

# Daily media briefing

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**Fri, 3 May 2024**

## [Schools swap Christian worship for mindfulness – NSS quoted](#)

Schools have been allowed to opt out of providing a daily act of Christian worship to teach pupils about "looking after the planet" and mindfulness instead – with one head concerned youngsters would be withdrawn if the rule was kept in place.

Schools Week

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## [‘Schools should bond communities: faith schools divide them. Why are ministers making that worse?’](#)

The government wants to scrap England's 50% cap on 'faith admissions'. It will just lead to religious discrimination

The Guardian

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## [Staff become Catholics after evangelism programme in state schools](#)

An innovative evangelisation programme in the Archdiocese of Southwark has led to four staff members in Catholic schools being received into the Catholic Church.

Catholic Herald

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### **Bishop of Dover thanks protestors who blocked asylum coaches**

A prominent Church of England bishop has praised the protestors who successfully disrupted Home Office attempts to move asylum seekers to the Bibby Stockholm barge in Dorset.

The Guardian

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### **Expanding clergy sexual abuse probe targets New Orleans Catholic church leaders**

Authorities have expanded an investigation of clergy sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church in New Orleans to include senior church officials suspected of shielding predatory priests for decades and failing to report their crimes to law enforcement.

Associated Press

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### **Texan chastity scandal and a 'hostile takeover' - the nuns defying Pope Francis**

Catholic nuns in Texas are defying the Pope and could be excommunicated amid what they say is a "hostile takeover" of their monastery.

Sky News

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### **Iran charges journalists after BBC report on teen protester's death**

Iran's judiciary has filed charges against "a number of journalists and activists" after the publication of a BBC report alleging men working for the security forces sexually assaulted and killed a 16-year-old protester.

BBC

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**Thu, 2 May 2024**

## **Catholic Church to open more schools amid plans to scrap 50pc limit – NSS quoted**

The Catholic Church is poised to open more schools as Gillian Keegan confirms plans to scrap a limit on faith admissions in England.

The Telegraph / MSN

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## **Cap on faith-based school admissions to be lifted – NSS quoted**

Stephen Evans, chief executive of the National Secular Society, said lifting the cap would only "exacerbate the discrimination, division, and disadvantage that faith based education encourages".

The Standard

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## **Children face travelling miles to school as cap on faith admissions scrapped**

Children may be forced to travel miles to primary school because of Government plans to scrap a cap on faith-based admissions, teaching unions have warned.

iNews\*

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## **Police officer charged with terror offences over pro-Hamas messages**

Mohammed Adil is accused of two counts of publishing an image in support of Hamas.

iNews\*

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## **Isis claims responsibility for deadly Afghanistan mosque shooting**

Isis has claimed responsibility for the deadly shooting at a Shi'ite mosque in western Afghanistan's Herat province that killed six people.

Independent

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## **US: Arizona Senate votes to repeal 1864 abortion ban**

The pre-statehood law bars abortion from the moment of conception, with no exceptions for rape or incest.

BBC

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**Wed, 1 May 2024**

## **England scraps 50% rule on faith school admissions – NSS quoted**

Faith schools in England will no longer have to offer up to half of their places to children who don't belong to their religion, under changes to state school admissions rules announced by the government.

The Guardian

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## **Government plans to lift faith-based admissions cap on free schools in England – NSS quoted**

The Government has announced plans to remove a cap on new faith-based free schools which currently stops them from selecting more than half of pupils on the grounds of religion.

The National

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## **London mosque hosts preacher who said 'Zionists' run UK schools**

A southeast London mosque led by an extremist imam has hosted a preacher who railed against "Zionists running schools and hospitals" in the UK and has doubted the extent of Hamas atrocities on October 7.

The Times\*

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## **Christian education in primary schools does not breach human rights law, Appeal Court rules**

Exclusively Christian-focused religious education taught at primary schools in Northern Ireland does not breach human rights law, the Court of Appeal ruled on Tuesday.

Irish News

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### **Sheffield priest denies sex attacks on 11 women**

A former priest who led an evangelical church movement has denied sexually abusing members of his congregation.

BBC

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### **Five teenagers arrested after 'attempted kidnap' of Jewish man in Stamford Hill**

Five teenagers have been arrested over the alleged kidnap of a Jewish man in north London.

Evening Standard

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### **New Orleans archdiocese is target of child sex-trafficking inquiry, officials say**

The Roman Catholic archdiocese of New Orleans is the target of an active child sex-trafficking investigation, according to a sweeping and unprecedented search warrant Louisiana state police recently served on an organization that for decades has been submerged in the global church's clergy molestation scandal.

The Guardian

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### **Iranian teenager 'sexually assaulted and beaten to death' for anti-hijab protest**

A teenage Iranian girl who became a symbol for anti-hijab protests was sexually assaulted and then beaten to death by a radical branch of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corp (IRGC), new documents reveal.

The Telegraph\*

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### **Saudi Arabia activist sentenced to 11 years in prison for 'support' of women's rights**

A young women's rights activist in Saudi Arabia was secretly sentenced to 11 years in prison by an anti-terrorism court after being arrested for "her choice of clothing and support for women's rights".

The Guardian

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**Tue, 30 Apr 2024**

### **Faith based admissions in schools – NSS letter**

"It would be entirely wrongheaded to make faith schools – and by extension society – even more divided and discriminatory now, at the behest of Catholic bishops", writes NSS CEO Stephen Evans.

The Telegraph\*

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### **Sydenham priest James Murphy jailed for sex abuse**

A Catholic priest has been jailed for 31 months for sexually abusing young boys who were in his care in the 70s and 80s.

