News



French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin of Lyon pauses at the courthouse in Lyon Jan. 7, 2019. Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Cardinal Barbarin March 6, 2020, less than six weeks after a French appeals court overturned his conviction for failing to report clerical sexual abuse. (CNS/ Reuters/Emmanuel Foudrot)



Jonathan Luxmoore

View Author Profile

Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Oxford, England — July 1, 2020

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint



French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin of Lyon pauses at the courthouse in Lyon Jan. 7, 2019. Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Cardinal Barbarin March 6, 2020, less than six weeks after a French appeals court overturned his conviction for failing to report clerical sexual abuse. (CNS/ Reuters/Emmanuel Foudrot)

Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, who retired from the Archdiocese of Lyon, has left his see to serve as a convent chaplain and envoy for the pope.

In a radio interview, he thanked Catholics for helping the church survive his conviction and acquittal on charges he ignored sexual abuse by a local priest.

"I'm contented and happy to be embarking on something new and joyful at this return to calm after the tempest," Barbarin told the Lyon-based Radio Chretienne Francophone.

"As an archbishop, I had an incredible amount of administration, official business and financial affairs to deal with, as well as national and international meetings. But my true vocation is as a priest, and I'm now able to rebuild the foundations of my priestly life."

On July 1, the cardinal was to take up residence with the Little Sisters of the Poor at Saint-Pern, in northwestern France, after celebrating a farewell Mass in Lyon's St. John Baptist Cathedral.

In late May, he returned from the Holy Land, and he said Pope Francis had asked him to conduct future peace missions to the Middle East.

In March 2019, Barbarin received a suspended jail sentence for failing to report abuse accusations against Bernard Preynat, a former French priest who was jailed for five years March 15 for assaulting at least 75 boys between 1971 and 1991.

Although Barbarin's suspended sentence was overturned Jan. 30 by the eastern city's appeal court, the pope accepted the cardinal's resignation as archbishop March 6.

Advertisement