News



This is a screenshot from video of Anglican Fr. Calvin Robinson, who closed his remarks Jan. 25 at the National Pro-Life Summit in Washington, D.C., with a movement that appeared to be a Nazi gesture. Robinson later posted video of the gesture on X. (NCR screenshot/X)



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January 30, 2025

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A Nazi salute at a "pro-life" rally?

About a week after Elon Musk made what appeared to be a Nazi salute at an inaugural event, Anglican Fr. Calvin Robinson enthusiastically closed his remarks at the National Pro-Life Summit in Washington, D.C., with his own Nazi-like salute.

"God bless all of you for what you're doing. Please keep doing it. I hope that I can encourage you, and my heart goes out to you," Robinson said as he touched his chest and then raised his arm out, in a movement that appeared to be a Nazi gesture, and then smirked gleefully before departing the stage.

The crowd could be heard cheering and laughing in delight.

The Anglican Catholic Church was not amused.

After the video went viral, the Anglican Catholic Church revoked his license to practice in the church.

"He is no longer serving as a priest" in the Anglican Catholic Church said in a statement on Jan. 29. "We condemn Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism in all its forms."

The Anglican Catholic Church, with worldwide headquarters in the United Kingdom, is not in communion with Rome. It is not to be confused with the Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter that was created by the Vatican in 2012 for former Anglican communities.

"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."

> My heart goes out to you.

> Make America Pro-Life Again. □□□□□ pic.twitter.com/5bG8Gyy5fH
>
> — Calvin Robinson (@calvinrobinson) January 29, 2025

Many Christian conservatives on social media reacted positively, with many users on X reveling in the effective "troll" by the priest.

"We're reaching levels of BACK I never thought possible," celebrated one supporter.

Robinson himself took a victory lap on X, posting the video of the salute, pinning it to the top of his profile, and repeatedly retweeting others who endorsed the gesture.

As of Thursday, Jan. 30, Robinson's post alone had 5.2 million views and 1,500 comments. Those numbers are likely to grow as conservative Christian influencers spread the salute like wildfire.

> No way □□ pic.twitter.com/lusvBjHmnd
>
> — Chief Trumpster (@ChiefTrumpster) January 29, 2025

> NO WAY □□□□ @calvinrobinson pic.twitter.com/NfYmo8iJjd
>
> — Kangmin Lee | □□□ (@kangminjlee) January 29, 2025

Though some commenters have been quick to write off both Musk and now as simply "trolling the liberals," others appear to have interpreted the dog whistle as tantamount to an endorsement of their views.

> Americans were lied to about Hitler and the Nazis and they're shedding that hypnosis pretty fast lately.
>
> — C.J. (@Raven_Resolve) January 29, 2025

Robinson's gesture occurred at the National Pro-Life Summit. The gathering is often hosted at the same time as the National March for Life, an event frequented by

hundreds of Catholic parishes and schools and endorsed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The summit and the march are not affiliated.

Robinson and the National Pro-Life Summit did not respond to National Catholic Reporter emails seeking comment.