Local London

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### **Survivors say 'devil will be in the detail' of CofE's financial redress scheme**

"But ultimately, the Church and in particular, the Archbishops' Council, have to take responsibility", said Gilo, who is a leading advocate for those affected by abuse.

Premier Christian News

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### **Local election candidate apologises for sharing Hamas post**

A Green Party candidate in Thursday's local elections has apologised after he "unwittingly" shared footage of a Hamas press conference on social media.

Jewish News

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### **'Invisible in our own country': Being Muslim in Modi's India**

Ever since Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swept to power in 2014, India's 200 million-odd Muslims have had a turbulent journey.

BBC

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## **Secret document says Iran security forces molested and killed hijab protester**

As street protests spread across Iran in the autumn of 2022, Nika Shakarami's name was shouted by crowds furious at the compulsory hijab.

BBC

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## **Radicalised Sydney teenagers 'planned to target Jews'**

Police detain six male teenagers who are alleged to have formed a terror cell as investigation into the stabbing of Orthodox bishop continue.

The Times\*

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## **'Demolishing democracy': how much danger does Christian nationalism pose?**

Documentary Bad Faith looks at the history of a group trying to affect and corrupt politics under the guise of religion.

The Guardian

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## **Taliban's treatment of women under scrutiny at UN rights meeting**

The Taliban face criticism at a UN meeting, with Washington accusing them of systematically depriving women and girls of their human rights.

Reuters

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**Mon, 29 Apr 2024**

## **Gillian Keegan to axe 50pc rule on faith school admissions**

Gillian Keegan is to axe the 50 per cent cap on faith schools, ending a policy that forces institutions to keep half their places open for children of different religions.

The Telegraph\*

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### **'Liberal' Islamic think tank condemned for suggesting MPs should be 'called out' for having Jewish family members**

The head of a "liberal" Islamic think tank has been accused of "despicable" and "atrocious" comments after suggesting that Sir Keir Starmer should be "called out" for having Jewish family members.

The Yorkshire Post\*

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### **Regulator warns Muslim charity after chair delivers 'divisive' sermon on Palestine**

The Charity Commission has issued an official warning to an Islamic charity after its chair gave a sermon at its premises last year containing "inflammatory and divisive" content.

Civil Society

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### **Strictly Orthodox brand school regulation 'cultural genocide'**

A large contingent of protesters from the strictly Orthodox community have staged their latest protest outside parliament at attempts by the government to regulate religious Jewish schools, claiming the proposals amount to "cultural genocide".

Jewish News

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### **The Times view on illegal schools: Lessons in Conspiracy**

Establishments continue to teach extremism due to loopholes that must be closed

The Times\*

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## **Detectives launch investigation into 'attempted kidnap' of Jewish man in Stamford Hill**

Scotland Yard has launched an investigation into an alleged attempt to kidnap a Jewish man from a north London street.

Evening Standard

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## **Former church curate jailed for child sex abuse**

A former Church of England clergyman has been jailed for 11 years for abusing two altar boys.

BBC

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## **Sadiq Khan apologises to Chief Rabbi over interview remarks**

Sadiq Khan has contacted the Chief Rabbi to apologise for comments he made during a discussion about Islamophobia.

BBC

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## **Protesters call for Islamic state in Germany**

More than 1,000 people marched through Hamburg on Saturday calling for a caliphate in Germany.

The Telegraph\*

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## **Anti-abortion activists set to target women at clinics in Italy as new bill approved**

Activists opposed to abortion in Italy are expected to ramp up their targeting of clinics after being "emboldened" by an amendment to the law.

i News

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## **US: Columbia campus protester apologises for 'kill Zionists' comments**

A leader of students protesting the war in Gaza at Columbia University has apologised after video emerged of him saying "Zionists don't deserve to live".

BBC

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## **Human rights groups and diplomats condemn Iraq's anti-LGBTQ+ law**

Human rights groups and diplomats have criticised a law passed by the Iraqi parliament over the weekend that would impose heavy prison sentences on gay and transgender people.

The Guardian

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**Fri, 26 Apr 2024**

## **Exposed: the 'illegal school' teaching children conspiracy theories**

At a grimy former nightclub pupils are told how to survive a 'plot against humanity'. This is what our undercover reporter saw.

The Times\*

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## **Headband was worn in support of Hamas, judge finds**

A man has been found guilty of wearing a headband in support of Hamas at a pro-Palestine rally in central London.

BBC

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## **Lack of action on Iran could lead to more threats and attacks in UK, says journalist**

A former BBC journalist has said the UK government will "pay a heavy price" for its lack of action against the Iranian regime, which could lead to more "threats" and "operations" in Britain, after the stabbing of an Iranian journalist in London.

The Guardian

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## **Abuse survivors could be paid £660,000 in C of E's four-stage redress scheme**

The Church of England's redress scheme for survivors of abuse will be able to make awards ranging from £5000 to £660,000, it was announced on Thursday evening.

Church Times\*

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## **US: Police serve search warrant on New Orleans archdiocese in child sex abuse case**

Louisiana state police went into the office of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of New Orleans on Thursday to begin the process of collecting records from the organization spanning the history of its decades-old clerical abuse scandal, as troopers investigate whether the local church hierarchy illegally covered up systemic child molestation.

The Guardian

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## **Canada: Legacy Christian Academy considering closing its doors in wake of abuse allegations**

A controversial Christian school in Saskatoon may close its doors at the end of June in the wake of abuse allegations and ongoing criminal court cases, according to a letter.

CBC

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## **Russian Orthodox Church suspends priest who prayed at Navalny's grave**

A Russian Orthodox priest who led a memorial service last month at the grave of late opposition leader Alexei Navalny has been suspended from clerical duties and ordered to serve three years of "penance".

Premier Christian News

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