

Briefly noted

News in the [February 12, 2008](#) issue

Bishop Nolbert Kunonga, who has been stripped of his credentials to function as a priest by the Anglican Church of the Province of Central Africa, has formed his own church, the Anglican Province of Zimbabwe. The bishop, a staunch ally of President Robert Mugabe, used the full force of the Zimbabwean police to disrupt several Anglican Sunday church services January 13 in Harare, the nation's capital city. Police arrested at least three priests and a number of parishioners opposed to him, the South African Press Association quoted a church official as saying. The priests were dragged from the church because they were conducting services without the authorization of the police or that of Kunonga, said a church spokesperson. He added that paramilitary police in riot gear and carrying batons disrupted a service at St. Elizabeth's Church in Harare's middle-income suburb of Belvedere.

Facing mounting protests, Pope Benedict XVI on January 15 canceled a long-planned talk at Rome's La Sapienza University. "Following the widely noted vicissitudes of recent days . . . it was considered opportune to postpone the event," the Vatican said in a statement quoted by the Italian news agency ANSA. It was a rare cancellation in not being attributed to an illness. The statement added that the pope would still send the text of the speech he had planned to deliver in person January 17 at the start of the academic year at La Sapienza, Europe's largest university. Over the prior weekend, more than 60 La Sapienza faculty members wrote to the university's rector objecting to the pope's presence, citing words from a 1990 lecture in which he seemed to justify the Vatican's condemnation of the astronomer Galileo Galilei in the 17th century. "In the name of the secularity of science, we hope that this incongruous event can still be canceled," the professors wrote.