



**Written Testimony of  
Arielle Del Turco, Director of the Center for Religious Liberty  
Family Research Council**

**Before the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government  
of the Committee on the Judiciary  
Hearing on “Revisiting the Implications of the FACE Act”  
May 16, 2023**

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Scanlon, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Arielle Del Turco, and I am the Director of the Center for Religious Liberty at Family Research Council (FRC) in Washington, D.C. Our organization desires all people to have the freedom to exercise their faith. This freedom is significantly undermined whenever houses of worship are the targets of violent or destructive incidents meant to intimidate the faithful or interrupt the normal work of the religious community. Last year, FRC began to monitor acts of hostility against churches in the United States as a religious freedom concern.

It would be appropriate at this time to observe that the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act extends explicit protections to places of religious worship. It protects people lawfully exercising or seeking to exercise the First Amendment right of religious freedom at a place of religious worship. It also protects places of religious worship from intentional efforts to damage or destroy their property, providing that “whoever . . . by force or threat of force or by physical obstruction, intentionally injures, intimidates or interferes with or attempts to injure, intimidate or interfere with any person lawfully exercising or seeking to exercise the First Amendment right of religious freedom at a place of religious worship . . . or intentionally damages or destroys the property of a place of religious worship,” shall be subject to the penalties and civil remedies found in the law.<sup>1</sup>

In December 2022, FRC released a report (submitted as Appendix A) analyzing publicly documented acts of hostility against churches over the past five years. We identified 420 incidents that occurred in 45 states and Washington, D.C. between January 2018 and September 2022. There also appeared to be an increase in frequency over the course of the reporting period.<sup>2</sup>

The types of acts identified include vandalism, arson, bomb threats, gun-related incidents, and interruption of worship services—all of which are punishable under the FACE Act. Most of the incidents covered in our December 2022 report were vandalisms; the report identified 342 occurrences of vandalism, 58 arson attacks or attempts, 12 gun-related incidents, 11 bomb threats, and 19 other incidences (assault, threats, interruption of worship services, etc.). Twenty incidents (4.76 percent) fell into more than one category.<sup>3</sup>

In April 2023, FRC published a supplemental update to our report (submitted as Appendix B), which found an additional 54 incidents in the final months of 2022 and 69 in the first quarter of 2023

(January-March).<sup>4</sup> Since releasing that supplemental report, we catalogued another 22 acts of hostility in the month of April. If this trend continues, 2023 will be on track to have the highest number of church attacks over the past six years. All told, FRC has observed 565 attacks against churches from January 2018 to April 2023. And that is based on the public documentation we have found. There are almost certainly more incidents.

The full list of incidents is available in our reports submitted in Appendix A and B. But I would like to highlight a few examples for you. In February 2023, vandals broke into the Dellabrook Presbyterian Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. They sprayed a fire extinguisher all over the church and into the ventilation and air conditioning system, causing \$40,000 in damage. One woman who works at the church told a local news station, “I keep wondering why. It shows a great deal of anger. And were they angry at us? Were they angry at churches? Were they angry at God?”<sup>5</sup>

In these attacks, many churches are defaced with obscene or hateful messages. In October 2021, vandals spray-painted hateful anti-Catholic messages on the front of downtown Denver’s Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, including the words, “Satan lives here.”<sup>6</sup> In March 2022, Journey Church of Sonora, a small church in California, was set on fire and completely destroyed, forcing the church to temporarily gather outside for weekly services.<sup>7</sup>

Following the leak of the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision last May, at least 57 acts of hostility against churches were directly tied to anti-religious animus related to the abortion issue. These incidents involved vandalism, destruction of property, and interruption of worship services. On June 25—the day after the Supreme Court announced the *Dobbs* decision, St. Patrick Catholic Church in Philadelphia was vandalized with the phrase “Abort the church” spray painted on the side of the building.<sup>8</sup>

On June 26, abortion-related protestors interrupted Mass at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Chicago and began chanting slogans and distributing leaflets in the middle of the service.<sup>9</sup> At least one protestor held up a sign that read, “The Catholic Church has blood on its hands.” Father Lawrence Lisowski reflected on the incident, saying, “Sadly, this is a sign of our times, and a reflection of the fragile world that we live in.”

On June 27, dozens of abortion-related protestors vandalized a church office building belonging to Hinson Baptist Church in Portland, Oregon, that included offices for a pregnancy resource center. The protestors wore masks and carried umbrellas to evade security cameras.<sup>10</sup> They broke windows and left obscene and hateful graffiti messages behind, including the phrase “abort yourself [expletive redacted].”

Such anti-religious animus isn’t limited to one faith. Other houses of worship are also experiencing vandalism and other attacks. The Anti-Defamation League reported dozens of antisemitic incidents against synagogues in 2022.<sup>11</sup> The American Civil Liberties Union has tracked nearly 400 anti-mosque incidents across the country since 2005.<sup>12</sup> This trend of increasing hostility and violent attacks against places of worship is completely unacceptable, and it should concern those of all faiths.

As long as the FACE Act remains law, it should be used as a tool to go after perpetrators of attacks such as those mentioned above. Anti-religious hostility like the incidents I mentioned has no place in our society or any country that wants to call itself a land of freedom. This issue deserves the full attention of the entire American public and the full weight of law enforcement.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's interest in learning about attacks on places of religious worship as it considers the effectiveness and application of the FACE Act. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



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<sup>1</sup> 18 U.S.C. 248, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/248>.

<sup>2</sup> Arielle Del Turco, "Hostility Against Churches Is on the Rise in the United States: Analyzing Incidents from 2018-2022," Family Research Council, December 2022, <https://www.frc.org/issueanalysis/hostility-against-churches-is-on-the-rise-in-the-united-states>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Arielle Del Turco, "Hostility Against Churches: Supplemental Report - First Quarter 2023," Family Research Council, April 2023, <https://www.frc.org/issuebrief/hostility-against-churches-supplemental-report-first-quarter-2023>.

<sup>5</sup> Louie Tran, "'It's horrifying': Winston-Salem church vandalized on Valentine's Day and left with \$40K worth of damage," WXII 12 News, last updated February 17, 2023, <https://www.wxii12.com/article/its-horrifying-winston-salem-church-vandalized-on-valentines-day-and-left-with-dollar40k-worth-of-damage/42942019>.

<sup>6</sup> Jonah McKeown, "Denver cathedral vandalized with anti-Catholic slogans," Catholic News Agency, October 11, 2021, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/249250/denver-cathedral-vandalized-with-anti-catholic-slogans>.

<sup>7</sup> Guy McCarthy, "Tuolumne County faith community rises from the ashes of Journey Church fire," *The Union Democrat*, last updated March 25, 2022, [https://www.uniondemocrat.com/news/article\\_f59deb54-ab06-11ec-ac22-3383c3efc887.html](https://www.uniondemocrat.com/news/article_f59deb54-ab06-11ec-ac22-3383c3efc887.html)

<sup>8</sup> Joe Bukuras, "Attacks on churches, pro-life pregnancy centers continue," Catholic News Agency, June 30, 2022, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/251687/attacks-on-churches-pro-life-pregnancy-centers-continue>.

<sup>9</sup> Joe Bukuras, "Pro-abortion protesters disrupted Mass at Catholic church in Chicago," Catholic News Agency, July 7, 2022, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/251743/pro-abortion-protesters-disrupted-mass-at-catholic-church-in-chicago>.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Lawrence, "When the Mob Shows Up the Monday After *Roe*," The Gospel Coalition, June 29, 2022, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-monday-after-roe/>.

<sup>11</sup> Anti-Defamation League, "Analysis: Recent Threats to Jewish Institutions," blog, December 9, 2022, <https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/analysis-recent-threats-jewish-institutions>.

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<sup>12</sup> “Nationwide Anti-Mosque Activity,” American Civil Liberties Union, last updated December 2022, <https://www.aclu.org/issues/national-security/discriminatory-profiling/nationwide-anti-mosque-activity>.

# Appendix A



# Hostility Against Churches Is on the Rise in the United States

Analyzing Incidents from 2018-2022

*by Arielle Del Turco, M.A.*

## Key Points

At least 420 acts of hostility against churches occurred between January 2018 and September 2022 across 45 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.

At least 57 pro-abortion acts of hostility against churches occurred between January 2022 and September 2022.

Criminal acts of vandalism and destruction of church property are symptomatic of a collapse in societal reverence and respect for houses of worship and religion.

Violent or destructive incidences that interfere with an individual's lawful free exercise of religion at their house of worship present a significant nationwide challenge and must be condemned.

## Summary

**D**ue to the perceived increase in acts of hostility against churches in the United States, Family Research Council set out to analyze publicly available data from the past five years to better understand the problem and determine whether there has been a statistically significant increase over time.

Between January 2018 and September 2022, at least 420 acts of hostility against U.S. churches occurred. The types of acts identified include vandalism, arson, gun-related incidents, bomb threats, and more. There also appeared to be an increase in frequency over the course of the reporting period.

This increase in religious hostility should not be taken lightly. Such acts are destructive and have the potential to intimidate a religious community. Therefore, they deserve to be condemned.

## **Introduction**

In June 2021, after surveillance cameras caught footage of two men approaching St. Veronica's Catholic Church in Philadelphia, setting fires at the entrance, and then walking away, Father Joseph LoJacono told local reporters, "I think it's a sign of a lessening of the faith and a certain anger and hatred to the Catholic faith."<sup>1</sup>

Father LoJacono is not the only person thinking that such incidents indicate a growing animosity toward Catholicism, and Christianity in general. There is ample reason to be concerned about rising hostility to Christianity by a Western culture that increasingly rejects Judeo-Christian values.

In a report published in July 2022, Family Research Council documented 99 incidents of government violations of religious freedom against individual Christians or Christian institutions across 14 Western countries since 2020.<sup>2</sup> But religious hostility can be felt from other sources besides the government. Tracking physical incidents against churches is an important data point for larger discussions about increasing intolerance toward Christianity in American society. So, Family Research Council set out to analyze publicly available data to determine whether there has been a statistically significant increase in acts of vandalism and destruction of church property over the past five years. Our findings, detailed in this report, indicate that there has been a noticeable increase.

Criminal acts of vandalism and destruction of church property are likely symptomatic of a collapse in societal reverence and respect for houses of worship and religion—in this case, churches and Christianity. Americans appear increasingly comfortable lashing out against church buildings, pointing to a larger societal problem of marginalizing core Christian beliefs, including those that touch on hot-button political issues related to human dignity and sexuality.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation keeps records of hate crimes in the United States, including those motivated by an anti-religious bias. In 2021, the most recent year with available data, the FBI reported 240 anti-Christian “hate crimes” (the FBI uses the following categories for Christianity: Catholics, Protestants, Eastern Orthodox, and “other Christians”). This was up from 213 anti-Christian incidents in 2020. There seems to be a general upward trend over the past few years: the FBI reported 217 anti-Christian incidents in 2019 and 172 in 2018.<sup>3</sup>

In a Western country like the United States, there can be a tendency to brush aside the significance of vandalism or other acts of hostility against churches. This should not be the case. For staff members and congregants, such acts of hostility against their churches can be intimidating. For example, when a statue of Mary outside of a Catholic church is beheaded, it is natural for congregants to feel disturbed and upset, and that may be the vandal’s aim. Acts of hostility against churches send the message that churches are not wanted in the community or respected in general. This may cause congregants or church leaders to feel unsafe. In some instances, the goal of the hostility is to interrupt the normal work of the church.

