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HOLY YEAR 2025

Scottish Jubilee cross draws criticism as LGBT similarities unavoidable

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As the 2025 Jubilee Year begins in earnest, Catholics in the Scottish Archdiocese of Glasgow may be surprised to learn that their cathedral has become the center of an international scandal.

Indeed, a newly installed cross in the somewhat unassuming Cathedral has now earned the scorn, ridicule and horror of Catholics in the U.K., along with those further afield, including an internationally famous Fox News host and a best-selling author and columnist.

What has prompted such international concentration on Glasgow's St.

Andrew's Cathedral? Nothing less than the Archdiocese's Jubilee Cross, **unveiled** on December 29 by Archbishop William Nolan. Each diocese around the global Catholic Church has been tasked by the Vatican to place a Jubilee Cross in the Cathedral, as Catholics are urged to make special pilgrimages to the mother church of each diocese if they cannot journey to Rome itself. Such an item ought hardly to be a source of

controversy or debate.

But Glasgow's cross is without doubt an item of ecclesial furnishing which will be remembered for some time – and not favorably. Described by critics as being more akin to an LGBT-themed cross rather than anything suited for worship – and also accused of presenting a risk of “alienating the faithful” – the Jubilee cross is without doubt striking.

~~It comprises the markedly bright colors of the Jubilee logo~~ on the four branches of the Greek style cross with all four branches of equal length. The Jubilee logo itself is positioned in the very center of the cross, rather than a corpus of Christ. So garish are the colors and their merging with one another that observers have suggested the Archdiocese is veering into the territory of promoting ... instead of giving honor to the crucified Lord.

“It is no accident that the Bergoglians have placed their vulgar multicolored cross in the place where God was once offered fit and proper worship at a neo-gothic high altar according to the *Usus Antiquior*,” U.K. Deacon Nick Donnelly commented to this correspondent about the cross.

EWTN and Fox News host Raymond Arroyo quipped about the cross, asking “[w]as it sponsored by Milton Bradley? Why must every new initiative of the church jettison the rich visual legacy of Catholicism for plastique, childish confections?”

The Glasgow Archdiocese stated publicly that the cross was specially commissioned, and would be in situ for 12 months, the entirety of the Jubilee Year.

“In Glasgow a new cross has been created which will be placed above the Archbishop’s ‘cathedra’ or chair on the rear wall of the sanctuary behind the altar throughout the Holy Year,” the social media announcement read. Further explaining the cross, the Archdiocese wrote that:

‘It will be a Greek cross (each arm of equal length) made of wood with the traditional symbols of St Mungo (bird, fish, bell and tree) represented at the extremities of the cross while at the centre the symbol of the 2025 Jubilee will feature bearing the image of ‘Pilgrims of Hope’.

St. Mungo, the patron saint of Glasgow, is indeed represented by the symbols traditionally linked to him, as the Archdiocese attests. But what appears to be notably lacking is a reference to Christ.

Indeed, for the prolific author and journalist Sohrab Ahmari, the Glasgow Jubilee Cross appeared to be the tipping point. While noting his preference to generally avoid

“commenting on Catholic Church affairs,” Ahmari **seemed** to be unable to contain his disgust at the Jubilee cross. “But folks, this is the Jubilee Cross installed at St Andrew’s Cathedral in Glasgow. Come on. Come on.”

Deacon Donnelly, a catechist and author based in North-West England, opined that the placement of the cross in the Church was also key, given its occupancy of the focal point inside the building. This, he said, presented “the transient ideology of men” rather than the “eschatological expectation of the second coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Like many who expressed their thoughts about the cross, Donnelly suggested that “this travesty of a cross, and the mindset that created it, is more at home in a liberal protestant church among the climate change posters and LGBT rainbow flags, and has no place in a genuine Catholic cathedral.”

In response to queries from this correspondent, the Archdiocese elaborated on their Jubilee cross and defended it strenuously from what they described as “offensive” criticism online.

“The social media comments you mention are totally wide of the mark, and in some cases offensive. The colours chosen are taken from the Vatican’s official logo for the Holy Year. They have absolutely no LGBT or political significance,” stated the Archdiocesan director of communications.

Expanding on their defense of the cross, the Archdiocese firmly rebuffed any criticism made by online commentators: “Those who have complained online that it replaces a tabernacle or cross display their own ignorance. There has been no tabernacle behind the high altar for more than 30 years and there was no pre-existing cross in the space that has been used for the jubilee cross.”

But despite such protestations, the impact remains unchanged. Mark Lambert, co-host of the U.K.-based podcast “Catholic Unscripted,” lamented how the cross “presents a shocking and jarring image, especially given its placement in a location traditionally reserved for the high altar and tabernacle.”

Lambert pointed to the design’s “a chaotic array of primary colors and seemingly arbitrary additions to the cross,” which he said “does little to evoke Christ’s sacrifice, a central tenet of Christian theology.” On the contrary, the Glasgow cross “appears as an attempt to obscure that profound mystery with imagery that lacks both catechetical depth and theological clarity,” he told this correspondent.

He questioned the underlying intention behind the cross, and suggested that it was “emblematic of the broader confusion that has come to characterize much of Pope Francis’s tenure.”

“Rather than inspiring faith or illuminating sacred truths, it risks alienating the faithful with its bewildering and ostensibly meaningless presentation,” he said. “Such perplexing choices undermine the Church’s mission to draw souls closer to God, replacing clarity with ambiguity and tradition with disarray.”