



Director of Anglican Centre in Rome steps down after “sexual misconduct” allegation



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, introduces Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi to Pope Francis ahead of his installation as Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome in October 2017.

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The governors of the Anglican Centre in Rome have announced the resignation of the Centre's director, Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, following an allegation of sexual misconduct. The Anglican Centre in Rome is the permanent Anglican Communion presence in Rome. Its director is also the Archbishop of Canterbury's Personal Representative to the Holy See.

The resignation was announced today in a statement by the Centre's Governors – its independent board of trustees. They said: "the Governors of the Anglican Centre in Rome have accepted the resignation of its Director Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi following his suspension last week over an allegation of sexual misconduct.

"The Governors are now taking urgent steps to appoint an interim director, who will also act as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See."

Archbishop Bernard was [installed as Director in October 2017](#). He was previously the Primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi. Before ordination, he was a civil servant who served as chief of staff to Burundi's President, Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, He served four years in prison following the 1987 military coup. Later, he was appointed Bishop of Matana and then Archbishop of Burundi. He also worked as vice-chair of the country's commission on truth and reconciliation.

The resignation comes at a time of significant change in the leadership of the Anglican Centre in Rome. The current Chair of Governors, [Bishop Stephen Platten, steps down at the end of this year](#) after 15 years in the Chair and 30 years of service to the Centre. In the New Year he will be

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succeeded by the Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory in the Church of Ireland, Bishop Michael Burrows.

Details of the allegation have not been made public. The governors have invited “anyone with a safeguarding concern or requiring support” to [contact the Church of England’s national safeguarding team](#).

Pope urges predator priests to turn themselves in

Pope Francis on Friday urged predator priests who have sexually abused minors to turn themselves in, making one of his strongest comments ever on the crisis sweeping the Roman Catholic Church.

While it was not immediately clear if Francis was referring to the Church judicial system, civil justice, or both, Vatican sources believed it was the first time the pope had made such a direct appeal.

'To those who abuse minors I would say this: convert and hand yourself over to human justice, and prepare for divine justice,' Francis said in his traditional Christmas address to the Curia, the Vatican's central administration.

He spoke two months before an extraordinary summit on the sexual abuse crisis that will be attended by the heads of some 110 national Catholic bishops' conferences and dozens of experts and leaders of religious orders in the Vatican.

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Pope Francis urged priests who were abusers to turn themselves in.

Francis has previously used the Christmas address to denounce cases of corruption and mismanagement in the Curia. This time, he concentrated on the global sexual abuse crisis.

'Let it be clear that, faced with these abominations, the Church will spare no effort to do all that is necessary to bring to justice whoever has committed such crimes. The Church will never seek to hush up or not take seriously any case,' he said.

When the pope has made similar promises of zero tolerance in the past, victim groups have scoffed, saying the Church

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has to come up with a clear policy to make bishops themselves accountable for the mishandling of abuse cases.

The groups say the February meeting must do precisely this.

In his address, Francis acknowledged that the Church had made serious errors in the past but promised to make 'past mistakes opportunities for eliminating this scourge' from both the Church and society at large.

Francis himself made such an error earlier this year when he first strongly defended a bishop in Chile who had been accused of covering up abuse, only later to launch an inquiry and accept the resignation of that bishop and other prelates in Chile.

'It is undeniable that some in the past, out of irresponsibility, disbelief, lack of training, inexperience, or spiritual and human short-sightedness, treated many cases without the seriousness and promptness that was due,' he said.

'That must never happen again. This is the choice and the decision of the whole Church.'

Thanksgiving for C of I priest who died one month after ordination

The death of the Revd Graham Jones occurred on Saturday December 8 surrounded by his family in his home in Dublin. Graham was diagnosed with cancer in 2016 while he was an ordinand in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute

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and in October 2018 he was told that his condition was terminal. He was 42 years of age.

In the weeks before his death Graham and his wife Louise and brother Rob (Rector of Rathmines with Harold's Cross) spoke openly about how his illness had affected them. On RTE Radio's *Sunday with Miriam O'Callaghan* one of his messages was to urge people not to use the phrase 'battling cancer' because it made it seem as if the person was at fault if they 'lost the battle'.

On the same programme he also spoke about what it was to live a flourishing life. This theme was continued at Graham's funeral which, Louise explained, he designed himself to speak to every person who was present. People from every aspect of Graham's life: school, Scouts, rugby, law, Solas Project and the Church of Ireland gathered inside

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and outside St Catherine's Church on Thomas Street, Dublin, to worship, give thanks and remember him. The service took place on December 11, a month to the day after his ordination to the priesthood in the same church.

The service was led by the Revd Rob Jones and was assisted by the Revd Eoghan Heaslip with Archbishop Michael Jackson, who also officiated at the burial. Rob delivered the sermon, entitled, "what does it mean to live a flourishing life", which will be part of a much bigger piece of work, which will hopefully be published in due course.

Louise also spoke and as the service drew to a close there were 'thank you letters to Dad from their daughters Rebecca, Amelia–Grace and Romy.