Make no mistake, acts of hostility against churches are a matter of religious freedom. Religious freedom is not maintained by good laws and policies alone; it also relies on cultural support. When church attendees feel targeted by members of their communities or church buildings bear the brunt of outrage over political events, a more grievous assault is occurring on the ability to choose and live out one’s faith safely, both at church and in the public square. Violent or destructive incidents that interfere with an individual’s lawful free exercise of religion at their house of worship present a significant nationwide challenge.

So, what should our response be to acts of hostility against churches? Everywhere they occur, such acts must be met with a strong public response condemning them and showing support for the church that



was targeted. A lack of respect for houses of worship must not be shrugged off; it directly damages churches and religious communities and contributes to a larger culture that fails to value freedom of religion. Our response to acts of hostility against churches must foster a renewed collective reverence for religion and religious freedom in American society, even—and perhaps especially—for those whose faith we do not share.

## **Overview of Findings**

Family Research Council identified a total of 420 documented acts of hostility that targeted 397 individual churches. These incidents occurred between January 2018 and September 2022 across 45 U.S. states and Washington, D.C. To conduct this research, we analyzed open-source documents, reports, and media outlets to assess the number of acts of hostility against churches over a five-year span.

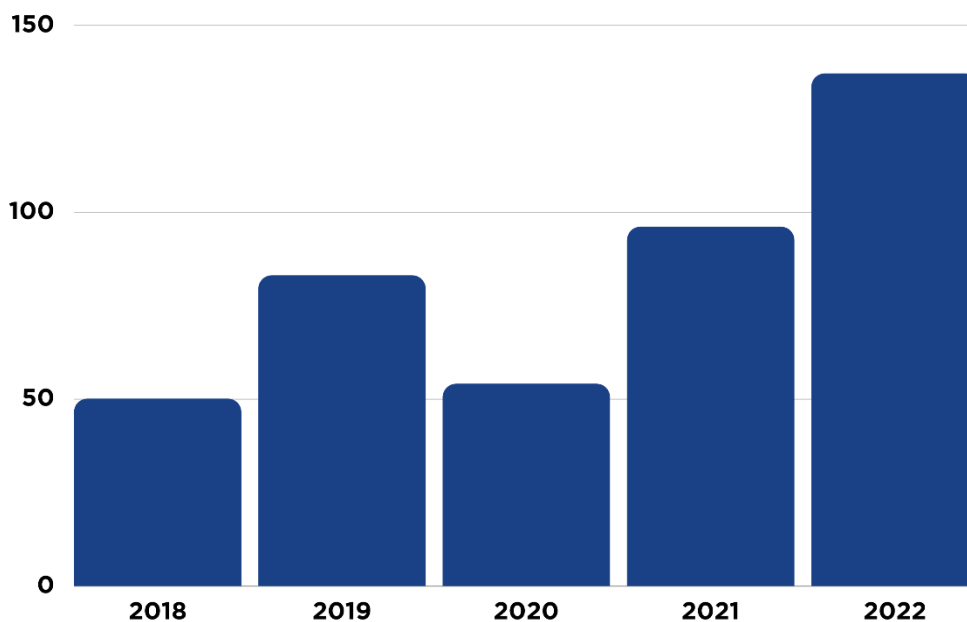
We looked at incidents of vandalism (including the destruction of property, the defacement of property, ransacking, and theft), arson, and arson attempts. Shootings that took place in a church building and bomb threats (including false ones) made against churches were also included. Most of the instances covered in this report are vandalisms; the report identified 342 occurrences of vandalism, 58 arson attacks or attempts, 12 gun-related incidents, 11 bomb threats, and 19 other incidences (assault, threats, interruption of worship services, etc.). Twenty incidents (4.76 percent) fell into more than one category, the most common combination being vandalism and arson.

Acts of hostility against churches occurred throughout the country, in 45 states and the District of Columbia. States with higher populations tended to report a greater number of incidents. California had the most incidents, with 51. Texas had 33 incidents, New York 31, and Florida 23. The only U.S. states without any known incidents during the five-year reporting period were Delaware, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, and Vermont.



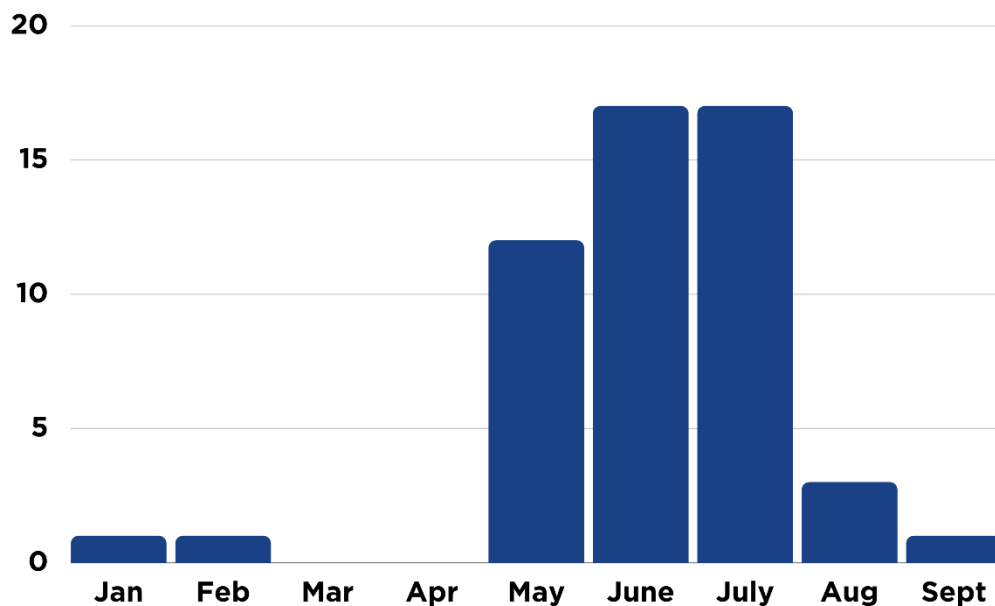
The number of acts of hostility against churches appears to have increased over the five-year reporting period, with a slight but noticeable dip in 2020 (this was likely due to government restrictions and a general decrease in movement during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic). In 2018, there were 50 incidences of hostility against churches; in 2019, there were 83, in 2020 there were 54; in 2021 there were 96; and between January and September 2022, there were 137.

**Incidents per year, January 2018-September 2022**



When the U.S. Supreme Court’s draft decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* was leaked on May 2, 2022, churches saw a spike in graffiti incidents with pro-abortion messages and protests that interrupted church services. This trend has continued since the *Dobbs* decision was officially handed down and *Roe v. Wade* was overturned on June 24, 2022. At least 57 incidents from January 2022 to September 2022 were directly tied to pro-abortion protests or contained pro-abortion messages. By contrast, only five incidents between 2019 and 2021 were abortion-related.

### Pro-abortion incidents against churches per month, 2022



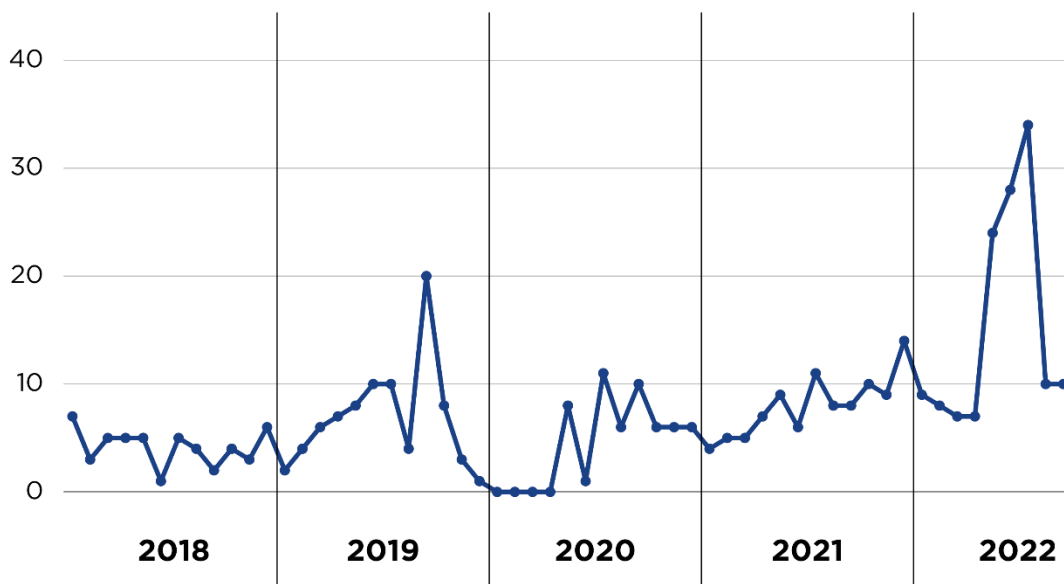
Church buildings also bore the marks of other political protests. At least 11 instances of vandalism, especially in the Northwest, had to do with the public controversy in Canada over the treatment of indigenous children in former Catholic-run schools. At least 10 instances included anti-police messages and messages related to the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement. Other instances were simply blatantly anti-Christian.

Yet, the motive for other incidents remains unclear. Minors were responsible for several acts of vandalism. Some instances of vandalism did not contain clear messages. Others included satanic or anarchist symbols for unknown reasons.

It is important to note that this report is not comprehensive. Many acts of hostility against churches are likely not reported to authorities and/or are not featured in the news or other online sources from which we collected data. Thus, the number of acts of hostility is undoubtedly much higher than the number reflected in this report. This report is intended to compile the data that is publicly reported and identify any trends.

When looking at recorded acts of hostility per month from 2018 to September 2022, it is notable that a spike in church attacks seemed to follow rises in political tension. This happened during the protests and concurrent riots related to George Floyd’s death in May 2020 and following the leak of the *Dobbs* decision in May 2022. Overall, acts of hostility trended upward during the five-year reporting period. The first nine months of 2022 saw more than double the number of reported acts of hostility against churches that occurred in the entirety of 2018.

**Incidents per month, January 2018-September 2022**



The rise in acts of hostility against churches is cause for concern and reflects a larger societal trend of intolerance toward Christianity. Family Research Council hopes this report draws attention to the problem of acts of hostility against churches in America and offers insights into the trends surrounding this issue. The following are the incidents identified in FRC’s research, spanning January 2018 through September 2022.

