

News

Pope Defrocks Chilean Priest at Center of Abuse Scandal

88-year-old Rev. Fernando Karadima was sanctioned in 2011 to live a lifetime of ‘penance and prayer’

By Nicole Winfield
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has defrocked a Chilean priest who was a central character in the global sex abuse scandal rocking his papacy, invoking his “supreme” authority to stiffen an earlier sentence because of the “exceptional amount of damage” the priest’s crimes had caused.

In a statement Friday, the Vatican said Francis had laicized 88-year-old Rev. Fernando Karadima, who was originally sanc-

tioned in 2011 to live a lifetime of “penance and prayer” for having sexually abused minors in the upscale Santiago parish he ran.

The Vatican said Francis was doing so for “the good of the church.”

“It is without doubt an exceptional measure, but Karadima’s grave crimes have caused exceptional damage in Chile,” Vatican spokesman Greg Burke said.

The “penance and prayer” sanction has been the Vatican’s punishment of choice for el-

derly priests convicted of raping and molesting children. It has long been criticized by victims as too soft and essentially an all-expenses-paid retirement, and Karadima’s whistleblowers had pressed for it to be toughened.

The Vatican cited no new evidence or crime that prompted Francis to revisit the case and impose what clergy consider to be the equivalent of a death sentence. It said he acted out of his conscience and as a pastor, referencing the canon



In this Nov. 11, 2015 file photo, Fernando Karadima is escorted from a court, after testifying in a case that three of his victims brought against the country’s Catholic Church in Santiago, Chile. Late last week Pope Francis defrocked Karadima, a priest at the center of the global sex abuse scandal rocking his papacy, invoking his “supreme” authority to stiffen a sentence originally handed down by a Vatican court in 2011. Kardima was informed of the defrocking on Friday.

that lays out the pope’s “supreme, full, immediate and universal power” to serve the people of God.

The statement said the decree, signed Thursday, takes effect immediately and that Karadima was informed of it Friday.

The decision appeared aimed at showing a get-tough approach to sex abuse after a series of missteps by Francis and accusations by a former Vatican ambassador that Francis had rehabilitated a now-disgraced former American cardinal early on in his papacy.

The move was welcomed by Chilean victims as overdue.

“I never thought I’d see this day,” said Juan Carlos Cruz, a survivor of Karadima’s abuse who has been a key driver in pushing for justice for

victims and an overhaul of the Chilean church hierarchy.

Thanking Francis, Cruz tweeted: “I hope many survivors feel a bit of relief today.”

While some conservative critics might bristle at another display of raw papal power from the Argentine Jesuit, U.S. canon lawyer Nick Cafardi said Francis was acting fully within his legal right to revisit the case since there’s no such thing as double jeopardy in canon law.

“The pope has the ability to intensify a penalty,” Cafardi said in an email.

Francis sparked a crisis in his papacy earlier this year when he strongly defended one of Karadima’s protégés, Bishop Juan Barros, against accusations that he had witnessed Karadima’s abuse and ignored it.

Francis had claimed that the accusations against Barros were “calumny” and politically motivated, and he defended his 2015 decision to appoint Barros bishop of a small Chilean diocese over the objections of the faithful and many in the Chilean hierarchy.

After realizing that something was amiss, Francis ordered a Vatican investigation that uncovered decades of abuse and cover-ups by the Chilean church leadership. Francis apologized to the victims, inviting Cruz and fellow survivors James Hamilton and Jose Andres Murillo to the Vatican for four days of talks. He set about making amends, including getting every active bishop in Chile to offer to resign.

To date, he has accepted seven of the more than 30 resignations offered, including that of Barros.

It was the second time in a month that Francis has laicized a Chilean priest, after five years in which the Vatican appeared to favor less drastic sentences.

On Sept. 15, the archdiocese of Santiago announced that Francis had defrocked the Rev. Christian Precht, citing the Latin terminology — “ex officio et pro bono Ecclesiae” — on his own authority and for the good of the church.

Read the rest of this story at
TheSkanner.com



520 SW 3rd Ave. Portland, OR

(503)796-9250

Avalonflowers@msn.com

avalonflowerspdx.com

Avalon Flowers

Creative, original designs

Anniversaries, weddings, funerals, birthdays!

Need health insurance?

CareOregon’s goMobile Team can help you sign up for Oregon Health Plan (OHP).



SNAP assistance available at ALL locations



- MULTNOMAH COUNTY**

CAREOREGON
315 SW 5th Ave, Portland

Oct 3.....9-11 a.m.
Oct 109-11 a.m.
Oct 17.....9-11 a.m.
Oct 24.....9-11 a.m.
Oct 31.....9-11 a.m.

CLACKAMAS SERVICE CENTER
8800 SE 80th Ave, Portland

Oct 9.....10-12 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
50 SW 2nd Ave, Portland

Oct 2.....9-11 a.m.
Oct 9.....9-11 a.m.
Oct 169-11 a.m.
Oct 23.....9-11 a.m.
Oct 30.....9-11 a.m.

- JOIN**
1435 NE 81st Ave, Ste 100, Portland

Oct 1112-2 p.m.

PORTLAND RESCUE MISSION
111 W Burnside, Portland

Oct 118-10 a.m.
Oct 25.....8-10 a.m.

UNION GOSPEL MISSION
3 NW 3rd, Portland

Oct 23.....2-4 p.m.

WORKSOURCE GRESHAM
19421 SE Stark St, Portland

Oct 4.....2-4 p.m.

- WASHINGTON COUNTY**

BEAVERTON LIBRARY
12375 SW 5th St, Beaverton

Oct 101-3 p.m.

COMPASSION CONNECT TUALATIN
20405 SW 95th Ave, Tualatin

Oct 208 a.m.-3 p.m.

FOREST GROVE FARMERS MARKET
Main St, Forest Grove

Oct 3.....4-8 p.m.

For information, or to host our team,
call Tamara at 503-416-1479 or Caleb at 503-416-4883.

careoregon.org/gomobile



Obituary: George R. Walker III
Sept. 9, 1951 - Sept. 15, 2018



George R. Walker III

CELEBRATION OF LIFE
Sun. Oct. 14, 2018, 2 to 4 p.m.
Los Prados Event Hall
N. Lombard Street
Portland, OR 97203

Full Obituary at
TerryFamilyFuneralHome.com

Check out:

THE SKANNER REPORT

TheSkannerReport.com

Your One-Stop Hub for Community Newspapers Throughout the U.S.