

Daily media briefing

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Fri, 19 Jan 2024

[Prince William told to abdicate if he snubs Church of England role](#)

The late Queen Elizabeth's former chaplain made a stark warning against the Prince of Wales after the latest bombshell claims in a new royal book.

Express

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[Religion and diversity in NI schools: 'Very limited, if any, success', says report](#)

The study by Queen's University Belfast has looked at the religious make-up of schools in the north and compares it to around the time of the Agreement in 1998.

Irish News

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[Nuns jailed over 'cruel and unnatural' abuse of vulnerable youngsters at notorious orphanage](#)

Sisters Sarah McDermott and Eileen Igoe, along with care worker Margaret Hughes were sentenced to three years each.

Daily Mail

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Jehovah's Witnesses go to trial against Norway after state registration is revoked

The trial will determine whether some practices of the Jehovah's Witnesses violate Norway's Religious Communities Act.

Religion News Service

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Thu, 18 Jan 2024

Psychologist reports 'significant harm' after closure of Independent Safeguarding Board

David Glasgow published a report based on interviews with victims of abuse awaiting a review of their case when two members of the ISB were sacked.

Church Times*

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Child sex abuse inquiry chair 'frustrated' at lack of action on recommendations

Professor Alexis Jay cited the lack of an 'in-built follow-up' requirement to check on progress by Government as a weakness of public inquiries.

Shrophshire Star

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Katharine Birbalsingh defends ban on school prayers in high court

Headteacher of London school Michaela says policy is vital to ensure 'children of all races and religions can thrive'.

The Guardian

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'Would King William really break with the Church of England?'

"William, a 41 year old man, is thought to be one of life's casual Christians at best", writes Alexander Larman.

The Spectator*

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Letters: Assisted dying debate

"In 2021 the BMA dropped its opposition to assisted dying, instead adopting a neutral position. It is not only inside parliament where views on assisted dying have shifted."

The Times*

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Should Australian parliaments axe the Lord's Prayer? In Victoria it's up for debate

Every parliament, except the ACT, features the Christian prayer. But it hasn't always been the case, and some say it's time to change.

The Guardian

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Malaysia court charges filmmakers for 'wounding religious feelings'

The director and producer of local film, "Mentega Terbang", were charged under the penal code and face a one-year jail sentence and fines if convicted.

Reuters

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El Salvador woman freed after abortion conviction

A Salvadoran woman has been freed from prison more than seven years after she was convicted for having an abortion.

BBC

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Polish MP who doused Hanukkah candles loses immunity

After extinguishing the candles, the politician described Hanukkah as "satanic" and said he was restoring "normality".

BBC

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Wed, 17 Jan 2024

'Assisted dying law is closer than you think'

"The Conservatives would be foolish to ignore voter support for a new bill and let Sir Keir Starmer steal the initiative", writes Daniel Finkelstein.

The Times*

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Pupil takes school to court over alleged prayer ban

A school led by former government social mobility tsar Katharine Birbalsingh is being challenged in the High Court over a policy allegedly amounting to a "prayer ban".

BBC

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Could Prince William be first monarch in five centuries not to be head of the Church of England?

Future King isn't a regular churchgoer and 'is not instinctively comfortable in a faith environment'.

Daily Mail

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Abortion clinic protest laws to be watered down by James Cleverly

Home Office draft guidance would allow protesters to engage in 'silent prayer' and approach women with leaflets inside 150m-wide buffer zones, despite MPs voting to block such activity.

iNews

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'I will do whatever is necessary to vanquish terrorism. That's why we are proscribing Hizb ut-Tahrir'

"The Government will not let extremist groups abuse our freedom of speech to radicalise in Britain", writes James Cleverly.

The Telegraph*

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'Are Indian agents targeting British Sikhs?'

"The question has arisen after it was revealed that some Sikhs have been issued with 'threat to life' warnings by West Midlands police", writes Jawad Iqbal.

The Spectator*

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Suspected Kenyan cult leader to be charged with terrorism after 400 deaths

Prosecutors say they intend to charge Paul Nthenge Mackenzie and dozens of other suspects with murder and terrorism.

The Guardian

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US: The three-decade saga that led to the Crown Heights tunnels

How a group of anti-establishment yeshiva students from the Israeli city of Tzfat took control of the Chabad-Lubavitch synagogue in Brooklyn and started digging.

The Guardian

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Benzema files defamation suit against French interior minister

Gérald Darmanin said in October that Mr Benzema "has a notorious link" with the Muslim Brotherhood.

BBC

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Tue, 16 Jan 2024

Home Office to ban Hizb ut-Tahrir as terror group

One of the most controversial Islamist groups in the UK, Hizb ut-Tahrir, is to be banned as a terrorist organisation, accused of praising the Hamas attacks.

BBC

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Welby 'should quit' over claims he backed Paula Vennells to be Bishop of London

Late Queen's chaplain calls for Archbishop of Canterbury to resign over alleged support for disgraced former Post Office boss.

The Telegraph*

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Pope Francis: I feel lonely and isolated over gay blessings

Conservative bishops say they will boycott the Vatican's decision to allow the blessing of same-sex couples.

The Times*

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Iran sentences Nobel laureate Narges Mohammadi to additional prison term

Iran's Revolutionary Court has sentenced Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi to an additional 15 months in prison.

BBC

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India: Transforming a flashpoint holy city into the 'Hindu Vatican'

A multi-billion dollar makeover has seen swathes of the city bulldozed to turn it into what some Hindu nationalist leaders are calling a "Hindu Vatican".