## **2022**

### **Flowertown Baptist Church, Summerville, South Carolina:** January 4, 2022

Someone broke into the church, destroyed windows, set items on fire, turned a stove on in the kitchen, and stole \$3,000 in property.<sup>4</sup>

### **Hopeland Church, Vandalia, Ohio:** January 5, 2022

Approximately \$10,000 worth of equipment belonging to the church was damaged, including a computer, televisions, and a copier. The previous month, a church nativity scene and a van in the parking lot were set on fire.<sup>5</sup>

### **St. Phillips Moravian Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina:** January 9, 2022

The church was the recipient of a bomb threat.<sup>6</sup>

### **Burns United Methodist Church, Des Moines, Iowa:** January 9, 2022

The church was the recipient of a bomb threat.<sup>7</sup>

### **St. Alphonsus Catholic Church, Fresno, California:** January 14, 2022

A 100-year-old tabernacle was vandalized, causing \$35,000 in damages.<sup>8</sup>

### **St. Timothy Catholic Church, San Antonio, Texas:** January 16, 2022

Police arrested a man armed with a gun who tried to interrupt mass, sending parishioners fleeing. Another man was waiting for him in a van outside the church.<sup>9</sup>

### **Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, District of Columbia:**

January 20, 2022

Pro-abortion slogans were projected onto the exterior of the building.<sup>10</sup>

### **Church of the Nativity, Burke, Virginia:** January 26, 2022

A statue of Our Lady of Fatima was vandalized.<sup>11</sup>

**Immaculate Heart of Mary, Greenwood, Mississippi:** January 27, 2022

The church was ransacked, and paintings, statues, and the altar were severely damaged.<sup>12</sup>

**Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, San Francisco, California:** February 2022

Pro-abortion protestors disrupted mass dressed as characters from Hulu's "The Handmaid's Tale" based on the novel by Margaret Atwood.<sup>13</sup>

**Flatrock Baptist Church, Floyd County, Georgia:** February 1, 2022

Racial slurs and threats were written on the church's exterior walls.<sup>14</sup>

**Assumption Parish, St. Louis, Missouri:** February 8, 2022

A man was charged with making false bomb threats against the church.<sup>15</sup>

**Springfield Pentecostal Holiness, Laurel Hill, North Carolina:** February 11, 2022

Someone broke into the church and stole property before setting the building on fire. The extent of the damage resulted in the building being deemed a total loss.<sup>16</sup>

**St. Therese of the Infant Jesus Catholic Church's Shrine of the Little Flower, Albuquerque, New Mexico:** February 14, 2022

Someone threw objects at the church's stained glass windows, causing \$20,000 in damages.<sup>17</sup>

**Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Milledgeville, Georgia:** February 17, 2022

Someone damaged two angel statues outside the church.<sup>18</sup>

**St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, San Antonio, Texas:** February 23, 2022

A statue of the Holy Family was stolen from outside the church in the middle of the night.<sup>19</sup>

**St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church, Baltimore, Maryland:** February 28, 2022

Almost 50 headstones at a Ukrainian Catholic cemetery were vandalized.<sup>20</sup>

**Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** March 2022

A statue of St. John Neumann, who was the fourth bishop of Philadelphia and was instrumental in the creation of the Catholic school system, was destroyed.<sup>21</sup>

**Holy Family Catholic Church, Jacksonville, Florida:** March 1, 2022

Statues depicting Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were vandalized with satanic imagery.<sup>22</sup>

**St. Mary's Catholic Church, Royal Oak, Michigan:** March 8, 2022

A statue of Mary was vandalized, as well as the interior and exterior of the building.<sup>23</sup>

**Community Church of Christ in Jamaica, New York, New York:** March 8, 2022

Church windows were broken with a large stick.<sup>24</sup>

**Hillcrest Baptist Church, Yazoo City, Mississippi:** March 10, 2022

Grass on the church property and multiple items were set on fire with gasoline.<sup>25</sup>

**Main Street Baptist Church, Bartow, Florida:** March 13, 2022

The church building was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>26</sup>

**Journey Church of Sonora, Sonora, California:** March 19, 2022

The church building was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>27</sup>

**St. Anthony's Catholic Church, North Beach, Maryland:** April 1, 2022

A crucifix, a stained-glass window, a stone angel, multiple candles and candleholders, an organ, and a piano were damaged when someone entered the church and ransacked it.<sup>28</sup>

**Cristo Rey Catholic Church, Austin, Texas:** April 8, 2022

Thirty windows and the front door were damaged by someone throwing rocks at the church.<sup>29</sup>



**Two churches in Waco, Texas:** April 11 and 13, 2022

Two churches in Waco, Texas, were threatened over the phone, prompting police investigations.<sup>30</sup>

**Peace United Church of Christ, Rochester, Minnesota:** April 18, 2022

An arson attack caused more than \$2.5 million in damages.<sup>31</sup>

**Bethlehem Baptist Church, Hybla Valley, Virginia:** April 27, 2022

Glass from the church door was shattered.<sup>32</sup>

**St. John Baptist Church, Hybla Valley, Virginia:** April 27, 2022

A church door was broken into, and there was evidence that someone had smoked inside the building.<sup>33</sup>

**Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Boulder, Colorado:** May 3, 2022

The church was vandalized with pro-abortion messages on the building, and some of its windows were broken.<sup>34</sup>

**St. Andrew Catholic Church, Eagle River, Alaska:** May 4, 2022

The church was vandalized with inappropriate spray-painted symbols and nails scattered across the parking lot. The act is thought to have been a response to the church hosting a conservative Catholic speaker on the topic of gender identity.<sup>35</sup>

**St. Joseph's Church and Academy, Armada, Michigan:** May 5, 2022

The church was vandalized with satanic symbols and messages calling for the death of Republicans.<sup>36</sup>

**St. John XXIII Catholic Church, Fort Collins, Colorado:** May 7, 2022

Someone spray painted the church's front doors and broke glass windows.<sup>37</sup>

**The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, New York, New York:** May 7, 2022

After a draft of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* was leaked, bomb threats were issued against the church and a Franciscan friar was heckled. Security measures were tightened as a result.<sup>38</sup>

**St. Bartholomew the Apostle Catholic Church, Katy, Texas:** May 8, 2022

The church's tabernacle was stolen.<sup>39</sup>

**Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Houston, Texas:** May 8, 2022

The message "Pro-Choice is Pro-Life" was painted on the church's main entrance and a side door.<sup>40</sup>

**Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, California:** May 8, 2022

Protestors in red, hooded gowns representing characters from Hulu's "The Handmaid's Tale" interrupted mass.<sup>41</sup>

**Cathedral of Christ the King, Atlanta, Georgia:** May 8, 2022

On Mother's Day, abortion supporters protested outside the church and staged a "die-in" with fake blood while mass was taking place inside.<sup>42</sup>

**St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Houston, Texas:** May 9, 2022

Someone tried to desecrate the Eucharist, likely in relation to pro-abortion protests.<sup>43</sup>

**St. Louis Catholic Church, Louisville, Colorado:** May 9, 2022

The church was spray painted with the message "My body, my choice."<sup>44</sup>

**Elliston Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee:** May 13, 2022

The church building was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>45</sup>

**Irvine Taiwanese Presbyterian Church, Laguna Woods, California:** May 15, 2022

A shooter opened fire on a lunch reception until church members stopped him. One person died, and five were wounded.<sup>46</sup>

**Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, New York, New York:** May 17, 2022

Statues were beheaded and smashed.<sup>47</sup>

**St. David the King Church, West Windsor, New Jersey:** May 17 and 26, 2022

A statue in the church parking lot was vandalized following another instance of vandalism outside the church in the preceding week.<sup>48</sup>

**Pitts Chapel United Methodist Church, Springfield, Missouri:** May 18, 2022

A swastika was spray-painted on the side of a historically black church.<sup>49</sup>

**St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania:** May 20, 2022

Vandals ripped rain gutter pipes off the church building and stole copper panels from the roof.<sup>50</sup>

**St. Michael's Catholic Church, Olympia, Washington:** May 22, 2022

The anarchist group “Jane’s Revenge” spray-painted pro-abortion messages onto the church’s exterior. The vandalism was motivated by the church’s connection to pregnancy resource centers.<sup>51</sup>

**Church of Latter-Day Saints, Olympia, Washington:** May 22, 2022

The anarchist group “Jane’s Revenge” spray-painted pro-abortion messages onto the church’s exterior. The vandalism was motivated by the church’s connection to pregnancy resource centers.<sup>52</sup>

**Harbor Church, Olympia, Washington:** May 22, 2022

The anarchist group “Jane’s Revenge” spray-painted pro-abortion messages onto the church’s exterior. The vandalism was motivated by the church’s connection to pregnancy resource centers.<sup>53</sup>

**Calvary Church, Olympia, Washington:** May 22, 2022

The anarchist group “Jane’s Revenge” spray-painted pro-abortion messages onto the church’s exterior. The vandalism was motivated by the church’s connection to pregnancy resource centers.<sup>54</sup>

**Mt. Avery Missionary Baptist Church, Columbus, Mississippi:** May 23, 2022

The church was spray-painted with pro-abortion messages.<sup>55</sup>

**St. Augustine Catholic Church, New York, New York:** May 28, 2022

The tabernacle was stolen, and statues of angels on the altar were beheaded and destroyed.<sup>56</sup>

**St. Mary Catholic Church, Vinton, Iowa:** June 2022

A pro-life sign outside of the church that read “Choose Life” was defaced; the message “Pro Choice, My Body My Choice” was spray-spayed over the sign.<sup>57</sup>

**St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Oakdale, California:** June 2022

The church was the target of multiple vandalisms, including broken windows and repeated damage to a sprinkler system.<sup>58</sup>

**Sierra Foothills Community Church, Oakdale, California:** June 2022

The church experienced multiple incidences of someone throwing rocks through the windows. Police believed the suspect was targeting churches.<sup>59</sup>

**Cornerstone Church, Ames, Iowa:** June 2, 2022

A shooting killed three people during the church’s college ministry program.<sup>60</sup>

**Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas:** June 5, 2022

Protestors interrupted a service, stripped down to their underwear, and chanted, “My body, my choice.”<sup>61</sup>

**Redemption to the Nations Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee:** June 10, 2022

The historic Phillips Chapel building owned by the church was set on fire and nearly burned down.<sup>62</sup>

**St. Veronica Church, Eastpointe, Michigan:** June 12, 2022

A pro-abortion protester interrupted mass and yelled, “Overturn *Roe*? Hell, no!” along with other pro-abortion messages.<sup>63</sup>

**St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, Vestavia Hills, Alabama:** June 17, 2022

A gunman opened fire at the church and killed three people.<sup>64</sup>

**St. Margaret’s Catholic Church, Buffalo, New York:** June 23, 2022

Statues outside the church were beheaded, and the church’s gardens were damaged.<sup>65</sup>

**Guardian Angel Roman Catholic Church, New York, New York:** June 24, 2022

The church was vandalized with pro-abortion messages, including “Separation [*sic*] Btwn Church + State.”<sup>66</sup>

**Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church, New Orleans, Louisiana:** June 25, 2022

A statue outside the church that honored the unborn victims of abortion was defaced.<sup>67</sup>

**St. John Neumann Catholic Church, Reston, Virginia:** June 25, 2022

The church was vandalized with crude messages, and police investigated the possibility of arson due to a small fire on the property.<sup>68</sup>

**All Saints Catholic Church, Portland, Oregon:** June 25, 2022

The church was vandalized with the message, “If abortions aren’t safe, neither are you.”<sup>69</sup>

**St. Anthony’s Catholic Church, Harlingen, Texas:** June 25, 2022

Two angel statues were stolen, and a statue of the Virgin Mary was knocked over.<sup>70</sup>

**St. Patrick Catholic Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** June 25 and July 12, 2022

On June 25, the phrase “Abort the church” was spray painted on a corner of the church building. On July 12, the church doors were vandalized with the pro-abortion message “My body my choice” and obscenities.<sup>71</sup>

**St. Anthony’s Catholic Parish, Renton, Washington:** June 25, 2022

Several stained-glass windows were destroyed, and hateful messages were spray-painted in the church.<sup>72</sup>