As Graham's coffin was carried from the church, which had been his spiritual home for the last 17 years, a guard of honour was provided by members of the Liberty Saints Rugby Club which Graham had founded as part of his vision to make a positive impact on the lives of people in the Liberties.

Graham qualified as a solicitor 2003 and worked in commercial law before a brief spell in criminal law. He was in practice until 2011 when he spoke of the really strong feeling he had that "there must be something more". In his sermon he said eventually Louise had sat him down to help him find his new direction. He had been volunteering with two youth ministries at St Catherine's and shortly afterwards he was told by another member of the St Catherine's community that she had secured funding to employ him for six months in an afterschool project for children in the Liberties.

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From this Solas Project grew and Graham became their first Head Gardener (CEO). From humble beginnings, the community development project flourished in pursuit of its mission to counteract the effects of social and educational disadvantage.

Towards the end of his time with Solas Project he had a growing sense that God was calling him into leadership in his church. In a piece he wrote before being ordained a Deacon in September 2018, Graham said: “When I explored this further, through prayer and conversations with Louise and trusted friends, I knew that we had to follow God’s prompting. This was very exciting but also very challenging, not just because of the uncertainty, but also because of how much I loved what I was doing with Solas Project”. He said he loved his training and was looking forward to serving his year as Deacon Intern in Kiltarnan.

However, shortly after his ordination came the news that his cancer had entered his central nervous system. In his sermon he spoke of the shock of the diagnosis and the pain he felt for Louise and his daughters. Speaking to Miriam O’Callaghan, he spoke about his faith and how it helped the family during this time. “I don’t want it to sound as if there is a magic wand. There is real suffering. There is real pain. There are real tears. There is heart brokenness. Yet in some way God will allow the joy to come through because of trusting in him... We are safe, we are safe in his arms,” he said.

After receiving the news, and following prayer with Archbishop Jackson, it was decided to bring forward Graham’s ordination. During that service, the preacher, the

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Revd Dr Maurice Elliott, director of CITI said that Graham knew that the service was not ultimately about him: “Rather, it is also about a celebration of the impact that your life and your ministry have had, and will continue to have, on other people: that is what it means to truly flourish, if I might coin the topic of your own dissertation, that is what it looks like to move in the river of the Spirit instead of remaining comfortable in the swimming pool, that is what it means for the people of God to celebrate and to radiate life, and in every sense may this be the fullness of what your priestly ministry will come to mean.”

Graham is survived by his wife Louise, daughters Rebecca, Amelia Grace and Romy; his father David; brothers and sisters Stephen, Susan, Rob and Beverley. He is predeceased by his mother Barbara.

Graham was laid to rest beside his mother Barbara, in Mount Venus Cemetery, Rockbrook, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16. Donations, if desired, could be made to Solas Project solasproject.ie.

News briefs

A special service was held in St Paul’s, Lisburn, to celebrate Mr Jim Neill’s 40 years as a Diocesan Lay Reader in Connor Diocese.

The preacher at the service of thanksgiving which took place on the evening of December 9, was the Rev Eddie Coulter, rector of Lambeg Parish. The Ven Paul Dundas, Archdeacon of Dalriada, represented the Bishop of Connor.

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At the service of thanksgiving for Jim Neill's 40 years as a Diocesan Lay Reader are, from left: Canon Bro David Jardine, Dean John Bond, the Rev Arthur Young, Mr Jim Neill, Archdeacon Paul Dundas and the Rev Eddie Coulter, preacher.



First ever Waterville Christingle

On 16 December, the Revd Brian Rogers led the first ever Christingle service in St Michael and All Angels, Waterville, in the company of local schoolchildren who had been given the instructions in the preceding week. Clearly, the specification did not include a size restriction.

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50 years helping children in need

For almost 50 years, St Katharine's Parish, Belfast, has been donating toys for children in need.

These have been distributed by the Newtownabbey Children's Services to local families. Included in the picture above at this year's presentation are Adam Turnbull and Debbie Williams from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, along with the rector of St Katharine's, the Rev Canon William Taggart.

Clogher sitout for charity

The Archdeacon of Clogher, the Venerable Brian Harper, Rector of Magheracross Parish, and his neighbouring minister, the Revd John Beacom from Ballinamallard Methodist Church, were well wrapped up and nourished with warm food for their 12-hour sit-out for charity on Wednesday, 19th December, from 8am to 8pm.

Taking up 'residence' in a gazebo on the pavement outside Magheracross Parish Church, Ballinamallard, they received plenty of support from members of their own congregations and passers-by.

Local businesses provided hot food and refreshments throughout the day.

This year, the charities supported by the two ministers are the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (Enniskillen) and CLIC Sargent, a national charity supporting children and young people with cancer.

God on side of Archdeacon?

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There was fun for all at the All Saints' Parish, Antrim, Beetle Drive and Pudding night in the Parish Centre on Friday November 30.

Almost 100 parishioners of all ages came along and the evening proved to be a great way of including everyone in a fun activity which all could enjoy.

The Beetle Drive was won by the Vicar, Archdeacon Stephen McBride. Some sore losers accused him of having God on his side!

The evening began with the sale of Christmas crafts created by Antrim Parish's Holy Knitters group which meets every Monday evening. The total raised has exceeded £400.