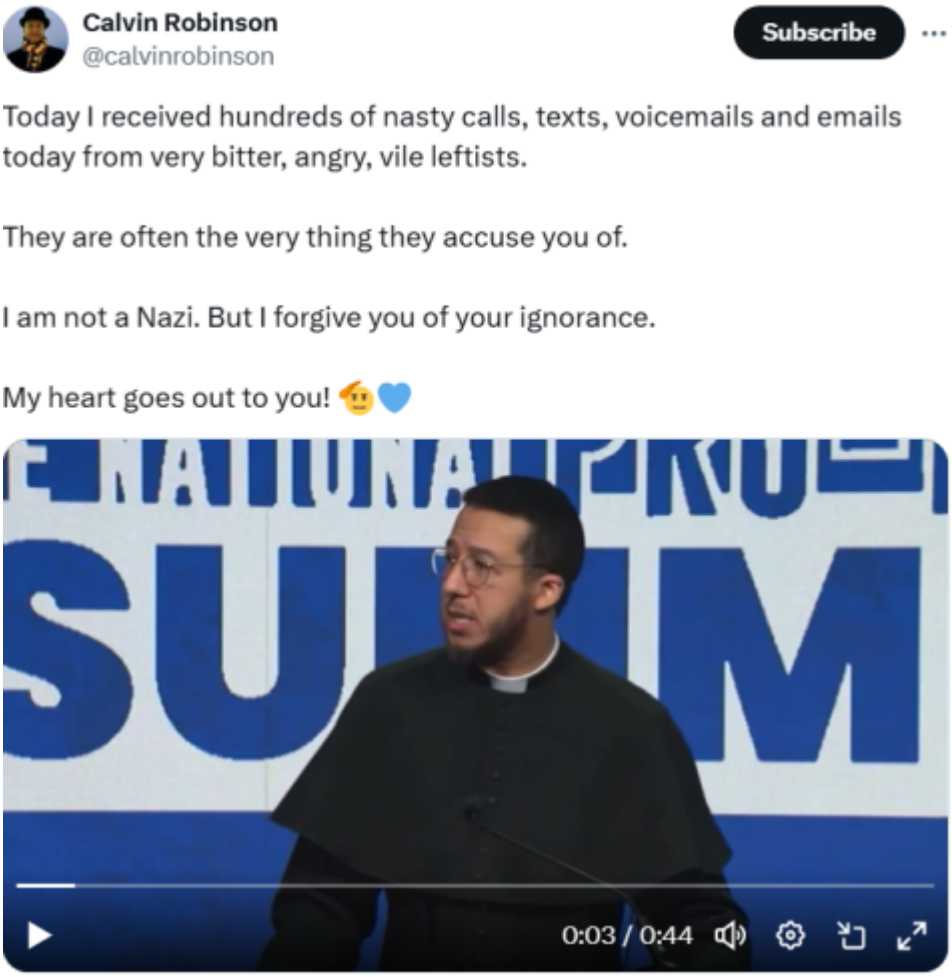
The summit was replete with conservative extremists, including the founder and President of Turning Point USA, Charlie Kirk, an advocate for defunding Catholic Charities and Matt Walsh, a social media personality famous for his controversial views on masculinity and for being a self-described, Theocratic fascist.

Sponsors included The Heritage Foundation, Students for Life of America, Catholic Answers, Regina Caeli, and Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America.

Though the Anglican Catholic Church is not in communion with Rome, Robinson is identified on the Pro-Life Summit website as a priest with "OldCatholic" orders, serving in an Anglican parish. He is also the founding member of the Anglo-Catholic confraternity, Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity.

After studying theology in Oxford, Robinson attempted to become a deacon for the Church of England but his application was unsuccessful, the Independent reported.

Robinson released a statement on X that expressed no contrition and blamed "bitter, angry, vile leftists" for hurting his feelings. He then attached the video of himself giving the gesture.



Screenshot of a statement by Calvin Robinson on X (NCR screenshot/X)

Robinson followed up his initial post with a lengthier explanation, insisting that "For the record, in case it needs saying: I am not a Nazi."

"The joke at the end was a mockery of the hysterical 'liberals' who called Elon Musk a Nazi for quite clearly showing the audience his heart was with them. Context is key, but sometimes people ignore context to confirm their own prejudices. People see what they want to see," he posted on X.

Robinson's statement did not diffuse the reaction.

Robinson continues to react to his removal, posting and retweeting supporters on X, even going so far as to share a prayer.

"Almighty and everlasting God: mercifully look upon our infirmities; and in all our

dangers and necessities, stretch forth thy right hand to help and defend us; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen."

Even in his prayer, Robinson couldn’t resist the urge to raise a right hand.

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In its statement revoking Robinson’s license with the church, the Anglican Catholic Church said it had warned the cleric to cease online trolling because it was incompatible with his priestly vocation.

"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 favour with certain elements of the American political right by provoking its opposition," the church said. "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."

The statement also condemned those who would use the gesture to callously troll or mock their political opponents, saying that those who do "trivialize the horror of the Holocaust and diminish the sacrifice of those who fought against the perpetrators."

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