**St. Phillips AME Church, Tallahassee, Florida:** June 25, 2022

The church sign was vandalized with a pro-abortion message.<sup>73</sup>

**St. Teresa’s of Avila Catholic Church, Hutchinson, Kansas:** June 25, 2022

A pro-life sign was vandalized ahead of a vote on a pro-life amendment in Kansas.<sup>74</sup>

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, Chicago, Illinois:** June 26, 2022

Protestors interrupted mass, yelling and carrying signs with sayings such as “The Catholic Church had blood on its hands.”<sup>75</sup>

**St. Colman Catholic Church, Shady Spring, West Virginia:** June 26, 2022

The historic church building was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>76</sup>

**Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and St. Joseph School, Chicago, Illinois:** June 26, 2022

Pro-abortion activists disrupted mass, shouted slogans, distributed flyers, and displayed a sign that read, “The Catholic Church has Blood on its Hands.”<sup>77</sup>

**Ascension Roman Catholic Church, New York, New York:** June 27, 2022

The church was vandalized with aggressive pro-abortion messages.<sup>78</sup>

**Hinson Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon:** June 27, 2022

During a march protesting the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe*, a crowd of protestors vandalized the church, leaving behind obscenities and pro-abortion slogans, including "Abort the Court," "My trans," and "Abortion is a human right."<sup>79</sup>

**St. Brendan the Voyager Orthodox Church, Bullhead City, Arizona:** June 27, 2022

Someone threw a rock through a church window.<sup>80</sup>

**St. Therese Little Flower Catholic Church, South Bend, Indiana:** June 27, 2022

A memorial cross for unborn babies killed via abortion was vandalized.<sup>81</sup>

**St. George Catholic Church, Framingham, Massachusetts:** June 27, 2022

Red paint was splattered on a statue and the church entrance.<sup>82</sup>

**St. Louise Catholic Church, Bellevue, Washington:** June 28, 2022

The church was spray-painted with hateful anti-Catholic messages, and some of its windows were broken.<sup>83</sup>

**St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Lorain, Ohio:** June 30, 2022

An arsonist set fire to the school belonging to a Catholic church, causing \$1 million in fire damage.<sup>84</sup>

**St. Bernard Catholic Church, Weston, West Virginia:** July 2022

Someone climbed through a stained glass window and vandalized the church, causing extensive damage.<sup>85</sup>

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, Bakersfield, California:** July 2022

Stained glass windows were smashed, causing an estimated \$20,000 in damages.<sup>86</sup>

**Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Halstead, Kansas:** July 2022

A sign supporting a pro-life ballot initiative was pushed out of its wooden frame.<sup>87</sup>

**St. Peter's Catholic Church, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin: July 1, 2022**

The church was spray-painted with pro-abortion messages.<sup>88</sup>

**Holy Ghost Parish, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin: July 1, 2022**

The church was spray-painted with pro-abortion messages.<sup>89</sup>

**Notre Dame Catholic Church, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin: July 1, 2022**

The church was spray-painted with pro-abortion messages.<sup>90</sup>

**St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin: July 1, 2022**

The church was spray-painted with pro-abortion messages.<sup>91</sup>

**Holy Redeemer Church, Portland, Oregon: July 1, 2022**

Police drove away anarchist rioters who had planned a pro-abortion rally to "Abolish SCOTUS" following the U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision.<sup>92</sup>

**The Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, New York, New York: July 2, 2022**

Angry pro-abortion protestors disrupted mass.<sup>93</sup>

**St. Bernard Catholic Church, Madison, Wisconsin: July 2, 2022**

The church was vandalized with pro-abortion and anti-police messages.<sup>94</sup>

**Ramsey Freewill Baptist Church, Norton, Virginia: July 2, 2022**

Arson caused smoke damage to the church building and fire damage to several church pews and a wall.<sup>95</sup>

**Holy Family Catholic Church, Hillsborough, North Carolina: July 3, 2022**

The church was defaced with hateful, satanic, and pro-abortion messages.<sup>96</sup>



**Bible Missionary Church, Sumner, Washington: July 6, 2022**

The church building was vandalized with the anarchist symbol and an upside-down cross.<sup>97</sup>

**Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Ontario, Oregon: July 7, 2022**

A pro-life sign displayed outside the church that read “A baby is a person no matter how small” was vandalized.<sup>98</sup>

**St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, Upland, California: July 7, 2022**

Someone entered the church, set a small fire, and began threatening to kill everyone in the church, prompting his arrest.<sup>99</sup>

**ACTS Center, Redlands, California: July 8, 2022**

The church was vandalized three times in one week with curse words and anti-Christian messages.<sup>100</sup>

**St. Patrick Church, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania: July 9, 2022**

Two people damaged statues outside of the church.<sup>101</sup>

**St. John Neumann Parish, Lower Township, New Jersey: July 9, 2022**

A pro-life sign remembering the unborn victims of abortion was vandalized with the message, “Defenestrate babies.”<sup>102</sup>

**Wildwood Baptist Church, Bethesda, Maryland: July 9, 2022**

A fire was started outside the church, and headstones in the adjacent cemetery were damaged.<sup>103</sup>

**North Bethesda United Methodist Church, Bethesda, Maryland: July 9, 2022**

The church was set on fire in an arson attack.<sup>104</sup>

**St. Jane Frances de Chantal Parish, Bethesda, Maryland: July 10, 2022**

Multiple fires were set as part of an arson attack.<sup>105</sup>

**Church of the Ascension, Overland Park, Kansas: July 10, 2022**

A vandal painted explicit words and the phrase “My body, my choice” on the church and defaced a statue of Mary.<sup>106</sup>

**Kingdom Celebration Center, Gambrills, Maryland: July 11, 2022**

An African American church was vandalized with racist slurs inscribed onto the church door.<sup>107</sup>

**Cedarville Baptist Church, Cedarville, Illinois: July 14, 2022**

The church was vandalized with explicit language and anarchist symbols.<sup>108</sup>

**St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, Long Beach, Mississippi: July 15, 2022**

Two statues in the church garden were damaged.<sup>109</sup>

**Allen Chapel AME Church, Delano, California: July 17, 2022**

A vandal spray-painted the N-word on a church sign, on windows, in front of the church, on a brick facade, on the walkway, and on trash cans.<sup>110</sup>

**Three Hierarchs Greek Orthodox Church, New York, New York: July 17, 2022**

Someone scaled the exterior of the church and splattered black paint on the building.<sup>111</sup>

**St. Boniface Catholic Church, Springfield, Georgia: July 20, 2022**

A billboard in front of the church that read “God doesn’t make mistakes. Choose life!” was defaced by spray paint and a vile message overnight.<sup>112</sup>

**Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Houma, Louisiana: July 22, 2022**

Someone damaged three statues outside the church.<sup>113</sup>

**Holy Family Catholic Church, Kingsburg, California: July 23, 2022**

Statues of Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus were beheaded by a vandal.<sup>114</sup>

**Evangelical Lutheran Emmanuel Church, Dubois, Indiana:** July 25, 2022

The church was broken into, the property was vandalized, and several items were stolen.<sup>115</sup>

**Victory Baptist Church, Lawrence, Kansas:** July 31, 2022

Vandals defaced the church with pro-abortion graffiti, including messages such as “Protect Choice” and “Vote no,” referring to Kansas’ pro-life amendment on the ballot at the time.<sup>116</sup>

**Calvary Temple Assembly of God, Lawrence, Kansas:** July 31, 2022

The church was vandalized with the pro-abortion slogan “My body, my choice” and “Vote no,” referring to Kansas’ pro-life amendment on the ballot at the time.<sup>117</sup>

**San Clemente Mission Parish, East Bakersfield, California:** August 2, 2022

The church experienced multiple vandalisms over the span of a few months. In one particularly bad incident, surveillance cameras showed someone breaking the head off a statue outside the church and placing dead birds on statues.<sup>118</sup>

**The Basilica of St Patrick’s Old Cathedral, New York, New York:** August 6, 2022

Pro-abortion rioters harassed parishioners during a regularly scheduled pro-life gathering, screaming, “Tell those Nazis to come out.” Police made multiple arrests of pro-abortion protestors.<sup>119</sup>

**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Denver, Colorado:** August 6 and 8, 2022

Two drive-by shootings were carried out by a gunman after hours, targeting the doors and stained-glass windows of the church. No one was hurt.<sup>120</sup>

**The Promised Land Church, Spartanburg, South Carolina:** August 16, 2022

Signs belonging to the church and Christian school were vandalized. The pastor thinks the church was targeted due to its strong anti-abortion stance.<sup>121</sup>

**St. Mary’s Church, Evansville, Indiana:** August 17, 2022

A glass window was destroyed, and a door was busted out of its frame overnight.<sup>122</sup>

**St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Glens Falls, New York:** August 19, 2022

A pro-life memorial for unborn babies was vandalized outside the church. Graffiti with the word "Allah" was also left on an outdoor event tent at the church in the same incident.<sup>123</sup>

**Stonebridge United Methodist Church, McKinney, Texas:** August 28, 2022

The building was vandalized with a racist slur, curse words, multiple swastikas, and the ominous message "Not my best work yet..."<sup>124</sup>

**St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, Houston, Texas:** August 29, 2022

The church was burglarized, and cash was stolen from the offering box. Candlesticks and windows were also smashed in the incident.<sup>125</sup>

**St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Gibbsboro, New Jersey:** August 30, 2022

An Our Lady of Fatima statue, one of only four statues like it, was stolen from church grounds.<sup>126</sup>

**Live Oak Baptist Church, Gatesville, Texas:** September 3, 2022

Surveillance cameras caught someone entering the main sanctuary of the church and then leaving, followed by smoke because of a fire that had been set.<sup>127</sup>

**Victory Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California:** September 11, 2022

A historic church burned to the ground after a suspected arson attack.<sup>128</sup>

**Our Lady of the Angels Church, Sauk Centre, Minnesota:** September 16, 2022

Intoxicated vandals caused extensive damage to the interior of the church, including broken statues.<sup>129</sup>

**St. Hyacinth Church, Detroit, Michigan:** September 19, 2022

A church was robbed of donated items that were going to be raffled off during a fundraising event. Windows were also smashed in the incident.<sup>130</sup>

**St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania:** September 22, 2022

Thieves climbed up to the steeple and removed copper panels. This was the third time vandals had targeted the church using the same method.<sup>131</sup>

**The Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Bayside, California:** September 24-26, 2022

A church was defaced with politically themed graffiti, including messages such as “Kill MAGA/Pigs,” “BLM,” “Antifa,” “Wok-Up,” and “666.”<sup>132</sup>

**Eureka Seventh Day Adventist Church, Eureka, California:** September 24-26, 2022

A church was defaced with hateful messages.<sup>133</sup>

**St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Arcata, California:** September 24-26, 2022

A church was defaced with graffiti.<sup>134</sup>

**First Covenant Church, Eureka, California:** September 24-26, 2022

A church was defaced with graffiti.<sup>135</sup>

**St. Patrick’s Cathedral, New York, New York:** September 26, 2022

Pro-abortion protestors shouted “f--- the church” and other obscenities outside the church.<sup>136</sup>

## **2021**

**St. Patrick’s Cathedral, New York, New York:** January 1, 2021

The church was vandalized with anti-police graffiti.<sup>137</sup>

**Peace Lutheran Church, Neenah, Wisconsin:** January 7, 2021

The church was vandalized with obscenity directed at President Donald Trump.<sup>138</sup>

