

Chicago Tribune



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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2023

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Pope approves blessings for same-sex couples



Same-sex couples take part in a public blessing ceremony in front of the Cologne Cathedral in Cologne, Germany, on Sept. 20. **MARTIN MEISSNER/AP**

But new policy states rites associated with marriage still banned

By Nicole Winfield and David Crary
Associated Press

ROME — Pope Francis formally approved letting Catholic priests bless same-sex couples, the Vatican announced Monday, a radical shift in policy that aimed at making the church more inclusive while maintaining its strict ban on gay marriage.

But while the Vatican statement was heralded by some as a step toward breaking down discrim-

ination in the Catholic Church, some LGBTQ+ advocates warned it underscored the church's idea that gay couples remain inferior to heterosexual partnerships.

The document from the Vatican's doctrine office elaborates on a letter Francis sent to two conservative cardinals that was published in October. In that preliminary response, Francis suggested such blessings could be offered under some circumstances if the blessings weren't confused with the ritual of marriage.

The new document repeats that condition and elaborates on it, reaffirming that marriage is a lifelong union between a man and a woman. And it stresses that blessings in question must not be tied to

■ Chicago-area Catholics saw the pope's support as a surprising but reaffirming move toward accepting gay couples in the church. **Page 2**

any specific Catholic celebration or religious service and should not be conferred at the same time as a civil union ceremony. Moreover, the blessings cannot use set rituals or even involve the clothing and gestures that belong in a wedding.

But it says requests for such blessings for same-sex couples should not be denied. It offers an extensive and broad definition of the term "blessing" in Scripture to insist that people seeking a transcendent relationship with God

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Migrants stand Monday outside a shelter near the 2300 block of South Halsted Street where 5-year-old Jean Carlos Martinez Rivero was staying. He died Sunday. **ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Migrant boy dies during stay at Chicago shelter

5-year-old perishes after falling ill; Johnson defends city's care of asylum-seekers

By Nell Salzman and Jake Sheridan
Chicago Tribune

A 5-year-old migrant boy staying at a Pilsen shelter died Sunday evening after a medical emergency, authorities said, capping what has been a tumultuous 16 months for over 26,000 migrants who have arrived in the city since August 2022 on buses sent from Texas border cities.

The Cook County medical examiner's office identified the boy as Jean Carlos Martinez Rivero.

The arrival of thousands in Chicago has ignited political debate as the city has scrambled to find housing for the asylum-seekers ahead of freezing winter temperatures. Volunteers helping migrants are concerned about cramped conditions inside city-run shelters and health emer-

gencies that may arise as a result.

The address of the boy's death listed by authorities is the location of a temporary shelter on the Lower West Side for migrants and asylum-seekers operated by the city's biggest contractor to handle the growing migrant crisis — Favorite Staffing.

Mayor Brandon Johnson told reporters Monday afternoon that "we are obviously deeply sorry and hurt by this loss" before

placing the blame on Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who has been busing migrants to Chicago and other liberal cities for the past 15 months.

"They're just dropping off people anywhere. Do you understand how raggedy and how evil that is ... and then you want to hold us accountable for something that's happening down at

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Supreme Court to weigh area case

Ind. bribery dispute ripples into Chicago corruption trials

By Jason Meisner
Chicago Tribune

A decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to take up a Chicago-area bribery case has already reverberated in several of the city's biggest public corruption cases, where defense attorneys have long complained that prosecutors overreach when it comes to charging public officials under the federal bribery statute.

On Monday, the lawyer for a co-defendant of ex-House Speaker Michael Madigan told a federal judge he will seek to delay the landmark case set for April following the Supreme Court's announcement last week.

Patrick Cotter, who represents Madigan's longtime confidant, Michael McClain, made the disclosure during a hearing in the "ComEd Four" case, where McClain and three others were convicted earlier this year in a scheme to bribe Madigan to help the utility's legislative agenda in Springfield.

Lawyers for the four defendants in that case filed motions last week seeking delays in the January sentencing hearings due to the Supreme Court granting a writ of certiorari in the bribery conviction of the former mayor of Portage, Indiana, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Chicago-based 7th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals.

A decision from the high court overturning that conviction could resolve a split among federal circuits and set new rules for the federal bribery statute that would invalidate the ComEd Four convictions.

Turn to Case, Page 3

Historically long strike concludes

Columbia College Chicago and its part-time faculty reached a tentative deal Sunday evening ending nearly two months of striking. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

Burke jury begins deliberation

The jury in the corruption case of former Chicago Ald. Ed Burke has begun deliberating after five weeks of testimony that included nearly 40 witnesses, more than 100 secret recordings, two COVID-related delays and about 16 hours of closing arguments. **Page 5**

Student groups call out U. of C., UIC, claim freedom of speech restricted

By Zareen Syed and Alysa Guffey
Chicago Tribune

When Youssef Hasweh got arrested for trespassing on his own college campus, he lost that "beaming sense of pride" he once felt for the University of Chicago.

"It's a really weird time to be a UChicago student right now," Hasweh said. "I feel like part of my love for the university has died."

Hasweh, a Palestinian and Moroccan fourth-year student studying political science, was among the 26 students arrested last month by the University of Chicago Police Department during what he said was a peaceful sit-in objecting to the U. of C.'s alleged ties to weapons manufacturers supplying arms to Israel.

By arresting students instead of opening up a dialogue, the campus' United for Palestine coalition said, the university stifled their freedom of speech in a move that contradicts its reputation as being the "vanguard of free speech."

University President Paul Alivisatos called protests and demonstrations an essential part of the university's "culture of free expression" in an email to students a week before the sit-in.

"They reaffirmed that they stand with the right to expression and the right to protest, and then within that same week they arrested us," said Hasweh, who now faces charges of trespassing, with a court appearance scheduled for Dec. 20.

Turn to Speech, Page 4



University of Illinois at Chicago student Mahdi Muhammad speaks at a rally at Michigan Avenue and Ida B. Wells Drive on Oct. 11 organized by the Chicago Coalition for Justice in Palestine. Protesters called for an end to Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories and an end to its airstrikes on the Gaza Strip. **LAILA ZAYED**

