

Musk 'prayed for this' SpaceX splashdown



Screen grabs taken from a NASA video shows Elon Musk speaking and the successful landing of crew dragon capsule

Reuters

“I’m not very religious, but I prayed for this one.”

Elon Musk’s SpaceX saw the successful landing of its Crew Dragon capsule on Sunday (August 2) after a two-month voyage.

It was NASA’s first crewed mission from home soil in nine years.

Speaking at a homecoming event in Houston, Texas Sunday, astronaut Doug Hurley said he was proud to be part of the experience.

“You know, this has been a quite an odyssey the last five, six, seven, eight years, five years since Bob and I started working on this program. And to be where we are now, the first crewed flight of Dragon is just unbelievable.”

Hurley and fellow astronaut Bob Behnken flew aboard the capsule to the International Space Station and spent 64 days in space before splashing down in the Gulf of Mexico.

Their homecoming was the first crewed splashdown in an American capsule in 45 years.

The successful splashdown was also a final key test of whether SpaceX could trans-

port humans to and from orbit -- a feat no private company has accomplished before.

And Musk said he hoped the news would bring some much-needed light to dark times.

“You know, I think this is something that the whole world can take some pleasure in and can really look at this as an achievement of human-

The landmark mission, which took off from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center on May 31, marked the first time the US space agency launched humans from American soil since its shuttle programme retired in 2011



ity. These are difficult times when, you know, there’s there’s not that much good news. And I think this is one of those things that is universally good no matter where you are on planet Earth. This is a good thing.”

Former pope Benedict XVI ‘extremely frail’: report



Former pope Benedict XVI became seriously ill after visiting his sick brother in Germany in June and is “extremely frail”,

AFP | Berlin

Former pope Benedict XVI became seriously ill himself after visiting his sick brother in Germany in June and is “extremely frail”, according to a report in the Monday edition of the German Passauer Neue Presse newspaper.

Benedict, 93, is suffering from erysipelas of the face, a virus that causes a facial rash and episodes of severe pain, the newspaper reported, citing the former pope’s biographer Peter Seewald.

“According to Seewald, the Pope emeritus is now extremely frail,” the report says. “His thinking and his memory are quick, but his voice is hardly audible at the moment.”

Seewald reportedly visited Benedict in Rome on Saturday to present him with his biography.

“At the meeting the emeritus Pope, despite his illness, was optimistic and declared that if his strength increased again he would possibly take up his pen again,” the paper said.

Benedict visited his sick brother Georg in Germany in June, marking his first trip out of Italy since his shock resignation in 2013. Georg Ratzinger died just two weeks later, aged 96.

The former pontiff, whose original name is Joseph Ratzinger, now lives in a small former monastery inside the Vatican.

He has largely stayed out of the public eye since he became the first pope in 600 years to resign, citing health reasons.

A traditionalist in the Catholic Church, he was replaced by the reformist Pope Francis.

Some COVID-19 survivors suffer psychiatric disorders, Italian study says

Reuters | Milan

COVID-19 survivors suffer higher rates of psychiatric disorders including post-traumatic stress (PTSD), anxiety, insomnia and depression, according to a study conducted by San Raffaele hospital in Milan yesterday.

The survey showed that more than half of the 402 patients monitored after being treated for the virus experienced at least one of these disorders in proportion to the severity of the inflammation during the disease.

The patients - 265 men and 137 women - were examined at a one-month follow-up after hospital treatment.

“It was immediately clear that the inflammation caused by the disease could also have repercussions at the psychiatric level,” said professor Francesco Benedetti, group leader of the Research Unit in Psychiatry and Clinical Psychobiology at San Raffaele, in a statement.

The report was published on



Outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Belgrade

Monday in the scientific journal Brain, Behavior and Immunity.

Based on clinical interviews and self-assessment questionnaires, physicians found PTSD in 28 per cent of cases, depression in 31pc, anxiety in 42pc of patients and insomnia in 40pc, and finally obsessive-compulsive symptoms in 20pc.

The study shows that women in particular suffered the most from anxiety and depression,

despite the lower severity of the infection, the statement said.

“We hypothesise that this may be due to the different functioning of the immune system,” said Professor Benedetti.

Finally, less serious psychiatric repercussions have been found in hospitalised patients than in outpatients.

The psychiatric consequences of COVID-19 can be caused both by the immune response to the

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PROFESSOR FRANCESCO BENEDETTI, GROUP LEADER OF THE RESEARCH UNIT IN PSYCHIATRY AND CLINICAL PSYCHOBIOLOGY AT SAN RAFFAELE

virus itself and by psychological stress factors such as stigma, social isolation and worries about infecting others, it said.

The results will underscore growing concerns about potential debilitating health complications for survivors of the disease.

Earlier this month, scientists warned of a potential wave of coronavirus-related brain damage in people who have had the disease.

Verdict looms in killing of Lebanon ex-PM Hariri

The Hague

A UN-backed tribunal will give its verdict Friday on the 2005 murder of former Lebanese premier Rafic Hariri, but questions will remain over a long and costly trial whose suspects remain at large.

Four alleged members of the Shiite Muslim fundamentalist group Hezbollah are on trial in absentia at the court in the Netherlands over the huge Beirut suicide bombing that killed Sunni billionaire Hariri and 21 other people.

The court is billed as the world’s first international tribunal set up to probe terrorist crimes, and it has cost at least \$600 million since it opened its doors in 2009 following a



former Lebanese premier Rafic Hariri

They didn’t show up for their trial

UN Security Council resolution.

But the tribunal faces doubts over its credibility with Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah refusing to hand over the defendants, and the case relying almost entirely on

mobile phone records.

And while Hariri’s son Saad looked forward to a “day of truth and justice”, many Lebanese people are meanwhile more preoccupied with the country’s economic crisis, the worst since the 1975-1990 civil war.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the judgment “will be delivered from the courtroom with partial virtual participation” at 0900 GMT on Friday.

The four defendants went on trial in 2014 on charges including the “intentional homicide” of Hariri and 21 others, attempted homicide of 226 people wounded in the bombing, and conspiracy to commit a terrorist act.