**Rosary Cathedral, Toledo, Ohio:** January 18, 2021

The front doors were set on fire, and the church was vandalized with messages, including “Jesus is Black.”<sup>139</sup>

**Oakley Chapel AME Church, Tebbetts, Missouri:** January 23, 2021

The historic church building was ransacked by several individuals and sustained damage to windows, doors, and pews.<sup>140</sup>

**St. Pius X Parish, El Paso, Texas:** February 9, 2021

Three angel statues were damaged.<sup>141</sup>

**St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Denver, Colorado:** February 16, 2021

The church’s altar was ransacked, and items around the altar were destroyed.<sup>142</sup>

**St. Mary of the Knobs Catholic Church, Floyds Knobs, Indiana:** February 23, 2021

A statue of Mary was spray-painted with the misspelled word “Harlat,” and the doors of a chapel were spray-painted with the word “Hell.”<sup>143</sup>

**Basilica of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Youngstown, Ohio:** February 26, 2021

Over \$20,000 worth of property was destroyed by a vandal overnight.<sup>144</sup>

**St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, Fort Worth, Texas:** February 28, 2021

Statues of Mary and St. Thomas were pushed off their pedestals and damaged; later, the statue of St. Thomas the Apostle was stolen and found beheaded with broken arms.<sup>145</sup>

**St. Teresa of Calcutta Church, Dorchester, Massachusetts:** March 12, 2021

An unknown putty-like substance was inserted into the locks of the church to prevent entry.<sup>146</sup>

**St. Monica-St. Augustine Church, Boston, Massachusetts:** March 12, 2021

A statue of Mary was knocked down, and an unknown substance was inserted into the locks on the church doors.<sup>147</sup>

**St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Washington, District of Columbia:** March 13, 2021

The church was vandalized with what appeared to be satanic graffiti.<sup>148</sup>

**First Baptist Church of Brevard, Brevard, North Carolina:** March 14, 2021

Multiple suspected "incendiary devices" were found near the church.<sup>149</sup>

**St. Charles Catholic Church, Spokane, Washington:** March 18, 2021

Part of St. Charles Parish School was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>150</sup>

**Pleasant View Church, Elkland, Missouri:** April 3, 2021

The historic church was vandalized on Easter weekend.<sup>151</sup>

**Emmanuel Christian Center, Spring Lake Park, Minnesota:** April 11, 2021

Two false calls were made to 911 indicating there was a bomb threat at the church, prompting an evacuation of the building.<sup>152</sup>

**St. Mary's Cathedral, Fargo, North Dakota:** April 16, 2021

The face of a statue of Jesus was vandalized.<sup>153</sup>

**Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Woodland, California:** April 17, 2021

Statues of Mary, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. John were vandalized with spray paint.<sup>154</sup>

**Liberty Live Church, Hampton Roads, Virginia:** April 18, 2021

Hoax bomb threats were called into multiple locations.<sup>155</sup>

**St. Elisabeth Catholic Church, Van Nuys, California:** April 21, 2021

A man smashed the face of a Virgin of Guadalupe mural with a sledgehammer.<sup>156</sup>

**St. John Vianney Catholic Church, Rancho Cordova, California:** April 25, 2021

A statue of Mary was slashed with black paint.<sup>157</sup>

**St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Waltham, Massachusetts:** May 2, 2021

A statue of Jesus was beheaded.<sup>158</sup>

**Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Riverside, California:** May 6, 2021

Stained glass windows were broken, and a statue of San Juan Diego was vandalized.<sup>159</sup>

**Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, Everett, Massachusetts:** May 8, 2021

Someone threw rocks through a stained glass window.<sup>160</sup>

**St. Thomas Moore Catholic Church, Narragansett, Rhode Island:** May 8, 2021

A statue of Jesus outside the church was damaged by someone using a blunt instrument.<sup>161</sup>

**St. Athanasius Catholic Church, New York, New York:** May 14, 2021

Someone knocked over and damaged a crucifix outside the church.<sup>162</sup>

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel-St. Benedicta-St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, New York, New York:**

May 15, 2021

Statues of Our Lady of Carmel and the Sacred Heart of Jesus were destroyed by a vandal.<sup>163</sup>

**Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, New York:** May 17, 2021

Someone beheaded a statue of baby Jesus.<sup>164</sup>



**Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Leavenworth, Washington:** May 27, 2021

Audio equipment was stolen, and multiple fire extinguishers were deployed by vandals inside the church.<sup>165</sup>

**St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Port Charlotte, Florida:** May 31, 2021

Someone vandalized stained glass windows and a statue of the Ten Commandments.<sup>166</sup>

**St. Patrick Catholic Church, Portland, Oregon:** June 2021

Vandals lit fires outside the church and defaced the building with graffiti.<sup>167</sup>

**Parsons Primitive Methodist Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania:** June 7, 2021

Someone ripped up a Bible, desecrated an American flag, discharged several fire extinguishers, and left feces throughout the building.<sup>168</sup>

**Immaculate Conception Church, New York, New York:** June 8, 2021

Graffiti was found on the church's exterior.<sup>169</sup>

**St. Veronica's Catholic Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** June 19, 2021

Two individuals set fire to the church doors.<sup>170</sup>

**St. Andrew Catholic Church, Portland, Oregon:** June 26, 2021

Someone broke a stained glass window, causing over \$2,000 in damages.<sup>171</sup>

**Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Denver, Colorado:** June 28, 2021

A church was vandalized with "1323" in red paint, referring to a controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>172</sup>

**Holy Rosary Church, Jersey City, New Jersey:** July 1, 2021

A statue of Mary with baby Jesus was vandalized and then stolen.<sup>173</sup>

**St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Portland, Oregon:** July 1, 2021

A group of people put red handprints across the front of the church, including the main doors and front steps, possibly in response to a controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>174</sup>

**St. James Cathedral, Seattle, Washington:** July 2, 2021

The church doors were vandalized with red paint and the message “We were children.” The incident corresponded with a wave of other incidents following the public controversy in Canada over the treatment of indigenous children in former Catholic-run schools.<sup>175</sup>

**St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, Merced, California:** July 4, 2021

Handprints with red paint were left across the entrance of the church, likely in connection to a controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>176</sup>

**New Vision Sanctuary Church of God in Christ, Camden, South Carolina:** July 4, 2021

A church wall was covered with vulgar and disturbing graffiti.<sup>177</sup>

**St. Lawrence Basilica, Asheville, North Carolina:** July 4, 2021

A statue of Jesus was covered in red paint.<sup>178</sup>

**St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Los Angeles, California:** July 7, 2021

Someone climbed the roof of the church and set fire to a wooden cross.<sup>179</sup>

**Holy Redeemer Church, Portland, Oregon:** July 12, 2021

The church doors were spray painted with an anarchist symbol and an obscene critique of colonialism in connection with the controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>180</sup>

**St. Mark’s United Methodist Church, Charleston, West Virginia:** July 13, 2021

Someone threw a rock through a church window, causing \$12,000 in damages.<sup>181</sup>

**Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, New York, New York:** July 17, 2021

Someone was caught on camera smashing statues of Mary and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, breaking them into pieces and dragging them 180 feet.<sup>182</sup>

**Christ the King Church, South Bend, Indiana:** July 25, 2021

A man broke into and vandalized a church.<sup>183</sup>

**St. Benedict Catholic Church, Seattle, Washington:** August 6, 2021

The church entryway was vandalized with handprints in black paint and the words “LAND BACK” written on the doors, in reference to the controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>184</sup>

**First Grace United Methodist Church, New Orleans, Louisiana:** August 6, 2021

Someone spray-painted over a sign in front of the church that read, “Love thy neighbor, get vaccinated.”<sup>185</sup>

**Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mary Catholic Church, New York, New York:** August 8, 2021

Someone launched “a fiery object” at a statue of Mary.<sup>186</sup>

**The Church of St. Joseph, Spring Valley, New York:** August 12, 2021

Someone riding past the church on a bicycle threw a rock at a statue outside the church, damaging it.<sup>187</sup>

**Global Vision Bible Church, Mount Juliet, Tennessee:** August 15, 2021

The inside and outside of the church building were vandalized, and hateful messages were spray-painted on church property, including “Your lies cost lives” and “FU.” This was likely in response to the pastor’s positions on COVID-19.<sup>188</sup>

**Mount Washington Missionary Baptist Church, Kansas City, Missouri:** August 16, 2021

A person was shot while serving in the church’s homeless ministry. The shooter reportedly did not like how the volunteer looked at him.<sup>189</sup>

**St. Michael's Catholic Church, New York, New York:** August 17, 2021

Someone jumped over a church fence and attacked a newly established statue of St. Bernadette, knocking it over and damaging it.<sup>190</sup>

**St. Martha Catholic Church, Miami Shores, Florida:** August 29 and September 29, 2021

Two statues were vandalized. One statue of Jesus had its hand knocked off; another statue in front of the parish office was left headless and handleless.<sup>191</sup>

**St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Jay, Maine:** September 2, 2021

The church's front entrance was vandalized with white spray paint at the same time that local businesses and other buildings were.<sup>192</sup>

**St. Louis Catholic Church, Louisville, Colorado:** September 5, 2021

The church was vandalized with pro-abortion messages, such as "My body, my choice."<sup>193</sup>

**Reeves Temple AME Zion Church, Davidson, North Carolina:** September 5, 9, and 10, 2021

The church was broken into and vandalized by teenagers on three separate occasions. The church's historic meeting hall was damaged.<sup>194</sup>

**Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Boulder, Colorado:** September 29, 2021

Vandals spray-painted pro-abortion messages and anarchist symbols on the church building, signs, and a truck.<sup>195</sup>

**First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Alabama:** September 29, 2021

An arsonist caused extensive damage by lighting multiple fires in the church building and causing smoke and soot to spread throughout.<sup>196</sup>

**Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Denver, Colorado:** October 10, 2021

The church was vandalized with anti-Catholic messages spray-painted on the walls. The messages included "Satan lives here," "White supremacists," and "Child rapists, LOL."<sup>197</sup>

**St. Edward Catholic Church, Seattle, Washington:** October 10, 2021

Vandals broke church windows and spray-painted the words “Stolen children” and “House of murder,” likely in connection with the controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>198</sup>

**St. Peter’s Italian Catholic Church, Los Angeles, California:** October 11, 2021

Red paint was splattered across the building, and the words “Land back” were spray painted near the entrance, likely in connection with the controversy over former Catholic-run schools for indigenous children in Canada.<sup>199</sup>

**American Martyrs Catholic Church, Manhattan Beach, California:** October 16, 2021

The church was vandalized with crude and hateful graffiti.<sup>200</sup>

**St. John’s Missionary Baptist Church, Somerville, Alabama:** October 18, 2021

Four children were caught ransacking the church, damaging pews, tables, couches, and pianos.<sup>201</sup>

**Annunciation Catholic Church, Washington, District of Columbia:** October 22, 2021

Someone painted a swastika on a pillar in the church parking lot.<sup>202</sup>

**Berachah Church, Middletown, Ohio:** October 22, 2021

Four juveniles broke into the church, spray-painted vulgar images, and broke LED lights.<sup>203</sup>

**St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Tacoma, Washington:** October 24, 2021

The parish office was badly damaged by a fire set by a serial arsonist.<sup>204</sup>

