

Daily media briefing

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Tue, 15 Aug 2023

[Russian Orthodox priests face persecution from state and church for supporting peace in Ukraine](#)

Last September, when President Vladimir Putin ordered a partial mobilization of reservists, Moscow Patriarch Kirill required his clergymen to pray for victory. Standing in front of the altar and dozens of his parishioners in one of Moscow's churches, the Rev. Ioann Koval decided to put the peace above the patriarch's orders.

Associated Press

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[US: New Jersey court backs Catholic school in firing of unmarried pregnant teacher](#)

A Catholic school was within its rights to deny an art teacher a contract renewal after the instructor became pregnant out-of-wedlock, the Supreme Court of New Jersey ruled Monday.

Washington Times*

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Israel may uproot ancient Christian mosaic near Armageddon. Where it could go next sparks outcry

An ancient Christian mosaic bearing an early reference to Jesus as God is at the center of a controversy that has riled archaeologists: Should the centuries-old decorated floor, which is near what's believed to be the site of the prophesied Armageddon, be uprooted and loaned to a U.S. museum that has been criticized for past acquisition practices?

Associated Press

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Israel: Jewish teens 'told to sit at the back of the bus to avoid offending strictly-Orthodox'

A group of teenage girls wearing shorts and tank-tops were ordered to sit in the back of the bus in Israel in order not to offend strictly-Orthodox passengers.

Jewish News

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Lakhimpur case: Life in jail for India sisters' rape and hanging

A court in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh has sentenced two men to life in prison for raping and murdering two Dalit sisters last year. Two other convicts were found guilty of destroying evidence and were sent to jail for six years each. The convicts are likely to appeal in the high court.

BBC

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Mon, 14 Aug 2023

I was abused as a choirboy. Decades later the Church of England betrayed me again

A victim who reported his ordeal says the church lied during the trial and then threatened to withdraw his compensation. Dozens of other cases are tearing the synod apart.

The Times*

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Fourth abortion charge in eight months — after only three trials in the past 160 years

A woman is due in court this week accused of carrying out her own abortion — the fourth to appear before a judge on similar charges in eight months.

The Times*

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Britain warns of possible terrorist attacks in Sweden

Britain on Sunday warned citizens going to Sweden of possible terrorist attacks following Quran burnings by anti-Islam activists that have outraged some Muslims.

Reuters

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U.S. Department of Education reaffirms Baylor's religious exemption in response to sexual harassment complaints

The U.S Department of Education exempted Baylor University from sexual harassment claims regulated under Title IX last month after the Christian university asked the agency to dismiss discrimination complaints made by students, arguing that the claims were inconsistent with the university's religious tenets.

Texas Tribune

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Oklahoma sued for funding US's first 'state-sponsored' religious school

Lawsuit seeks to stop state from sponsoring Catholic virtual school amid a fierce debate surrounding religious liberties.

The Guardian

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Iran attack: Shiraz shrine shooting leaves at least one dead

One person was killed and eight wounded in a "terrorist" attack at a Shia Muslim shrine in the Iranian city of Shiraz on Sunday, state media reported. The official Irna news agency said a gunman attempted to enter the Shah Cheragh mausoleum and opened fire on visitors before he could be subdued.

BBC

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Uganda president defiant after World Bank suspends funding over LGBT law

Museveni denounced the decision to suspend new funding in response to a harsh anti-LGBTQ law and vowed to find alternative sources of credit.

Reuters

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Thousands of Afghan judges and legal staff remain at risk post-Taliban takeover

Nearly 4,000 prosecutors and legal staff members face the threat of violence from the Taliban in Afghanistan, where at least 28 prosecutors and their families have reportedly been killed.

The Guardian

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Fri, 11 Aug 2023

Smyth survivors still waiting, five years after being promised church review

It is five years this week since the "lessons-learned" review of the abuse perpetrated by John Smyth was promised, and ten years since the Archbishop of Canterbury was formally told about the abuse.

Church Times*

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Law society ends prayers before meals

One of the UK's oldest legal institutions, Lincoln's Inn has decided to replace saying Grace before meals with a moment of reflection giving thanks instead.

Premier Christian News

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Banned jihadi group in push to 'infiltrate' UK campuses

Members of the British branch of Hizb ut-Tahrir, which argues for the destruction of Israel, have been keynote speakers at UK universities.

The Jewish Chronicle

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At least 25 Scots end their life in Swiss clinics

Charity claims most people in Scotland back legalising assisted dying as MSP's bill goes through parliament.

The Times*

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Israel's supreme court prepares to rule on its own fate

Many Israelis fear that the overhaul will weaken the court as a check on the government, currently the most right-wing and religiously conservative in Israeli history.

The New York Times*

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Indian opposition walks out as Narendra Modi refuses to discuss Manipur conflict

PM attacks opposition parties during no-confidence motion called to force him to address ethnic violence in far-east.

The Guardian

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The Times view on Taliban treatment of women

Taliban leaders deserve to be prosecuted for destroying female education.

The Times*

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Thu, 10 Aug 2023

'It's time to end mandatory Christian worship in British schools' – NSS quoted

"New census data and a report on religion in the UK call into question the longstanding relationship between the Church of England and British public schools", writes Kafia Ahmad.

Analyst News

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Bishops back calls to ‘scrap the cap’ on faith-based school admissions

A number of Catholic Bishops have declared their support for a campaign to lift the 50 per cent cap on faith-based admissions to new free schools.

Premier Christian News

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David Miller condemned after vowing to make list of 'over-represented Jews'

Former University of Bristol academic said 'classical antisemitism' doesn't really exist anymore.

