

Daily media briefing

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Tue, 3 Oct 2023

[Pope suggests Catholic Church could bless same-sex couples](#)

Pope Francis has suggested he would be open to having the Catholic Church bless same-sex couples. Responding to a group of cardinals who asked him for clarity on the issue, he said any request for a blessing should be treated with "pastoral charity".

BBC

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[US: Fresno becomes second US city after Seattle to ban caste discrimination](#)

Fresno in California is now the second US city to ban caste discrimination as authorities marked caste and indigeneity under two new protected categories into its municipal code.

The Independent*

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[US: Episcopalian Bishops speak of 'pain' of clergy disciplinary cases](#)

The House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in the United States has acknowledged the "disappointment, pain, and grief" felt by many in the Church over the handling of recent disciplinary cases against bishops.

Church Times*

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How Manipur mob violence and gang rapes ‘shamed’ India

India's prime minister has acknowledged the escalating brutality but failed to mention its ethnic character or lack of action by police

The Times*

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Marriage equality eludes Japan's same-sex couples

Japan is the only G7 country not to fully recognise same-sex couples or offer them clear legal protection, leaving the country's LGBTQ+ community feeling vulnerable and nearly invisible.

BBC

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Mon, 2 Oct 2023

Catholic and C of E primary schools in England ‘take fewer SEND pupils’ – NSS quoted

Church of England and Roman Catholic primary schools take fewer pupils with disabilities or special needs than other local schools in England, according to research that suggests faith-based admissions requirements deter pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Guardian

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Suella Braverman turns down Archbishop of Canterbury talks over immigration

Home secretary Suella Braverman has turned down an invitation to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury over his concerns about her approach to immigration, according to reports.

The Independent*

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Priest asks EHRC for statutory review of racism in Church of England

A priest who uncovered a letter in which a bishop described him in racial stereotypes has asked the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to investigate racism in the Church of England.

Church Times*

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Scottish politicians 'influenced by religion' when voting

Almost two-thirds of MSPs want more freedom to vote with their conscience, a survey of Holyrood politicians has found.

The Herald

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Top Indian diplomat blocked from Glasgow gurdwara visit

India has complained to the Foreign Office after a top diplomat was confronted by protesters at a gurdwara in Glasgow. The High Commission of India said Vikram Doraiswami had been invited to the place of worship to discuss community and consular issues.

BBC

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Relationship between bishops and government could be "unfixable" after migration clashes

A former senior advisor to Bishops in the House of Lords has said their relationship with Government could be "unfixable" after the two groups have repeatedly clashed over illegal migration.

Politics Home

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A Belgian bishop says the Vatican has for years snubbed pleas to defrock a pedophile ex-colleague

A prominent Belgian bishop on Wednesday criticized the Vatican for failing to defrock a former bishop who admitted sexually abusing children, saying it had led to massive frustration with the

highest Roman Catholic authorities.

Associated Press

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Baltimore Archdiocese files for bankruptcy before new law on abuse lawsuits takes effect

The Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore on Friday filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization days before a new state law goes into effect removing the statute of limitations on child sex abuse claims and allowing victims to sue their abusers decades after the fact.

Associated Press

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US Episcopalian Sunday figures nearly halved over past decade

Sunday attendance at Episcopal churches in the United States has almost halved in the past decade. It has fallen by 43 per cent to an average of 373,000.

Church Times*

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At least 59 people killed in twin attacks on mosques in Pakistan

At least 59 people have died in bomb attacks on two mosques in Pakistan as the country's deteriorating security situation was laid bare on a public holiday held to celebrate the prophet Muhammad's birthday.

The Guardian

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LGBT+ Ugandans tortured, starving and evicted due to anti-gay law

Less than four months on from the Anti-Homosexuality Act being signed in Uganda, gay and trans people are starving, homeless and facing increasing persecution.

ITV

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Canada's Sikhs are grateful - and afraid - after Trudeau's India allegations

Canadian Sikhs are grateful to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for giving voice to their fears and standing up to India at the risk of severe backlash from New Delhi, which he said could be linked to the murder of a Sikh separatist leader.

Reuters

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Fri, 29 Sep 2023

Disgraced Soul Survivor vicar Mike Pilavachi could be banned from working with children

It comes amid calls for the charismatic evangelist to be stripped of his MBE following concerns about his leadership spanning 40 years.

The Telegraph*

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British Sikhs concerned over lack of security advice after activist's murder in Canada

Sikh Federation wants ministers to set out how UK activists will be protected, after killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

The Guardian

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Abortion protest buffer zones take effect in NI

Anti-abortion protests can no longer be held directly outside specific health clinics in Northern Ireland where abortions are carried out.

BBC

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Pope's own abuse commission blasts system that leaves victims 'wounded and in the dark'

An advisory body created by Pope Francis in 2014 has condemned what they described as a failure on the part of Church authorities in abuse prevention.

Crux

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China's persecution of Uyghurs extends to those it once favoured

The punishment of Rahile Dawut speaks volumes.

The Economist*

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Disabled Muslim man lynched in Delhi after eating at Hindu temple

Family says he was not a thief and had picked up food from the offering because he was hungry.

Independent

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9/11 suspect 'admitted White House was fourth target'

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed made 'voluntary confession' at Guantanamo, court told.

