [22]
- [The Very Reverend Richard Duffield, the Provost of the Birmingham Oratory](#) [23]
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 - [Catherine Pepinster, editor of the British Catholic weekly The Tablet](#) [30]
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Links:

- [1] <http://ncronline.org/node/20317>
- [2] <http://ncronline.org/node/20316>
- [3] <http://ncronline.org/node/20315>
- [4] <http://ncronline.org/node/20314>
- [5] <http://ncronline.org/node/20313>
- [6] <http://ncronline.org/node/20309>
- [7] <http://ncronline.org/node/20308>
- [8] <http://ncronline.org/node/20303>
- [9] <http://ncronline.org/node/20306>
- [10] <http://ncronline.org/node/20293>
- [11] <http://ncronline.org/node/20281>
- [12] <http://ncronline.org/node/20276>
- [13] <http://ncronline.org/node/20274>
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- [15] <http://ncronline.org/node/20207>
- [16] <http://ncronline.org/node/20254>
- [17] <http://ncronline.org/node/20211>
- [18] <http://ncronline.org/node/20240>
- [19] <http://ncronline.org/node/20265>
- [20] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/q-father-komonchak>
- [21] <http://ncronline.org/node/20277>
- [22] <http://ncronline.org/node/20241>
- [23] <http://ncronline.org/node/20220>
- [24] <http://ncronline.org/node/20181>
- [25] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/when-benedict-meets-victims>
- [26] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/blast-past-newman>
- [27] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/q-james-roberts>
- [28] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/q-christopher-lamb>
- [29] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/q-elena-curti>
- [30] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/q-catherine-pepinster>