BBC

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Australia: Child abuse detectives reportedly search home of former bishop

Christopher Saunders denies allegations he sexually assaulted and groomed young Aboriginal men.

The Guardian

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Kenya: Former PM criticises FGM and circumcision

Raila Odinga has sparked a fervent debate by voicing his strong opposition to the practices of circumcision and Female Genital Mutilation.

BNN Breaking

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Mon, 15 Jan 2024

Sikhs given ‘threat to life’ notices fear link to India

Sikhs living in Britain have been warned by police that their lives are in danger amid increased tensions over the separatist movement in India and claims of intimidation by Narendra Modi’s regime.

The Times*

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‘What has Christianity to do with Western values?’

Nick Cohen on Ayaan Hirsi Ali’s conversion to Christianity and the problem with seeing Western values as inherently ‘Christian’.

The Freethinker

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Palestine protesters chant in support of Houthi rebels

A group of protesters in central London reportedly chanted in support of Houthi militants on Saturday.

The Jewish Chronicle

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Spanish bishops publish sex abuse report after disputing previous inquiry's findings

Spain's bishops have disputed the findings of a report which they commissioned almost two years ago on sex abuse in the Spanish Church. They have now published their own report which is notably more favourable to the Church than the previous report.

The Tablet

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A Denmark terror case has 'links' to Hamas, a prosecutor tells local media

A Danish prosecutor said Friday that an investigation that led to the arrests of three suspects in Denmark last month on suspicion of plotting to carry out "an act of terror" was linked to Hamas, according to a local media report.

Associated Press

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Italy's justice minister blocks extradition of priest sought by Argentina in murder-torture cases

Italy's justice minister has ruled against the extradition of a former chaplain sought in Argentina on charges of murder and torture during the South American country's last military dictatorship, human rights advocates said Friday.

Associated Press

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TB Joshua exposé: How the disgraced pastor faked his miracles

How late Nigerian televangelist TB Joshua faked the miracles that drew millions of people to his church has been revealed.

BBC

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Priest in Moscow faces expulsion for refusing to pray for war victory

A prominent liberal priest in Moscow faces expulsion from the Russian Orthodox Church for refusing to read out a prayer asking God to guide Russia to victory over Ukraine.

Premier Christian News

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Protest in Georgian capital amid anger over 'desecration' of Stalin icon

A large protest was held in Tbilisi on Saturday to demand harsh punishment for a woman accused of defacing a religious icon depicting Soviet dictator Josef Stalin which was recently-installed in the Georgian capital.

Reuters

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Australia: Catholic bishop accused of child sexual abuse stripped of charity control

The Catholic bishop Christopher Saunders, who is accused of sexually assaulting and grooming young Aboriginal men, has been removed as the person responsible for nine Broome diocese charities, records show.

The Guardian

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Iran frees Niloufar Hamedei and Elaheh Mohammadi, jailed for covering Mahsa Amini death

Iran has freed two female journalists jailed for more than a year for covering the death of Mahsa Amini, which triggered nationwide protests.

BBC

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Fri, 12 Jan 2024

Chair of Church of England evangelical group says it opposes conversion therapy, after social-media furore

The Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS) is opposed to conversion therapy, it says, in response to criticism of a statement on the charity's website which refers to same-sex relations.

Church Times*

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Georgian Orthodox Church calls for Stalin religious icon to be changed

The Georgian Orthodox Church has called for changes to an icon depicting Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin hung in a cathedral in the capital, Tbilisi.

BBC

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Taliban arresting women protesting education ban under pretext of ‘bad hijab’ law, say Afghan activists

Activists in Kabul say the Taliban is rounding up and detaining women and girls under the pretext a draconian law on improperly worn headscarves.

The Independent*

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Africa’s Catholic hierarchy defies Vatican by refusing same-sex blessings

In the greatest rebuke yet to Pope Francis, the Catholic bishops of Africa and Madagascar issued a unified statement Thursday refusing to follow his declaration allowing priests to offer blessings to same-sex couples and asserting that such unions are "contrary to the will of God."

Associated Press

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Netflix removes Nayanthara film after backlash from Hindu groups

An Indian film that received backlash for "hurting Hindu religious sentiments" has been removed from Netflix, days after it began streaming.

BBC

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US: Sexual abuse case against defrocked cardinal suspended

A Wisconsin judge suspended charges against defrocked Roman Catholic Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, accused of sexually assaulting a boy in the 1970s, ruling Wednesday that the former cleric is incompetent for trial because of dementia.

Associated Press

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Thu, 11 Jan 2024

Church of England evangelical group delete statement on same-sex relationships after backlash

A recent statement endorsing the Evangelical Alliance's affirmations on human sexuality is no longer available on the Church Pastoral Aid Society's website, after its publication received major backlash online.

Premier Christian News

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Christian barman sacked for telling lesbian colleague 'God will forgive' has his discrimination claim thrown out

A Christian Wetherspoons barman who sued the pub chain for discrimination after he was sacked for replying 'God will forgive you' to a lesbian colleague has had his case thrown out.

Daily Mail

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Defacing of Stalin icon exposes deep divisions in his home country Georgia

Georgian authorities are investigating the defacing of a recently-installed icon in Tbilisi's main cathedral depicting Josef Stalin, a case that has exposed deep divisions in Georgia over the former Soviet dictator's legacy in his homeland.

Reuters

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A spiritual leader in Nepal known as 'Buddha Boy' arrested on charges of rape and kidnapping

A controversial Nepalese spiritual leader known as "Buddha Boy" was arrested on charges of sexually assaulting a minor and involvement in the disappearance of at least four of his followers from his camps, police said Wednesday.

Associated Press

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