The evening's entertainment concluded with a feast of delicious puddings.

Two wise canons installed at Killala Carol service

The annual Tuam, Killala and Achonry Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent was held in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Killala, on Sunday 9th December.

The liturgy was prepared and led by the Revd Canon Jennifer McWhirter, Priest in Charge of Killala Union. Lessons were read by representatives of all the parishes in the Killala and Achonry end of the diocese. Music was provided by Daphne Higgins.

The Dean, the Very Revd Alistair Grimason, preached and also, with the guidance of the Diocesan Registrar Mrs Audrey Shannon, installed two new Canons to the Chapter of Saint Patrick's: the Revd Canon Lynda Peilow (Galway

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and Kilcummin) to the Prebend Stall of Lackan and the Revd Canon Andrew Ison (Ballysodare, Colooney and Ballymote) to the Prebend Stall of Errew.

Successful Christmas Tree Festival

Christ Church Parish, Ballynure, held a very successful Christmas Tree Festival over the weekend of December 8 and 9.

Each tree was designed by a different community group and each had its own story to tell.

All voluntary donations made at this spectacular exhibition benefited the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice and Church funds.

Festival of Wreaths marks season of Advent and Christmas

The Priory Church, Killadeas in Clogher Diocese has been marking the beginning of Advent and the Christmas season with a Festival of Wreaths during Saturday, 8th December and Sunday, 9th December.

The event brought the whole community together and proceeds were in aid of the Killadeas Priory Church Repair Fund and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Almost 120 wreaths were on display in the church, some from parish organisations and many others donated by local businesses, community and voluntary groups from around Enniskillen and the north Fermanagh area. These included local primary schools as well as post-primary schools in Enniskillen.

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The Parish held a workshop a few weeks earlier at which around 20 local people made wreaths, some on behalf of donors. These were displayed at the end of pews, on window sills and in the sanctuary area of the church.

The Priory Church was recently re-opened following an extensive refurbishment programme supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.



News links

New boss set to take helm of Northern Ireland education services

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/new-boss-set-to-take-helm-of-northern-ireland-education-services-37646242.html>

Church leaders reflect on uncertain times in their Christmas messages

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/church-leaders-reflect-on-uncertain-times-in-their-christmas-messages-37646221.html>

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Vatican Museums to launch full virtual tour

[https://www.catholicherald.com/News/National_International/Vatican/Vatican Museums to launch full virtual tour/](https://www.catholicherald.com/News/National_International/Vatican/Vatican_Museums_to_launch_full_virtual_tour/)

How Vatican is preparing for its February abuse summit

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2018/12/20/analysis-how-the-vatican-is-preparing-for-its-february-abuse-summit/>

Approval for contract for first phase of National Maternity Hospital project

BreakingNews.ie

The Health Minister said St Vincent's Healthcare Group has also confirmed the process by which the **Religious** Sisters of Charity will transfer their ...

Sisters' arrogance adds insult to injury

The Irish Catholic

Dear Editor, The **news** that the **Religious** Sisters of Charity refuse to say more importance, and a lot more catastrophic, especially in **Ireland** today.

Remembering the babies at Bethany

Irish Times

Moreover, when the **Church of Ireland** finally decides to clearly support the memory of the dead babies and children and to actively help the survivors ...

Church in Illinois withheld names of 500 priests accused of abuse

Irish Times

The Catholic **Church** in Illinois withheld the names of at least 500 priests accused of sexual abuse of minors, the state's attorney general said ...

[Catholic Church in Illinois allegedly withheld names of at least 500 priests and clergy accused of ... - Independent.ie](#)

[Catholic Church in Illinois withheld names of over 500 priests accused of child sex abuse, says ... - Irish Post Full Coverage](#)

Messages of hope, home and the story of Immanuel - God with us

The Irish News

In their annual messages, the leaders of **Ireland's** main **Churches** remind us not ... and Dr Richard Clarke, the **Church of Ireland** Archbishop of Armagh Followers of Christ have not always lived out the Good **News** in the way that ...

Bishops Christmas messages

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Ecumenical Christmas letter from Archbishop of Canterbury

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2018/12/the-ecumenical-christmas-letter-from-the-archbishop-of-canterbury-justin-welby-.aspx>

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2018/12/a-christmas-message-from-presiding-bishop-michael-curry.aspx>

Archbishop John Davies of Wales

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2018/12/a-christmas-message-from-archbishop-john-davies.aspx>

Archbishop Michael Jackson of Dublin

<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2018/12/17/christmas-message-2018-from-archbishop>

Bishop of Connor

<https://connor.anglican.org/2018/12/19/christmas-message-from-the-bishop-of-connor/>

Bishops of Cork: Bishop John Buckley and Bishop Paul Colton

<https://churchofirelandcork.com/2018/12/18/joint-christmas-message-from-the-bishops-of-cork-bishop-john-buckley-and-bishop-paul-colton/...>

Bishop John McDowell, Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher, and Monsignor Joseph McGuinness, Diocesan Administrator of Clogher

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/8518/joint-christmas-message-from-bishop>

