Catholic 27 November 2026 | English article

Latest: Archbishop of Westminster Richard Moth Taken to Hospital Before Ann Widdecombe Memorial

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"In good spirits"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Archbishop of Westminster Richard Moth was taken to hospital on Wednesday 25 November after feeling unwell, and he is now undergoing preliminary tests. The Diocese of Westminster says he is in good spirits and looks forward to returning to Archbishop's House, and it asks for prayers for his full recovery. The timing could hardly have been sharper: within a day, the cathedral he leads was filling with around 600 mourners for a memorial service he was meant to lead himself.

Moth was appointed Archbishop of Westminster on 19 December 2025, so he has held the post for less than a year. The memorial for former Conservative MP Ann Widdecombe at Westminster Cathedral on Thursday 26 November was one of the most visible services of his first year in the role - a gathering of the Prime Minister and former prime ministers, politicians past and present, and hundreds of others who had come to remember a woman who spent decades in public life.

Eleven months into the role, he was facing one of the most high-profile services of his first year. Instead, he was in a hospital bed, and someone else had to stand where he should have stood.

Westminster Cathedral: A Memorial Without Its Archbishop

Auxiliary Bishop James Curry stepped in at the last minute to lead the service. The change occured so late that many in the congregation learned of it only as the service was about to begin.

For the 600 people in the cathedral, the service carried two layers of feeling at once: grief for Widdecombe, and worry for the Archbishop who should have been leading it. The service itself went ahead as planned, with Bishop Curry leading in Moth's place, but the empty chair at the front said as much as any announcement.

Ann Widdecombe: The Woman The Cathedral Came To Remember

Widdecombe, 78, was found dead on 9 July at her home in Haytor, Dartmoor. The news stunned British politics: a former Conservative MP who had spent decades in public life, gone suddenly in her own home.

Joshua Kerry, 28, has been charged with her murder, according to the BBC and the Press Association. The memorial at Westminster Cathedral was the moment the country, and the Church she belonged to, came together to mark a life that had been cut short - and to stand with the family and friends left behind.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

Continue on FaithStories -- the complete article, with sources and related stories:
https://faithstories.onrender.com/articles/news-1221.html?utm_source=pdf_guide&utm_medium=organic_pdf

More from FaithStories

FaithStories - Home
https://faithstories.onrender.com/

(Spanish) Hoy: El Vaticano nombra tres comisarios para los Heraldos del Evangelio tras siete años de intervención
https://faithstories.onrender.com/articles/es/news-1225.html

(Portuguese) Cristo Redentor celebra o Dia de Ação de Graças com procissão de agradecimentos na Sala da Gratidão
https://faithstories.onrender.com/articles/pt/news-1226.html

(Hindi) Yuunaaiteda Krishchiyana Phorama Ne Piiema Modii Se Kii Apiila, Deshabhara Men Shaantipuurna Krisamasa Sunishchita Karen
https://faithstories.onrender.com/articles/hi/news-1227.html