

Pope's next encyclical to cover globalization, digital divide

VATICAN CITY - Pope Benedict XVI's upcoming encyclical is titled "Charity in Truth" and covers a wide range of issues related to globalization and social justice, said an Italian report.

The text is still under revision and has yet to be translated, according to church sources. A leading Vatican official said he doesn't expect the encyclical to be published before summer.

The Italian news agency ANSA reported March 12 that the encyclical, whose Latin title is "Caritas in Veritate," is divided into four chapters. The lengthy text begins with a reflection on the 1967 encyclical, "Populorum Progressio" ("The Progress of Peoples"), and the social changes that have occurred since then, it said.

Among the topics examined by the pope are the relationship of economic and social development with human dignity, and the gap between the rich and poor, it said.

It said the text touches on issues of war and peace, international cooperation and economic globalization, environmental and energy issues, the "digital divide" and disarmament.

Vatican sources said the pope began work on the encyclical last year. His first two encyclicals examined the virtues of love and hope.

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican secretary of state, said March 9 that the social encyclical was nearing completion.

"The pope is reflecting and revising, and therefore we cannot predict. But I presume it will not be published before the summer vacation period," he said.

Cardinal Bertone, who spoke with ANSA while visiting Azerbaijan, said the pope was preparing his new text carefully.

"It needs to be written well. The pope is making his reflections and annotations and

is checking things rigorously," he said.

"I'm not saying the pope is a true perfectionist, but in a certain sense he is," the cardinal said.

Cardinal Bertone said he hoped that, with this encyclical, a Chinese translation would be published immediately, along with the other main languages.