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## Michigan priest defrocked by church after mimicking Musk's straight-arm gesture

Updated on: January 30, 2025 / 2:35 PM EST / CBS/AP

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A Michigan priest had his license revoked by the Anglican Catholic Church after he mimicked a [straight-arm gesture performed by Elon Musk](#) during a speech earlier this month that some have interpreted as a Nazi salute.

Calvin Robinson, who is listed as the priest-in-charge of St. Paul's Anglican Catholic Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, performed the gesture at the end of a Jan. 25 speech at the National Pro-Life Summit in Washington, D.C.

On Wednesday, the Anglican Catholic Church posted a statement that said Robinson's "license in this Church has been revoked" after he made a "gesture that many have interpreted as a pro-Nazi salute."

"While we cannot say what was in Mr. Robinson's heart when he did this, his action appears to have been an attempt to curry favor with certain elements of the American political right by provoking its opposition," the statement read. "Mr. Robinson had been warned that online trolling and other such actions (whether in service of the left or right) are incompatible with a priestly vocation and was told to desist. Clearly, he has not, and as such, his license in this Church has been revoked. He is no longer serving as a priest in the ACC.

"Furthermore, we understand that this is not just an administrative matter. The Holocaust was an episode of unspeakable horror, enacted by a regime of evil men. We condemn Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism in all its forms. And we believe that those who mimic the Nazi salute, even as a joke or an attempt to troll their opponents, trivialize the horror of the Holocaust and diminish the sacrifice of those who fought against its perpetrators. Such actions are harmful, divisive, and contrary to the tenets of Christian charity."

Musk's gesture that Robinson was mimicking came in a Jan. 20 speech during celebrations of Donald Trump's presidential inauguration. Musk slapped his hand on his chest, extended his arm straight out and up with his palm facing down and said, "My heart goes out to you."

At the close of Robinson's Jan. 25 speech, he quoted Musk, saying "my heart goes out to you," before mimicking his straight-arm motion.

In a statement posted to his Facebook page, Robinson said "in case it needs saying: I am not a Nazi," and that the gesture was a "joke."

Robinson is from England and in the past has been outspoken about his conservative views, according to a biography on St. Paul's Anglican Catholic Church's website.

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