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**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

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## **Pressure on Catholic Church mounting**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

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27th March, 2010

# THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

The Catholic Church is facing a huge number of lawsuits over claims of sexual abuse by priests. Added to this scandal are calls for Pope Benedict XVI to resign. News sources say the Pope knew about many of the cases of sexual abuse and rape but covered it up for decades. One American newspaper called this crisis the largest faced by the Church in centuries. The allegations centre on the Pope's role as head of the Vatican office monitoring priestly misconduct. The Pope was then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Many people now say he failed to punish a priest called Lawrence Murphy, who abused as many as 200 boys at a school in Wisconsin in the USA. One of the victims, Donald Marshall, said "The Pope is a fraud and a hypocrite."

The media is reporting on more and more cases of cover-ups by the Catholic Church. Many scandals have broken out in Ireland, Australia, the USA and Mexico. The Vatican has fought back at those trying to force the Pope to resign. Officials released a statement attacking people for their "aggressive persistence... to involve the Holy Father personally in the matter of abuse". The official said the Pope's record was "above discussion" and that no one would comment any further. It will be difficult for people to win lawsuits against the Vatican because it is a country and it has immunity from US lawsuits. A lawyer, Jeff Anderson, has managed to start a law case in the USA. He told reporters that "this is the first foot in the door."

# WARM-UPS

**1. THE CHURCH:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about the church. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*lawsuits / scandal / resigning / sexual abuse / misconduct / punishing people / fraud / cover-ups / fighting back / resigning / persistence / immunity / foot in the door*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. SCANDAL:** Complete this table. Talk about it with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you talked about. Change and share again.

	What happened?	How did you feel?
Religion		
Sport		
Friend		
You		
Politics		
Celebrity		

**4. NOT ABOVE THE LAW:** Students A **strongly** believe religious leaders should not be above the law; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. RESPECT:** Who do / should you respect most? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. The person getting most respect goes at the top. Change partners and share your ratings again.

- parents
- best friends
- your country's leader
- charity workers
- religious leaders
- successful business people
- people in the military
- teachers

**6. ABUSE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'abuse'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Many priests in the Catholic Church were sexually abused.           | T / F |
| b. People have asked the Pope to stand down from being Pope.           | T / F |
| c. The Catholic Church has its biggest crisis in 2,000 years.          | T / F |
| d. Someone accused the Pope of concealing the abuse of up to 200 boys. | T / F |
| e. The media is covering an increasing number of Church abuse stories. | T / F |
| f. The Vatican is angry people are telling the Pope what to do.        | T / F |
| g. The Vatican is a sovereign nation and can be sued by the USA.       | T / F |
| h. A reporter got his foot stuck in the Pope's door.                   | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. huge          | a. press       |
| 2. calls         | b. hid it      |
| 3. covered it up | c. more        |
| 4. monitoring    | d. fake        |
| 5. fraud         | e. forceful    |
| 6. media         | f. enormous    |
| 7. broken out    | g. checking    |
| 8. aggressive    | h. journalists |
| 9. further       | i. requests    |
| 10. reporters    | j. started     |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. facing a huge number               | a. to resign          |
| 2. calls for Pope Benedict XVI        | b. in the door        |
| 3. the Pope's role as head            | c. fought back        |
| 4. people now say he failed to punish | d. further            |
| 5. The Pope is a fraud                | e. of the Vatican     |
| 6. reporting on more and more         | f. of lawsuits        |
| 7. The Vatican has                    | g. a statement        |
| 8. Officials released                 | h. cases of cover-ups |
| 9. no one would comment any           | i. and a hypocrite    |
| 10. this is the first foot            | j. a priest           |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The Catholic Church is facing a \_\_\_\_\_ number of lawsuits over claims of sexual abuse by priests. Added to this scandal are \_\_\_\_\_ for Pope Benedict XVI to resign. News sources say the Pope knew about many of the cases of sexual abuse and \_\_\_\_\_ but covered it up for decades. One American newspaper called this \_\_\_\_\_ the largest faced by the Church in centuries. The allegations centre on the Pope's role as \_\_\_\_\_ of the Vatican office monitoring priestly misconduct. The Pope was then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Many people now say he \_\_\_\_\_ to punish a priest called Lawrence Murphy, who abused as \_\_\_\_\_ as 200 boys at a school in Wisconsin in the USA. One of the \_\_\_\_\_, Donald Marshall, said "The Pope is a fraud and a hypocrite."

