

# Pope urges Christian drivers to examine consciences

VATICAN CITY - Pope Benedict XVI, lamenting the high number of traffic accidents over the summer holiday period, called on Christians to make “a personal examination of conscience” about the way they drive.

Driving is both a moral and civil responsibility, the pope said Aug. 17. Most accidents that cause fatalities or serious injuries can be avoided, he said.

“There needs to be a greater sense of responsibility, above all on the part of drivers, because the accidents are often caused by excessive speed and imprudent behavior,” he said.

The pope’s comments came as Europeans took to the roads in record numbers for the August holidays, prompting an annual spike in traffic-related deaths.

“We shouldn’t grow accustomed to this sad reality,” the pope said.

“As church, we feel directly called upon to respond on an ethical level: Christians should first of all make a personal examination of conscience about their own driving,” he said.

In addition, the church should help people realize that driving is an area in which they should “defend life and exercise in a concrete way love of neighbor,” he said.