

Police ordered out of St. Paul's as protesters allowed in

by [Al Webb](#)

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LONDON (RNS) Scores of anti-corporate demonstrators invaded London's historic St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday (Oct. 16), but police who tried to stop them were told to leave by church officials.

The protesters -- who were targeting the global financial system as part of worldwide demonstrations against corporate greed -- were welcomed into the 17th-century cathedral, and services went on uninterrupted.

The protesters were allowed to continue their presence into Monday, provided they did not interfere with tourists.

The Rev. Giles Fraser, the cathedral's canon chancellor who took steps to ease tensions, told reporters that "I am very much in favor of people's rights to protest peacefully," and said he asked the police to leave the building "because I didn't feel it needed that sort of protection."

The demonstrators, some wearing masks and others waving banners, camped out in tents around St. Paul's and preached their defiance of bankers and financial institutions from the cathedral's steps.

The protesters milled in and around the cathedral well into Monday,

and authorities left them alone as long as the demonstrations remained peaceful.

The London protest, calling itself the Occupy London Stock Exchange action, was part of a worldwide demonstration of anger against capitalism and greed in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Rome and Tokyo as well as the wellspring of the movement, Wall Street and other parts of New York City.

One masked protester in London said the string of protests was to "challenge the bankers and the financial institutions which recklessly gambled our economy."