

Voices of 2011

Century Marks in the [December 27, 2011](#) issue

"I Used to Be Afraid . . . I Became an Egyptian."

-- sign (in Arabic) seen in Tahrir Square in Cairo during protests that led to the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak's regime

"I hope from the bottom of my heart that the people will, hand in hand, treat each other with compassion and overcome these difficult times."

-- Japanese Emperor **Akihito** after the March earthquake, tsunami and subsequent nuclear crisis embroiled his country

"Greece is bust, essentially."

-- London economist **Gabriel Stein** on the likelihood that Greece would default on its sovereign debt

"While [Muammar] Qaddafi is a bad guy, being a bad guy with a long history of brutality and terrorism is not a moral justification for the United States to go to war."

-- **Robert Parham**, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville, arguing that the situation in Libya did not meet just war criteria for U.S. intervention

"However emotionally satisfying to Americans, Osama bin Laden's departure from the scene is unlikely to produce definitive results. It does not mark a turning point in history."

--

Boston University professor **Andrew J. Bacevich**, arguing that the U.S. is engaged not in a war on terror but in a struggle to control the Middle East, particularly the oil-rich Persian Gulf

"It has been a really tough weekend."

-- **Harold Camping** after the Rapture that he had predicted would happen on Saturday, May 21, failed to occur

"Now we know the reality of so many others in the world where violence pierces the lives of the innocent."

--

Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches and a Norwegian, following the shootings in and around Oslo that left at least 76 people dead

"This Shari'a law business is crap. It's just crazy. And I'm tired of dealing with the crazies. It's just unnecessary to be accusing this guy of things just because of his religious background."

--

New Jersey Republican Governor **Chris Christie**, defending his nomination of Sohail Mohammed, a Muslim-American, to be a judge on the state Superior Court

"This deal is a sugar-coated Satan sandwich. If you lift the bun, you will not like what you see."

-- Representative **Emanuel Cleaver** (D., Mo.), a United Methodist minister, tweeting about a congressional deal that raised the debt ceiling

"My friends and I have been coddled long enough by a billionaire-friendly Congress."

-- **Warren Buffet**, the world's third most wealthy person, supporting a higher tax rate for the super-rich

"There is nobody in this country who got rich on his own."

-- **Elizabeth Warren**, candidate in Massachusetts for the Senate, challenging the idea that seeking higher taxes for the wealthy is class warfare

"It's

a shame that there's an economic state that we feel like we have no recourse in our government, that we feel like we have to go out and protest in the streets."

-- **Erin Cadet**, an Occupy Wall Street participant, grad student and actress

"I'm wondering when that day will come where they will be asked to wear the yellow star."

-- **Mary Bauer**, legal director of the Southern Poverty Law Center, about migrant families living under Alabama's tough new immigration law

"I want you to know I am a Christian, I'm a Methodist, and I voted for this law. This legislation was written by Christians."

--

Alabama state senator **Bill Holtzclaw**, a Republican, responding to critics of the state's immigration law, which one Methodist bishop described as the nation's "meanest"

"I'm not a spokesman for my church, and one thing I'm not going to do in running for president is become a spokesman for my church or apply a religious test that is simply forbidden by the Constitution. I'm not going there."

-- Republican presidential candidate **Mitt Romney** speaking about his Mormon faith

"Under normal circumstances, [Newt] Gingrich would have some real problems with the social-conservative community. But these aren't normal circumstances."

-- **Tony Perkins**, head of the Family Research Council, on the bid by the thrice-married Gingrich to be the Republican nominee for president

"They are reading it like a sacred text. . . . You are not supposed to worship your constitution. You are supposed to govern your government by it."

-- **Jerrold Nadler** (D., N.Y.), talking about how Tea Party members view the Constitution

"In the ashes and the aftermaths, we knew that we had lost Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, men, women, young, old. And a decade later, that unity that we felt must continue to inspire and guide us."

-- Secretary of State **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, speaking about the 9/11 anniversary at a September 7 reception marking Eid al-Fitr, the holiday that concludes the month of Ramadan

"This is a tragedy, one of the great sorrows of my life. With more benefit of hindsight, I wish I had done more."

-- **Joe Paterno**, Penn State football coach, in response to allegations that his former assistant Jerry Sandusky had sexually molested minors

"Too many universities are sports factories posing as academic institutions."

The overemphasis on sports is a leading cause of America losing its competitive edge."

-- Sports columnist **Buzz Bissinger**, commenting on scandals that rocked universities like Ohio State, Penn State and the University of Southern California

"Oh wow. Oh wow. Oh wow."

-- Apple CEO **Steve Jobs**'s last words, according to a eulogy by his sister Mona Simpson, after his death in October from pancreatic cancer. She said Jobs's words expressed his sense of wonderment