The Jewish Chronicle

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Why one BBC drama is shedding light on Ireland’s church-run abuse factories

When Bafta nominee Joe Murtagh learned about the Magdalene Laundries, he realised he had to tell their tale.

The Guardian

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US: Maryland families say LGBTQ school readings violate religious beliefs

In a lawsuit, several Montgomery County families are asking a judge for an opt-out from such materials

The Washington Post*

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US: Teen accused of stabbing O’Shae Sibley is a ‘good Christian boy’

A teenager accused of fatally stabbing O'Shae Sibley in an alleged racist and homophobic attack was described by his lawyer as a "good Christian boy".

Independent

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Lebanon in move to ban Barbie film for ‘promoting homosexuality’

Culture minister asks general security agency to act to prevent screening as anti-LGBT rhetoric ramps up.

The Guardian

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‘Narendra Modi has ignored religious violence for too long. Now he must face the music’

"Bloodshed in Manipur is just the latest example of sweeping ethnic frictions. The PM must show he is the solution, not the problem", writes Priya Sharma.

The Guardian

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Wed, 9 Aug 2023

New group asked to provide ‘insight’ on prayers to bless same-sex couples

A new group created by the co-chairs of the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) Steering Group is to meet next month.

Church Times*

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Interim manager appointed to religious charity amid ‘unresolved dispute’

The regulator opened a statutory inquiry last year into Dudley Central Mosque and Muslim Community Centre because of concerns about governance issues.

Third Sector*

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Tories could campaign to leave ECHR if Rwanda flights blocked

Senior Conservatives say their party is likely to campaign to leave the European Convention on Human Rights if Rwanda flights continue to be blocked.

BBC

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Church treasurer jailed after stealing £24,000 for 'retail therapy'

A church treasurer has been jailed after stealing £24,000 from a church in Hertfordshire.

Premier Christian News

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Lifetime ban for antisemitic Chelsea fan who called Jews 'vermin'

A Chelsea fan who referred to Jews as "vermin" in a lengthy series of racist social media posts has been handed a lifetime ban by Chelsea Football Club.

Jewish News

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Iraq bans media from using term 'homosexuality'

Iraq's media regulator ordered all media companies operating in the state not to use the term "homosexuality" and instead to say "sexual deviance".

Reuters

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Ohio vote delivers win for abortion-rights supporters

Ohio has rejected a Republican motion to make it harder to change the state's constitution - a move seen as a defeat for anti-abortion groups.

BBC

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US: Judge orders attorneys to take 'religious liberty training' from ADF

The lawyers must take an eight-hour session from Alliance Defending Freedom, an influential legal group behind anti-abortion and anti-LGBT+ litigation.

Independent

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Tue, 8 Aug 2023

Sex education: 'False information' being spread about lessons

A "false information campaign" is circulating about relationship and sex education in Northern Ireland, the Department of Education has said.

BBC

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Islamist preacher Anjem Choudary appears in court

Islamist preacher Anjem Choudary has appeared in court accused of leading banned militant network Al-Muhajiroun.

Daily Mail

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Investigating the 'spiritual healers' sexually abusing women

Spiritual healing, also known as "Quranic healing", is a popular practice in the Arab and Muslim world.

BBC

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Australia: Catholic Church challenges family's Pell child abuse claims

The Catholic Church is challenging a ruling that would allow the father of a choirboy to sue over allegations of child sexual abuse by Cardinal George Pell.

Canberra Times

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Judge: Texas' abortion ban is too restrictive for women with pregnancy complications

A judge ruled the state's abortion ban is too restrictive for women with serious pregnancy complications.

AP News

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Ghislaine Maxwell allegedly getting prison perks after declaring herself Jewish

Jewish inmates are entitled to kosher food, time off for Shabbat and access to a rabbi for counselling purposes as well as grape juice and bread for prayers.

The Jewish Chronicle

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IOC could ban Iran from Olympics over human rights abuses

The International Olympic Committee stands ready to ban Iranian athletes next year's Olympic Games in Paris if human rights abuses in the country continue.

City A.M.

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Mon, 7 Aug 2023

Bishop and ex-chair of Soul Survivor investigated for 'ignoring abuse'

Church of England look into allegation Bishop Graham Cray did not act on safeguarding concerns over Mike Pilavachi's behaviour.

The Telegraph*

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Regulator criticises Jehovah's Witness charity as it concludes long-running inquiry

The Charity Commission says responses from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Britain were not as 'straightforward and as transparent as they should have been'.

Third Sector*

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Documentary: Religious views in British politics – NSS featured

NSS president Keith Porteous Wood (1:45) explains in this City University documentary why we should be as free to express, and criticise, religious beliefs as any other beliefs.

Solape Alatisé

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Iran forces women defying hijab laws into psychiatric treatment

Iranian judges recently "diagnosed" Iranian actress Azadeh Samadi with an "antisocial personality disorder" after she wore a hat instead of a hijab at a funeral.

France 24

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'Blasphemous Barbie': doll dressed as Jesus causing fury

Two artists in Argentina have come under fire after creating Barbie dolls depicting Christ and a number of Catholic saints.

Premier Christian News

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'Evil does exist': Louisiana victim of Catholic priest abuse urges reform

Tim Gioe, who was groomed as a child, is pressing for parental consent to be obtained before priests are left alone with children.

The Guardian

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Defence minister: Niger coup weakens fight against terror in Africa

Several terror Islamist terror groups including Boko Haram, Islamic State in the Greater Sahara and Al-Qaeda's local branch are regaining strength.

France 24

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