**Greater New Life Church, Roseville, Michigan:** October 24, 2021

The church was vandalized with swastikas and the word “Die.”<sup>205</sup>

**St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Fargo, North Dakota:** October 31, 2021

A statue of St. Anthony was beheaded.<sup>206</sup>

**College Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Texarkana, Arkansas:** November 2, 2021

A suspicious package was found inside the church, and the building was in disarray.<sup>207</sup>

**Mission San Jose, Fremont, California:** November 5, 2021

The church was vandalized with spray-painted messages such as “Land back,” “Catholicism is a colonizer religion,” and “Genocide is not a spectacle.”<sup>208</sup>

**Nashville Light Mission Pentecostal Church, Nashville, Tennessee:** November 7, 2021

A gunman interrupted a church service, waving a gun in the air and pointing it at congregants before the pastor managed to tackle him and call the police.<sup>209</sup>

**St. Catharine’s Church, Columbus, Ohio:** November 8, 2021

Police investigated a bomb threat at the church.<sup>210</sup>

**St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral, Chicago, Illinois:** November 9, 2021

A 100-year-old church in Chicago’s Ukrainian Village was vandalized.<sup>211</sup>

**St. Monica and Luke Church, Gary, Indiana:** November 13, 2021

A gunman fired into a crowd just as a funeral was letting out, injuring two men, one of them fatally.<sup>212</sup>

**St. Peter’s Catholic Church, DeLand, Florida:** November 25-29, 2021

Windows were smashed and statues toppled as part of a set of incidents against three local churches.<sup>213</sup>

**Tomoka Christian Church, DeLand, Florida:** November 26, 2021

Windows were smashed and statues toppled as part of a set of incidents against three local churches.<sup>214</sup>

**DeLand Wesleyan Church, DeLand, Florida:** November 25-29, 2021

Windows were smashed and statues toppled as part of a set of incidents against three local churches.<sup>215</sup>

**Lititz Church of the Brethren, Lititz, Pennsylvania:** December 4, 2021

The church grounds were vandalized with satanic imagery and messages drawn in chalk, including the phrases “Hail Satan” and “Kill God.”<sup>216</sup>

**Olive Baptist Church, Pensacola, Florida:** December 4-5, 2021

Police confronted a vandal suspected of spray-painting graffiti at several local churches, including Olive Baptist Church, where the damage was estimated to be around \$66,700.<sup>217</sup>

**Marcus Pointe Baptist Church, Pensacola, Florida:** December 4-5, 2021

The church was vandalized with spray-painted messages, such as “Depart from me wicked” and “I am so holy.” This was part of a small rash of vandalisms in the Pensacola area by the same individual.<sup>218</sup>

**St. Andrew Orthodox Church, Pensacola, Florida:** December 4-5, 2021

The church was vandalized with the word “Depart” spray-painted on the church sign. This was part of a small rash of vandalisms in the Pensacola area by the same individual.<sup>219</sup>

**Victory Bible Baptist Church, Pensacola, Florida:** December 4-5, 2021

A vandal spray-painted the words “Depart from me” on the church’s front doors. This was part of a small rash of vandalisms in the Pensacola area by the same individual.<sup>220</sup>

**Legacy Church, Pensacola, Florida:** December 4-5, 2021

The church was struck in a small rash of vandalisms in the Pensacola area by the same individual.<sup>221</sup>

**Calvary Christian Center, Pensacola, Florida:** December 4-5, 2021

The church was struck in a small rash of vandalisms in the Pensacola area by the same individual.<sup>222</sup>

**Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, District of Columbia:**

December 5, 2021

A vandal cut off the hands, nose, and part of the crown of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima.<sup>223</sup>

**Mary Mother of God Church, Hillsborough, New Jersey:** December 12, 23, and 29, 2021

The church experienced three incidences of vandalism and theft, including having mail and Christmas decorations stolen from its property and other decorations destroyed.<sup>224</sup>

**Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Portland, Indiana:** December 13, 2021

An arsonist set fire to the church and rectory because he believed Catholics were “at fault” for the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>225</sup>

**Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church, Oldsmar, Florida:** December 18, 2021

A homeless man broke into the church, ransacked the building, and threw church items outside. The damage to the building cost an estimated \$50,000 and prompted the church building to remain closed during Christmas.<sup>226</sup>

**Emmanuel United Methodist Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** December 27, 2021

Bandits ransacked the church building, stealing doors, stained glass windows, and chairs behind the pulpit, causing an estimated \$11,000 in damages.<sup>227</sup>

## 2020

**St. Anthony’s Catholic Church, Casper, Wyoming:** May 6, 2020

Someone entered the church through an unlocked door and began knocking things over and kicking property throughout the building, causing an estimated \$25,000 in damages.<sup>228</sup>

**Basilica of St. Mary, Minneapolis, Minnesota:** May 28, 2020

Riots in Minneapolis following the death of George Floyd, a black man who was killed by a police officer on May 25, 2020, are believed to be linked to a small fire set in the basilica that caused minor damage.<sup>229</sup>



**St. Jude Chapel, Dallas, Texas:** May 29, 2020

Vandals threw rocks through church windows as a part of riots responding to the death of George Floyd.<sup>230</sup>

**Cathedral of the Assumption, Louisville, Kentucky:** May 29, 2020

Vandals threw rocks through church windows as a part of riots responding to the death of George Floyd.<sup>231</sup>

**St. Mary's Basilica, Minneapolis, Minnesota:** May 29, 2020

During riots responding to the death of George Floyd, a fire was lit under a church pew, causing minor damage.<sup>232</sup>

**Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon-St. Peter Cathedral, Los Angeles, California:** May 30, 2020

The church was vandalized as a part of riots responding to the death of George Floyd. The phrases "Prosecute killer cops," "ACAB" (All Cops Are Bastards), "Kill all cops," and "Make America pay for its crimes against Black lives" were all spray-painted on the exterior of the building.<sup>233</sup>

**St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, New York:** May 30, 2020

Vandals spray-painted "BLM" and "George Floyd," along with vulgar messages and anti-police slogans.<sup>234</sup>

**Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Denver, Colorado:** May 30-31, 2020

The church exterior was damaged over multiple nights, including smashed gates and graffiti with messages such as "God is dead" and "There is no God," and windows shattered.<sup>235</sup>

**St. Olaf Catholic Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota:** Late May 2020

The church sustained minor property damage during riots following the death of George Floyd.<sup>236</sup>

**Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel, Flagstaff, Arizona:** June 16, 2020

A historic church was vandalized.<sup>237</sup>

**St. Ann Catholic Parish, Gary, Indiana: July 2, 2020**

A statue of Mary was beheaded.<sup>238</sup>

**St. Bernadette Catholic Church, Rockford, Illinois: July 5-6, 2020**

A crucifix was vandalized.<sup>239</sup>

**Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Ocala, Florida: July 11, 2020**

While parishioners were getting ready for mass, someone crashed a minivan through the main doors, poured gasoline inside the church, and lit it on fire, causing substantial damage.<sup>240</sup>

**St. Peter Parish, Dorchester, Massachusetts: July 11, 2020**

Someone set fire to plastic flowers that were in the hands of a statue of Mary, burning the face and upper body of the statue.<sup>241</sup>

**St. Stephen Catholic Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee: July 11, 2020**

A statue of Mary was beheaded.<sup>242</sup>

**Mission San Gabriel Arcángel, Los Angeles, California: July 11, 2020**

An arson attack destroyed the roof and interior of the mission.<sup>243</sup>

**Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Punta Gorda, Florida: July 11, 2020**

Someone damaged multiple statues and knocked many over, including a statue of Jesus.<sup>244</sup>

**St. Mary's Cathedral, Colorado Springs, Colorado: July 14, 2020**

A statue of Mary was spray-painted with red paint, covering a cross on the statue and painting the statue's toenails.<sup>245</sup>

**Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Miami, Florida: July 14, 2020**

A statue of Jesus in the church courtyard was found toppled over and beheaded.<sup>246</sup>

**St. Joseph's Catholic Church, New Haven, Connecticut:** July 15, 2020

Satanic symbols were painted on the church doors.<sup>247</sup>

**Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church, Bloomingburg, New York:** July 18-19, 2020

A memorial to unborn children killed by abortion was knocked over.<sup>248</sup>

**Sacred Heart Church, Weymouth, Massachusetts:** August 2, 2020

Police believe a Molotov cocktail was thrown at the church overnight in an arson attempt. The only damage was charring on the door.<sup>249</sup>

**Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Wounded Knee, South Dakota:** August 8, 2020

The church building was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>250</sup>

**Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, Denver, Colorado:** August 9, 2020

A statue of St. Jude was beheaded, and dozens of candles in the courtyard were destroyed.<sup>251</sup>

**Holy Family Parish, Citrus Heights, California:** August 17, 2020

A copy of the Ten Commandments was spray painted with a swastika, and a statue of Mary was beheaded.<sup>252</sup>

**Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania:** August 24, 2020

Someone appears to have attempted to behead a statue of Mary, causing half of the statue's face to be broken off and part of the veil to be damaged.<sup>253</sup>

**St. James Catholic Church, Kenosha, Wisconsin:** August 24, 2020

Vandals smashed several windows at the church property and painted the word "Burn" on the church's front door, an upside-down cross on the exterior of the church building, and the words "God is dead" on construction equipment on the parish school property. The acts occurred during riots in Kenosha over Jacob Blake, a black man who was shot by police.<sup>254</sup>

**Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Tioga, Louisiana:** September 9, 2020

An individual caught on camera destroyed as much as he could around the exterior of the church for two hours, throwing statues and planters against the building and destroying windows and doors.<sup>255</sup>

**Shrine Church of Our Lady of Solace, New York, New York:** September 11, 2020

A vandal toppled a statue of Mary and caused an estimated \$4,000 in damages.<sup>256</sup>

**St. Therese of the Child Jesus Catholic Church, Midvale, Utah:** September 13-14, 2020

One day apart, a statue of St. Therese was smashed, and a parish property was broken into and vandalized.<sup>257</sup>

**St. Patrick's Cathedral, El Paso, Texas:** September 15, 2020

A 90-year-old statue of Jesus was beheaded.<sup>258</sup>

**St. Peter Armenian Church, Van Nuys, California:** September 17, 2020

A vandal destroyed eight very rare stained glass windows with a baseball bat.<sup>259</sup>

**Incarnation Catholic Church, Town 'n' Country, Florida:** September 18, 2020

Someone broke into the church and set three pews on fire, attempting to burn the church down.<sup>260</sup>

**Our Mother of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, El Cajon, California:** September 25, 2020

The church was vandalized with spray-painted swastikas. A second church in El Cajon experienced similar vandalism the same day.<sup>261</sup>

**St. Peter's Chaldean Catholic Cathedral, El Cajon, California:** September 25, 2020

The church was vandalized with spray-painted swastikas. A second church in El Cajon experienced similar vandalism the same day.<sup>262</sup>

**Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, Fall River, Massachusetts:** September 29, 2020

Someone threw a cinderblock through a church window.<sup>263</sup>

**St. Joseph Cupertino Catholic Church, Fall River, Massachusetts:** September 29, 2020

Someone beheaded statues of baby Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.<sup>264</sup>

**Mission San Rafael Arcángel, San Rafael, California:** October 12, 2020

Activists defaced a statue of St. Junipero Serra with red spray paint before tearing it down on California's Indigenous People's Day.<sup>265</sup>

**Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Magnolia, Arkansas:** October 19, 2020

A pro-life display consisting of 150 small white crosses and a banner were knocked down.<sup>266</sup>

