

# Pope seeks major changes to financial system

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VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI challenged world leaders on Thursday to make major changes to the global financial system, saying short-term answers to the financial crisis weren't sufficient.

"It's not enough, as Jesus said, to put patches on an old suit," Benedict said in his New Year's Day blessing to thousands of people huddled under umbrellas in a rain-soaked St. Peter's Square.

Echoing a similar theme in his New Year's Day homily, Benedict said the crisis should be seen as a test-case about the future of globalization.

"Are we ready to read it in its complexity as a way for the future and not just an emergency to respond to with short-term answers?" he asked. "Are we ready to make a profound revision in the dominant development model, to correct it in a farsighted and concerted way?"

He said the health of the planet required such a correction, as well as what he called the "cultural and moral crisis" in which the world finds itself.

Benedict has spoken out frequently about the financial crisis, and he used the Roman Catholic Church's World Day of Peace, celebrated every Jan. 1, to emphasize his belief that the meltdown showed the need for greater solidarity with the poor.

"Seen in its profundity, the crisis should be seen as a serious symptom that requires intervention at its root," the pontiff said.

During his homily, Benedict also said he was praying for an end to the violence in Gaza and said he hoped the international community would come forward with concrete proposals so the Israelis and Palestinians could live in peace, security and dignity.

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