*failed*  
*rape*  
*victims*  
*huge*  
*head*  
*many*  
*calls*  
*crisis*

The media is reporting on more and more \_\_\_\_\_ of cover-ups by the Catholic Church. Many scandals have \_\_\_\_\_ out in Ireland, Australia, the USA and Mexico. The Vatican has fought back at those trying to \_\_\_\_\_ the Pope to resign. Officials released a statement attacking people for their "aggressive persistence... to \_\_\_\_\_ the Holy Father personally in the matter of abuse". The official said the Pope's record was "above discussion" and that no one would \_\_\_\_\_ any further. It will be difficult for people to win lawsuits \_\_\_\_\_ the Vatican because it is a country and it has immunity from US lawsuits. A lawyer, Jeff Anderson, has \_\_\_\_\_ to start a law case in the USA. He told reporters that "this is the first \_\_\_\_\_ in the door."

*comment*  
*foot*  
*broken*  
*involve*  
*cases*  
*managed*  
*force*  
*against*

## LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

The Catholic Church is \_\_\_\_\_ of lawsuits over claims of sexual abuse by priests. Added to this scandal are calls for Pope Benedict XVI to resign. News sources say the Pope \_\_\_\_\_ the cases of sexual abuse and rape but covered it up for decades. One American newspaper called this \_\_\_\_\_ by the Church in centuries. The allegations centre on the Pope's \_\_\_\_\_ Vatican office monitoring priestly misconduct. The Pope was then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Many people \_\_\_\_\_ punish a priest called Lawrence Murphy, who abused \_\_\_\_\_ a school in Wisconsin in the USA. One of the victims, Donald Marshall, said "The Pope is a fraud and a hypocrite."

The media is reporting on more \_\_\_\_\_ -ups by the Catholic Church. Many scandals have broken out in Ireland, Australia, the USA and Mexico. The Vatican \_\_\_\_\_ trying to force the Pope to resign. Officials released a statement attacking people for their "aggressive persistence... to involve the Holy Father \_\_\_\_\_ of abuse". The official said the Pope's record was "above discussion" and that no one \_\_\_\_\_. It will be difficult for people to win lawsuits against the Vatican because it is a country \_\_\_\_\_ from US lawsuits. A lawyer, Jeff Anderson, has managed to start a law case in the USA. He told reporters that "this is the \_\_\_\_\_."

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'law' and 'suit'.

law	suit

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• huge</li><li>• sources</li><li>• decades</li><li>• role</li><li>• punish</li><li>• fraud</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• media</li><li>• fought</li><li>• involve</li><li>• further</li><li>• immunity</li><li>• foot</li></ul>
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# STUDENT THE CHURCH SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

Write five GOOD questions about the church in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# CHURCH DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'scandal'?
- c) What do you think about this story?
- d) What do you think should happen to the priests?
- e) Do you think the Pope should resign?
- f) How badly do you think this crisis is affecting the Church?
- g) Do you think abuse happens in all religions?
- h) What do you think the Pope should do now?
- i) What do you think of the Pope covering up the priest?
- j) Do you think the Pope is a fraud and hypocrite?

*Pressure on Catholic Church mounting – 27th March, 2010*  
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# THE CHURCH DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Do you think the media is making a mountain out of a molehill?
- c) Why is the Vatican fighting back if so much wrong has been done?
- d) Do you think it's better for the Vatican to talk about this crisis rather than stay quiet?
- e) Do you think American citizens should be able to sue the Vatican?
- f) What do you think of churches and religions?
- g) Do you think it's important for people to talk more about issues such as sexual abuse?
- h) What would happen if Jeff Anderson won his lawsuit?
- i) Do you think the first foot in the door will lead to more progress?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Pope Benedict XVI?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

The Catholic Church is (1) \_\_\_\_ a huge number of lawsuits over claims of sexual abuse by priests. Added to this scandal are calls for Pope Benedict XVI to resign. News (2) \_\_\_\_ say the Pope knew about many of the cases of sexual abuse and rape but covered it up for decades. One American newspaper called this crisis the largest faced by the Church (3) \_\_\_\_ centuries. The allegations centre on the Pope's (4) \_\_\_\_ as head of the Vatican office monitoring priestly misconduct. The Pope was then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Many people now say he (5) \_\_\_\_ to punish a priest called Lawrence Murphy, who abused as many as 200 boys at a school in Wisconsin in the USA. One of the victims, Donald Marshall, said "The Pope is a (6) \_\_\_\_ and a hypocrite."