**Resurrection Roman Catholic Church, New York, New York:** October 20, 2020

Someone cracked the head and broke a hand off a statue of Mary.<sup>267</sup>

**St. Germaine Catholic Church, Prescott Valley, Arizona:** October 20, 2020

Statues of Mary and Jesus were found toppled; gardens surrounding the statues were also damaged.<sup>268</sup>

**St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Scranton, Pennsylvania:** October 21, 2020

A vandal toppled a statue of Mary.<sup>269</sup>

**St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church, Louisville, Kentucky:** October 25, 2020

Someone broke into the church and vandalized the altar until he was apprehended.<sup>270</sup>

**Mother Cabrini Catholic Church, Shamokin, Pennsylvania:** November 8, 2020

Someone battered a statue of St. Teresa and stole Jesus' head from a crucifix held by the statue.<sup>271</sup>

**St. Mary's Catholic Church, Chicago, Illinois:** November 9, 2020

The exterior of the church was vandalized, and "God is dead" was spray-painted on a wall.<sup>272</sup>

**New Testament Baptist Church, Brewster, Washington:** November 15, 2020

The church experienced serious fire damage in an apparent arson attack. A nearby Catholic church experienced a fire at the same time.<sup>273</sup>

**Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Brewster, Washington:** November 15, 2020

The church experienced fire damage in an apparent arson attack. A nearby Baptist church experienced a fire at the same time.<sup>274</sup>

**St. Bernard Catholic Church, Sunrise, Florida:** November 23, 2020

Someone was caught on camera throwing rocks at the church, then pouring accelerant in the garden and lighting it on fire. Statues of Jesus, Mary, and St. Francis were also damaged.<sup>275</sup>

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, Derry, Pennsylvania:** November and December 2020

The church experienced multiple break-ins and acts of vandalism within the span of a few months, causing thousands of dollars in damages.<sup>276</sup>

**St. Louis Catholic Church, Houma, Louisiana:** December 6, 2020

Someone broke into the church and left strange messages inside and outside, including “This is the end!” and “What is real will prosper.”<sup>277</sup>

**Mission San Juan Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, California:** December 11, 2020

The 244-year-old church was tagged with graffiti on the front doors.<sup>278</sup>

**St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Indiana:** December 25, 2020

The church nativity scene was vandalized.<sup>279</sup>

**Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, Fall River, Massachusetts:** December 26, 2020

Someone damaged several of the church’s stained glass windows.<sup>280</sup>

**Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Houston, Texas:** December 29, 2020

A statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe was struck by at least six bullets.<sup>281</sup>

## 2019

**Filipino-American Mission Church and Iglesia Bautista Nuevo Comienzo, Sanford, North Carolina:**

January 6, 2019

The church building was broken into, musical instruments were broken, televisions toppled, supplies scattered, and trash tossed around the sanctuary and other rooms.<sup>282</sup>

**St. Paul AME Church, Atlanta, Georgia:** January 21, 2019

The church was vandalized with graffiti, including “666” and “Payback.”<sup>283</sup>

**St. Patrick Catholic Church, Watsonville, California:** February 7, 2019

A woman caused \$15,000 in damages during a vandalism spree that included pushing over a 15-foot crucifix statue on the altar, toppling another religious statue in a prayer room, and tearing down two large pieces of artwork.<sup>284</sup>

**Burton Memorial Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Kentucky:** February 8, 2019

The church building was spray-painted with an upside-down cross, a frowning ghost, and the phrase “God’s not real.” The parking lot was spray-painted with a message containing a racial slur and a smiley face.<sup>285</sup>

**St. John Catholic Church, Howell, Michigan:** February 18, 2019

The church’s property was vandalized at two locations with spray-painted graffiti.<sup>286</sup>

**Central Baptist Church, Conway, Arkansas:** February 28, 2019

A vandal destroyed \$100,000 of church property, including laptops, cameras, and other electronics. Six months later, the perpetrator was baptized in the church’s baptismal pool by associate pastor Mike Lefler.<sup>287</sup>

**Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Montclair, California:** March 1, 2019

Statues of Mary and St. Bernadette were beheaded.<sup>288</sup>

**St. Mary Catholic Church, Neillsville, Wisconsin:** March 1, 2019

Statues, picture frames, holy water stands, crosses, and candles were broken, and the baptismal pool was damaged. Prior to the attack, the alleged vandal had joined a cult.<sup>289</sup>

**Greater Iowa City Church of the Nazarene, Iowa City, Iowa:** March 3, 2019

The church was defaced with racist graffiti, including swastikas.<sup>290</sup>

**St. Mary Baptist Church, Port Barre, Louisiana:** March 26, 2019

In November 2020, Holden Matthews was sentenced to 25 years in prison for setting fire to three historic black churches, including St. Mary Baptist in March 2019.<sup>291</sup>

**Wilborne Baptist Church, Waverly, Virginia:** March 29, 2019

The church was vandalized with a black, spray-painted image on an outer wall. The skull-like image left church leaders and other observers puzzled as to its meaning.<sup>292</sup>

**St. Margaret Mary Church, Chino, California:** March 31, 2019

A statue of St. Margaret Mary was beheaded.<sup>293</sup>

**Greater Union Baptist Church, Opelousas, Louisiana:** April 2, 2019

This was the second historically black church set on fire by Holden Matthews (see March 26, 2019, above).<sup>294</sup>

**Church in the City-Beth Abraham, Denver, Colorado:** April 2, 2019

A Messianic Jewish (Christian) church was vandalized with graffiti, including a swastika.<sup>295</sup>



**Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Opelousas, Louisiana:** April 4, 2019

This was the third historically black church set on fire by Holden Matthews (see March 26, 2019, above).<sup>296</sup>

**Midway Presbyterian Church, Anderson, South Carolina:** April 14, 2019

Vandals broke windows and spray-painted two messages on the church's exterior walls: "SUBMIT TO GOD THRU ISLAM" and "MUHAMMED IS HIS PROPHET."<sup>297</sup>

**Green Acres Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas:** April 19, 2019

A woman spray-painted what appeared to be the word "Creep" on the building.<sup>298</sup>

**St. Anthony Church, Maui, Hawaii:** April 21, 2019

The church was vandalized on Easter Sunday, the second time in a month. Statuary, pictures, and relics of saints were destroyed, and the walls were written on with lipstick.<sup>299</sup>

**St. John's Cathedral, Fresno, California:** April 24, 2019

A man threatened the bishop and priests, then proceeded to vandalize the statuary and break windows. He returned an hour later with a club, hit the church walls, and broke more glass and objects outside. The estimated cost of all the damages was over \$25,000.<sup>300</sup>

**Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Phoenix, Arizona:** May 1, 2019

The church was broken into, burglarized, and vandalized.<sup>301</sup>

**St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Phoenix, Arizona:** May 1, 2019

The church was gutted by a fire.<sup>302</sup>

**St. Matthew Catholic Church, El Paso, Texas:** May 7, 2019

An attempt was made to throw a Molotov cocktail through the church's windows. No windows were broken, and the device bounced on the sidewalk.<sup>303</sup>

**St. Patrick's Cathedral, El Paso, Texas:** May 13, 2019

An attempt was made to throw a Molotov cocktail through the church's windows. No windows were broken, and the device bounced on the sidewalk.<sup>304</sup>

**All Saints Catholic Church, Babcock, Wisconsin:** May 14, 2019

Religious hate slogans and swastikas were spray-painted on the church building.<sup>305</sup>

**Babcock Community Church, Babcock, Wisconsin:** May 14, 2019

The church building was vandalized with religious hate slogans and swastikas.<sup>306</sup>

**Notre Dame de Lourdes Catholic Church, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania:** May 19, 2019

The message "You do not have the right to decide how others live" was spray-painted across the church entrance. Another message, "#Prochoice," was painted on the bricks at the side of the church.<sup>307</sup>

**Faith United Church of Christ and Rehoboth Worship Center, Hammond, Indiana:** May 29, 2019

Vandals inflicted thousands of dollars in damages to the organ, the altar, the office, and the bathrooms.<sup>308</sup>

**The Word Lutheran Church, Stevens Point, Wisconsin:** June 2, 2019

Vandals gained access to the church roof and spray-painted a depiction of male genitalia, an anarchy symbol, and the letters "G" and "D" on the building's air conditioning unit.<sup>309</sup>

**Hepsibah Baptist Church, Oconee County, South Carolina:** June 2, 2019

The church was vandalized with satanic graffiti and related emblems.<sup>310</sup>

**Co-Cathedral of St. Thomas More, Tallahassee, Florida:** June 10, 2019

The cathedra and presiders' chairs were set on fire, the sanctuary walls were charred, and there was smoke damage.<sup>311</sup>

**Friendship United Methodist, Seneca, South Carolina:** June 11, 2019

Over 20 headstones in the church graveyard were displaced.<sup>312</sup>

**Flowing Wells Assembly of God, Tucson, Arizona:** June 13, 2019

The church was vandalized with satanic messages, profanity, and related symbols.<sup>313</sup>

**San Judas Tadeo Catholic Church, El Paso, Texas:** June 15, 2019

A Molotov-cocktail-like device was used to start a fire inside the church.<sup>314</sup>

**Greater Bethlehem Temple Church, Jackson, Mississippi:** June 17, 2019

Vandals spray-painted graffiti on the church's exterior and broke a window.<sup>315</sup>

**Legacy International Worship Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania:** June 19, 2019

A Syrian refugee was arrested for allegedly planning to bomb the church. He pleaded guilty in September 2019.<sup>316</sup>

**New Life Assembly Church, Lima, Ohio:** June 20, 2019

The church's exterior was spray-painted with the messages "God is a woman, and she is gay," "Love is love," "Pride," "God is dead," "All people are equal," and "Be kind."<sup>317</sup>

**Second Baptist Church, Palermo, Maine:** June 25, 2019

A church sign with movable lettering was changed to read, "Jesus Made Adam & Steve, Not Adam & Eve." It previously said, "Jesus Made Adam & Eve, Not Adam & Steve." A pro-life poster that was located below the sign was stolen.<sup>318</sup>

**First Lutheran Church, Crowley, Louisiana:** Early July 2019

Vandals threw a padlock through a stained glass window in the first of five incidents in Crowley in 2019.<sup>319</sup>

**St. Augustine Catholic Church, Lamont, California:** July 1, 2019

Video cameras captured a man breaking into a church office, using a microwave to warm up and eat homemade tamales (for which the church's fundraisers are locally famous), relaxing for a few hours, then ransacking the office and making off with televisions and phones.<sup>320</sup>

**Johnson Chapel AME Church, Santa Ana, California:** July 2, 2019

A man confessed to vandalizing the church's exterior with a large pipe.<sup>321</sup>

**Kawaiahao Church, Honolulu, Hawaii:** July 3, 2019

Vandals damaged more than two dozen headstones in the church cemetery.<sup>322</sup>

**St. James Cathedral, Seattle, Washington:** July 8, 2019

A mentally ill man attacked a statue with a rock, breaking the arm of the child Jesus and damaging the face of Mary.<sup>323</sup>

**Antelope Springs Methodist Episcopal Church, Snyder, Colorado:** July 14, 2019

The 104-year-old church, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, was set on fire, resulting in extensive damage to the interior.<sup>324</sup>

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, Brookfield, Connecticut:** July 14, 2019

Graffiti reading "Abolish ICE" was discovered on an exterior wall of the church.<sup>325</sup>

