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# Accused cardinal is appointed prior. Cardinal Hans Hermann GrOer, who

retired as Archbishop of Vienna last year after remaining silent over accusations of having sexually abused a minor 20 years previously, has been appointed Prior of St Joseph's in Maria Roggendorf, Lower Austria, writes Christa Pongratz-Lippitt. He will take up his post on 1 September.

St Joseph's is a priory of the Benedictine monastery of Gottweig, which the cardinal joined when he became a Benedictine late in life in 1974. The priory has recently been extended at considerable expense to make room for novices and will have responsibility for several parishes in the neighbourhood.

In an interview in the Austrian weekly Profil, the magazine which last year first published the allegations of sexual abuse made against him, the cardinal spoke of "character assassination". Asked why in that case he had not defended himself and broken his silence, he said everything had been "a put up job" and the whole world had sat in judgement upon him.

The appointment has come in for considerable criticism. Fr Bruno Primetshofer CSSR, Professor of Church Law at the Catholic Theological Faculty of Vienna University, and one of the leading churchmen who last year begged Cardinal Groer to accept a full investigation for the Church's sake, says he cannot understand how anyone who has been accused of such a serious offence and has remained silent can be appointed to a church office without the allegations being cleared up. Cardinal Griier's case had been swept under the carpet, he said, and this new appointment would "once again do the Austrian Church serious harm".

But there are also those who have always supported Cardinal Groer. Bishop Kurt Krenn of St Polten said he had "long known" of his new appointment. "Whatever Cardinal

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Giber does is good", he maintained.

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