The Times*

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Thu, 28 Sep 2023

First look at Coronation Street's first gay wedding

As they prepared for their ceremony, the couple realised they would have to compromise on certain details and go for a civil ceremony as the Church of England still does not allow same-sex marriages.

The Sun

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No 10 backs threat to leave human rights convention

Suella Braverman has been authorised by Downing Street to float the prospect of leaving the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Times*

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Anglesey dad fears Buddhist group brainwashed son

Elwyn Lloyd-Jones, of Penmon, Anglesey, is one of several people who have raised concerns about the New Kadampa Tradition.

BBC

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Victims of church abuse march to Rome

A group of Catholic Church abuse victims and their advocates have called on Pope Francis to enforce "zero tolerance" against clerical sex abuse, after completing a six-day pilgrimage to Rome carrying a large wooden cross.

Premier Christian News

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Persecution of Mallorca's Jews finally acknowledged

After centuries of disdain, shame and silence, regional parliament recognises suffering of xuetes, forced to convert to Catholicism in 1400s.

The Guardian

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UN criticises France's ban on its Olympic athletes wearing headscarves

Dress codes should not be imposed on women, spokesperson says, after Paris Games ban affecting French athletes.

The Guardian

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Netanyahu calls for calm after Tel Aviv Yom Kippur clash

Secular and religious Israelis clashed in Dizengoff Square after activists attempted to segregate worship.

The Jewish Chronicle

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Killing of Canadian Sikh leader reignites historic fight

Decades-long separatist movement gets new fire with 'credible allegations' that India is behind murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

The Guardian

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US: As Muslims' status as political punching bag fades, some are fighting against LGBTQ+ acceptance

In battles against LGBTQ+ acceptance, it is often white evangelicals pushing for book bans or boycotts over beer brands or bathing suits. In this case, Muslims are leading the fight.

LA Times

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Wed, 27 Sep 2023

Majority of religious people back legalising assisted dying, poll suggests

More than two thirds of religious people said they would support a UK assisted dying law in polling described by campaigners as showing the public is "crying out for change".

Express and Star

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Ofcom fines Islam Channel £40,000 after it broadcasts antisemitic documentary

Broadcasting watchdog fines the Islam Channel over broadcast of The Andinia Plan - a one-hour documentary examining a conspiracy theory which originated in a neo-Nazi publication.

Jewish News

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Scotland: Anger at speed of progress on buffer zones at abortion clinics

The call comes as the 40 Days for Life group begins its latest six-week presence outside abortion facilities.

BBC

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Objections were small beer, says pint-pulling vicar

Beer pumps set up inside a church as part of a town's cultural festival proved a success — but were a step too far for some members of the congregation.

Church Times*

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Inside the vast digital campaign by Hindu nationalists to inflame India

It is part of a wider effort by the right-wing forces to wield technology in pursuit of a Hindu nationalist agenda that seeks to marginalise religious minorities and suppress criticism.

The Washington Post*

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Can the Pope survive the Rupnik scandal?

Rome is wondering what he knew about historic crimes.

UnHerd

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US: Less-redacted report on Maryland church abuse still redacts names of church leaders

The names of five Catholic church leaders remained redacted amid ongoing appeals, prompting criticism of the church by victims' advocates.

Independent

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Fights break out in Tel Aviv over gender segregated Yom Kippur service

An orthodox group attempted to enforce a traditional service despite Supreme Court ban.

The Jewish Chronicle

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Florida's controversial new SAT alternative

It's been called the "Christian-backed" SAT, which isn't entirely incorrect, as before this month the test was only accepted in admissions to private, faith-based colleges.

The Guardian

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Kent doctor given warning for praying with patient during mental health appointment

The 73-page findings said: "This conduct does not meet with the standards required of a doctor and his actions have undermined public confidence and the public's trust in the medical profession."

KentLive

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Tue, 26 Sep 2023

Archbishops' Council is retraumatising us, says group of abuse survivors

Ten survivors of church-based abuse have written to the Archbishops' Council criticising their treatment after the Independent Safeguarding Board was disbanded.

Church Times*

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Mike Pilavachi could face ban on working with children following DBS referral

The founder and former leader of Soul Survivor Watford has been referred to the Home Office's Disclosure and Barring Service.

Premier Christian News

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Letters: C of E is failing to plan for future of establishment

"It should then offer to lay down its unsustainable inherited privileges while defending the equal public status of faith for all: a "kenotic" gesture that might even win it new support", writes Jonathan Chaplin.

Church Times*

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Assisted dying: Grieving son calls for law change

James Johnson, from Hampshire, said his mother had to spend her life savings to have "control over her death".

BBC

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Oxford woman who shared Islamist extremist content to serve four years in prison

Roma Iqbal, 23, shared publications online that had Islamist extremist content in them and has now been sentenced following an investigation.

Oxfordshire Live

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Safe Access Zones around clinics providing lawful abortions to be introduced in Northern Ireland

Safe Access Zones around clinics providing lawful abortions will be introduced at health service locations across Northern Ireland on Friday.

ITV

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Alternative Catholic synod to push case for ordination of women priests

Event organisers say it's 'crunch time' for pope as scandal and bigotry drive Church members to leave.

The Guardian

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- [21](#)
- [22](#)
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- [25](#)
- [26](#)
- [27](#)
- [28](#)

- [29](#)
- [30](#)
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