

German bishop will head Vatican's doctrine office

by [Alessandro Speciale](#) in the [August 8, 2012](#) issue

Pope Benedict XVI has tapped a fellow German to lead the Vatican doctrinal office he headed for 24 years before being elected to the papacy. The Vatican announced July 2 that Bishop Gerhard Ludwig Mueller will replace U.S. Cardinal William J. Levada, 76, as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The congregation focuses on enforcing orthodoxy in the Catholic Church. The CDF launched the Vatican investigation of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, the main association for the various communities of American nuns. In recent years its mission has expanded to include dealing with reports of sexual abuse by priests all over the world.

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, a leading U.S.-based support group for victims of sexual abuse by clergy, criticized Mueller's appointment because in 2004, while serving as bishop of Regensburg in Bavaria, he had returned a local priest, Peter Kramer, to pastoral work without alerting the parish to previous charges of sexual abuse against Kramer.

In 2010, Mueller rejected criticism over his handling of the case, saying that reinstating Kramer had been done in collaboration with parish officials.

Mueller, 64, is considered a close follower of Benedict's teachings, and he is the curator of the German edition of the pope's complete works. —RNS