

**Technology without God is dangerous, Pope says**  
**Reuters**  
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VATICAN CITY, April 8 — Pope Benedict, leading the world's Catholics into Easter, said on last night technological progress, in the absence of awareness of God and moral values, posed a threat to the world.

Benedict presided at a solemn Easter vigil Mass in St Peter's Basilica to usher the 1.2 billion-member church into the most important day of its liturgical calendar.

The basilica, the largest church in Christendom, was in the dark for the start of the service to signify the darkness in Jesus' tomb before what Christians believe was his resurrection from the dead three days after his crucifixion.

The some 10,000 faithful in the basilica lit candles as the pope moved up the central aisle on a wheeled platform he uses to conserve his strength and then the basilica's lights were turned on when he reached the main altar.

Wearing gold and white vestments at the Mass, his last Holy Week service before Easter Sunday, Benedict wove his sermon around the theme of darkness and light.

"The darkness that poses a real threat to mankind, after all, is the fact that he can see and investigate tangible material things, but cannot see where the world is going or whence it comes, where our own life is going, what is good and what is evil," he said.

"The darkness enshrouding God and obscuring values is the real threat to our existence and to the world in general," he said.

Benedict, repeating one of the central themes of his pontificate, said man was too often in awe of technology instead of being in awe of God.

"If God and moral values, the difference between good and evil, remain in darkness, then all other 'lights', that put such incredible technical feats within our reach, are not only progress but also dangers that put us and the world at risk," he said.

"With regard to material things, our knowledge and our technical accomplishments are legion, but what reaches beyond, the things of God and the question of good, we can no longer identify," he said.

The pope, who returned from a gruelling trip to Mexico and Cuba last week, looked fatigued at the long service, during which he baptised eight adults from Italy, the United States, Slovakia, Turkmenistan, Albania, Germany and Cameroon. He turns 85 on April 16.

Today the pope will preside at an Easter day Mass and then deliver his twice-yearly "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and the world) blessing and message from the central balcony of St Peter's Basilica. — Reuters

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