The media is reporting on more and (7) \_\_\_\_ cases of cover-ups by the Catholic Church. Many scandals have broken out in Ireland, Australia, the USA and Mexico. The Vatican has fought (8) \_\_\_\_ at those trying to force the Pope to resign. Officials released a statement attacking people for their "aggressive persistence... to involve the Holy Father personally in the (9) \_\_\_\_ of abuse". The official said the Pope's record was "above discussion" and that no one would comment (10) \_\_\_\_ further. It will be difficult for people to win lawsuits against the Vatican because it is a country and it has immunity (11) \_\_\_\_ US lawsuits. A lawyer, Jeff Anderson, has managed to start a law case in the USA. He told reporters that "this is the first (12) \_\_\_\_ in the door."

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |             |            |            |             |
|-----|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1.  | (a) faced   | (b) faces  | (c) face   | (d) facing  |
| 2.  | (a) sources | (b) sauces | (c) saucy  | (d) sourced |
| 3.  | (a) on      | (b) in     | (c) at     | (d) to      |
| 4.  | (a) roll    | (b) real   | (c) role   | (d) rule    |
| 5.  | (a) fooled  | (b) felled | (c) failed | (d) fled    |
| 6.  | (a) afraid  | (b) fraud  | (c) freed  | (d) feared  |
| 7.  | (a) many    | (b) most   | (c) much   | (d) more    |
| 8.  | (a) back    | (b) up     | (c) front  | (d) in      |
| 9.  | (a) patter  | (b) matter | (c) batter | (d) natter  |
| 10. | (a) some    | (b) much   | (c) many   | (d) any     |
| 11. | (a) for     | (b) of     | (c) from   | (d) by      |
| 12. | (a) foot    | (b) hand   | (c) head   | (d) body    |

**WRITING**

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1003/100327-vatican.html>

Write about **the church** for 10 minutes. Correct your partner’s paper.

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# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about the church. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. THE CHURCH:** Make a poster about the church. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. LAWSUIT:** Write a magazine article about the lawyer who has the lawsuit against the Vatican. Include imaginary interviews with that lawyer and a representative from the Vatican.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to a church leader. Ask him/her three questions about the church. Give him/her three suggestions on how to encourage more people to join the church. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. huge          | a. enormous    |
| 2. calls         | b. requests    |
| 3. covered it up | c. hid it      |
| 4. monitoring    | d. checking    |
| 5. fraud         | e. fake        |
| 6. media         | f. press       |
| 7. broken out    | g. started     |
| 8. aggressive    | h. forceful    |
| 9. further       | i. more        |
| 10. reporters    | j. journalists |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. facing a huge number               | a. of lawsuits        |
| 2. calls for Pope Benedict XVI        | b. to resign          |
| 3. the Pope's role as head            | c. of the Vatican     |
| 4. people now say he failed to punish | d. a priest           |
| 5. The Pope is a fraud                | e. and a hypocrite    |
| 6. reporting on more and more         | f. cases of cover-ups |
| 7. The Vatican has                    | g. fought back        |
| 8. Officials released                 | h. a statement        |
| 9. no one would comment any           | i. further            |
| 10. this is the first foot            | j. in the door        |

## GAP FILL:

### Pressure on Catholic Church mounting

The Catholic Church is facing a **huge** number of lawsuits over claims of sexual abuse by priests. Added to this scandal are **calls** for Pope Benedict XVI to resign. News sources say the Pope knew about many of the cases of sexual abuse and **rape** but covered it up for decades. One American newspaper called this **crisis** the largest faced by the Church in centuries. The allegations centre on the Pope's role as **head** of the Vatican office monitoring priestly misconduct. The Pope was then cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Many people now say he **failed** to punish a priest called Lawrence Murphy, who abused as **many** as 200 boys at a school in Wisconsin in the USA. One of the **victims**, Donald Marshall, said "The Pope is a fraud and a hypocrite."

The media is reporting on more and more **cases** of cover-ups by the Catholic Church. Many scandals have **broken** out in Ireland, Australia, the USA and Mexico. The Vatican has fought back at those trying to **force** the Pope to resign. Officials released a statement attacking people for their "aggressive persistence... to **involve** the Holy Father personally in the matter of abuse". The official said the Pope's record was "above discussion" and that no one would **comment** any further. It will be difficult for people to win lawsuits **against** the Vatican because it is a country and it has immunity from US lawsuits. A lawyer, Jeff Anderson, has **managed** to start a law case in the USA. He told reporters that "this is the first **foot** in the door."

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d    2 - a    3 - b    4 - c    5 - c    6 - b    7 - d    8 - a    9 - b    10 - d    11 - c    12 - a