

# French cardinal resigns after his overturned abuse conviction

Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin of Lyon, five weeks after a French appeals court overturned his conviction for failing to report clerical sexual abuse.

The Vatican announced the resignation of the 69-year-old cardinal March 6.

A French appeals court Jan. 30 had overturned his conviction for failing to report sexual abuse accusations against Father Bernard Preynat, who currently awaits sentencing for abusing at least 75 boys.

The cardinal was convicted in March 2019 and given a six-month suspended sentence. At the time, he announced that he had presented his letter of resignation to the pope, but the Vatican said the pope would not act on it until the cardinal's appeal process had run its course.

When the conviction was overturned, Cardinal Barbarin announced that he would again submit his resignation for the good of the diocese.

Cardinal Barbarin changed the banner on his Twitter account March 6, adding the words, "Thank you all." And in a tweeted message to the people of Lyon, he repeated his thanks and asked the faithful "to follow Jesus closely in a servant church, fraternal and missionary."

The cardinal had led the Lyon archdiocese since St. John Paul II named him to the see in 2002; he was made a cardinal the next year.

Born Oct. 17, 1950, in Rabat, Morocco, he was ordained a priest in 1977. He served as a theology professor in France and in Madagascar, where he lived for four years until his 1998 nomination as bishop of Moulins.