**Bible Baptist Church, Pickens, South Carolina:** July 20, 2019

A wall was graffitied with a call to release a local man accused of committing a pipe bombing. Two other churches nearby were also vandalized.<sup>326</sup>

**Pickens View Wesleyan Church, Pickens, South Carolina:** July 20, 2019

The tires of a church van were slashed. Two other churches nearby were also vandalized.<sup>327</sup>

**Stoney Ridge Missionary Baptist Church, Eldersburg, Maryland:** July 27, 2019

A vandal spray-painted obscenities on the church's front sign and exterior. The graffiti included the word "Racist," swastikas, devil worship symbols, and curse words.<sup>328</sup>

**Living Hope Covenant Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado:** August 3, 2019

The church, which has been repeatedly vandalized, was spray-painted with satanic graffiti.<sup>329</sup>

**The Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan:** August 7, 2019

Vandals spray-painted satanic imagery on the church's doors along with "666."<sup>330</sup>

**St. Joseph Catholic Church, Bryson City, North Carolina:** August 7, 2019

A vandal sledgehammered a crucifix outside the church building and two inside. During the incident, a group of female parishioners was in the church basement for a birthday party.<sup>331</sup>

**Maranatha Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Montgomery, Alabama:** August 25, 2019

The church's sound system was thrown on the sanctuary floor, tapes and CDs were scattered on the pews, the pulpit and pews were overturned, drawers were open, and items were strewn about.<sup>332</sup>

**Cathedral Basilica of St. Joseph, San Jose, California:** September 1, 2019

Satanic and antisemitic graffiti was spray-painted on the outside walls.<sup>333</sup>

**St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Lynn, Massachusetts:** September 6, 2019

Two icons were vandalized with anti-Christian symbolism, including an upside-down cross, the number "666," and an anarchy symbol.<sup>334</sup>

**South Bay Pentecostal Church, Chula Vista, California:** September 7, 2019

Vandals spray-painted graffiti on the church walls, including messages promoting "Lucifer," "Satan," and "King of Hell." The church has been openly critical of the Chula Vista Public Library for sanctioning an event at which drag queens read to children.<sup>335</sup>

**St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church, New York, New York:** September 8 and 15, 2019

A vandal damaged the rosary stations, parish signs, and sprinkler system. In a previous incident a week earlier, the same person was caught on video tearing down signs and damaging plants in the church parking lot.<sup>336</sup>

**Newhall Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles, California:** September 12, 2019

Deputies arrested a nearly naked man after he allegedly vandalized the church and ran onto the freeway.<sup>337</sup>

**St. Michael Church, Jersey City, New Jersey:** September 13, 2019

The face of a statue of Mary was covered with feces and a cigarette.<sup>338</sup>

**Ideal Family Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>339</sup>

**Singing Hills Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>340</sup>

**Pearly Gates Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>341</sup>

**St. Paul Lutheran Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>342</sup>

**Beth Eden Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>343</sup>

**St. Luke Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>344</sup>

**St. Phillips Missionary Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas:** September 16, 2019

One of at least seven churches in the area vandalized with anti-Christian messages in red spray paint.<sup>345</sup>

**Mount Lebanon Baptist Church, Greer, South Carolina:** September 17, 2019

A church cemetery was vandalized in what was described as the latest in “a growing list of more than a dozen Upstate churches damaged in property crimes over the past year.”<sup>346</sup>

**Mammoth Cave Baptist Church, Mammoth Cave, Kentucky:** September 21, 2019

The historic structure was spray-painted with letters and drawings.<sup>347</sup>

**Venture Church, Hattiesburg, Mississippi:** September 24, 2019

Vandals covered multiple windows, walls, and doors with red spray paint, including the bizarre phrases “God forbids materials in heaven” and “Why so serious?”<sup>348</sup>

**Chapel of the Holy Cross, Sedona, Arizona:** September 25, 2019

A vandal swung a crowbar at the altar and spray-painted the word “Evil” outside on the sidewalk. A tweet about the incident observed that the vandal was “screaming about the Catholic Church supporting human trafficking as he left.”<sup>349</sup>

**St. Vincent de Paul Church, Bayonne, New Jersey:** September 25, 2019

A man uprooted a crucifix outside the church, threw it on the ground, and smashed it against a wall, breaking it into pieces. This was at least the third church in the county to be vandalized that month.<sup>350</sup>

**One Church, Memphis, Tennessee:** September 29, 2019

The church’s new sound equipment and the previous week’s tithes and offering were stolen. The sanctuary was vandalized, with paint spattered on the walls and carpet and chairs slashed. Community members helped clean up the wreckage, lifting the spirits of the congregation.<sup>351</sup>

**St. Alban’s Episcopal Church, Syracuse, New York:** October 1, 2019

A “666” and a pentagram were spray-painted on a wall, a side door, and the wheelchair access ramp.<sup>352</sup>

**St. Theresa Catholic Church, Crowley, Louisiana:** October 11, 2019

A glass door at a historically black church was found shattered by a brick or piece of concrete.<sup>353</sup>

**New Jerusalem Baptist Church, Wichita, Kansas:** October 16, 2019

The church's exterior was vandalized with racist graffiti, which included the name of a street gang, a Nazi symbol, and obscene drawings.<sup>354</sup>

**Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Crowley, Louisiana:** October 16, 2019

A brick was thrown into the historically black church's glass door.<sup>355</sup>

**First Church of the Nazarene, Crowley, Louisiana:** October 16, 2019

A glass door was broken by a brick or piece of concrete.<sup>356</sup>

**Revival Temple Church of God in Christ, Las Vegas, Nevada:** October 18, 2019

An African American church was vandalized with a spray-painted swastika.<sup>357</sup>

**Jerusalem Baptist Church, Crowley, Louisiana:** October 21, 2019

A brick was thrown into the historically black church's glass door, making it the fifth church to have been targeted in Crowley in four months.<sup>358</sup>

**Saints Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church, Corpus Christi, Texas:** October 29, 2019

Someone threw glass and candle wax at an outdoor statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe.<sup>359</sup>

**Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, New York, New York:** November 3, 2019

A former New York University sociology professor was arrested and charged with hate crimes after he allegedly uprooted plants outside the Brooklyn church, threw them at the main church door, and damaged a \$5,000 statue of a saint. Monsignor Jamie Gigantiello believed the perpetrator was drunk, but he added that the disturbing exhibition of "violence, anger, and hatred" was "definitely an attack on the Catholic Church."<sup>360</sup>



**The Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta, Augusta, Georgia:** November 16, 2019

The building was painted with a Star of David (representing the Jewish faith) in a circle with a diagonal line crossing through it and the quote “God will not be mocked.”<sup>361</sup>

**First Lutheran Church, Crowley, Louisiana:** November 22, 2019

Vandals struck a church in Crowley for the sixth time in five months. This attack was the second for First Lutheran Church. The glass windows at the church’s education center were shattered with a brick or piece of concrete.<sup>362</sup>

**St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, El Paso, Texas:** December 5, 2019

A vandal destroyed nearly a half-dozen windows and doors and started a small fire in one of the parish offices. This was the fourth El Paso Catholic church to be vandalized in 2019.<sup>363</sup>

## **2018**

**Church of the Angels, Pasadena, California:** January 13, 2018

Vandals sprayed graffiti on the inside of the 129-year-old church before setting a fire and causing substantial damage to the church’s interior.<sup>364</sup>

**Salt and Light Presbyterian Church, Buford, Georgia:** January 17, 2018

Someone stole a church van and set it on fire in another location.<sup>365</sup>

**Resurrection Catholic Church, Los Angeles, California:** January 25, 2018

The church suffered an arson attack and vandalism.<sup>366</sup>

**Bessie Road Baptist Church, Piedmont, South Carolina:** January 28, 2018

Two large wooden crosses were cut down outside the church.<sup>367</sup>

**Joy Fellowship Church, Piedmont, South Carolina:** January 28, 2018

The church was spray-painted with the words “Venceremos por el Diablo,” or “We will overcome for the devil.”<sup>368</sup>

**Mount Zion Baptist Church, Mitchell County, Georgia:** January 30, 2018

An arson attack heavily damaged the interior of the church.<sup>369</sup>

**Living Word Lutheran Church, Orland Park, Illinois:** Late January 2018

The church endured multiple acts of vandalism, including broken windows, attempted arson, and graffiti.<sup>370</sup>

**St. Augustine Catholic Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma:** February 18, 2018

Someone shattered a window and broke a statue of Mary.<sup>371</sup>

**Life Spring Community Church, Simpsonville, South Carolina:** February 25, 2018

Vandals spray-painted “To hell with Billy Graham. We venerate satan. We love him” on an exterior wall. Another church in the area experienced a similar incident at the same time.<sup>372</sup>

**Pentecostal Church of God, Piedmont, South Carolina:** February 25, 2018

Vandals spray-painted “Down with Billy Graham, the devil lives,” along with satanic symbols outside the church. Another church in the area experienced a similar incident at the same time.<sup>373</sup>

**First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Idaho Falls, Idaho:** March 3, 2018

The church was vandalized, and \$10,000 in property was stolen.<sup>374</sup>

**Upward Baptist Church, Flat Rock, North Carolina:** March 4, 2018

The church was vandalized with vulgar messages directed toward Jesus and Rev. Billy Graham.<sup>375</sup>

**Seed Planters Church McDonough, McDonough, Georgia:** March 19, 2018

Vandals spray-painted satanic and other offensive imagery around the building.<sup>376</sup>

**Our Lady of the Lake Church, Verona, New Jersey:** March 25, 2018

Statues of Jesus, St. John, and Mary were broken on Palm Sunday.<sup>377</sup>

**New Vision Ministries Church, Lincolnton, North Carolina:** March 24-25, 2018

A church sign, the parking lot, and a dumpster were spray-painted with offensive symbols, including “666” and swastikas.<sup>378</sup>

**Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, San Diego, California:** April 2, 2018

Someone threw a wooden kneeler through a window of the church and proceeded to vandalize the building.<sup>379</sup>

**Lake Bowen Baptist Church, Inman, South Carolina:** April 5, 2018

Teens broke into the church and strewed chocolate sauce, caramel, jelly, sprinkles, soap, and snow cone syrup across the church floor and walls and stuck knives in the wall.<sup>380</sup>

**Bethel Church of Nazarene, Spokane, Washington:** April 6, 2018

Multiple people broke into the church and ate food from the church kitchen, stole a guitar, and ripped a drinking fountain and urinal off of the walls, causing \$2,000 in damages.<sup>381</sup>

**Milford Heights Church of Christ, Goshen Township, Ohio:** April 8, 2018

A juvenile broke into the church, took grape juice from the fridge, and splattered it across the walls.<sup>382</sup>

**Bethel AME Church, Clinton, Iowa:** April 27, 2018

The church was defaced with hateful and racist symbols and messages in permanent marker.<sup>383</sup>

**St. Kierans Church, Heckscherville, Pennsylvania:** Early May 2018

The church was broken into, church pews, pipes, and electrical wiring were cut out of their places, and a side window was shattered.<sup>384</sup>

**St. Brigid's Church, Amherst, Massachusetts:** May 2, 2018

Statues were destroyed, a baptismal font was broken, and a window was smashed with a cross.<sup>385</sup>

**Noonday Baptist Church, Northeast Cobb, Georgia:** May 8, 2018

The church was vandalized in a series of recent church vandalisms in the area.<sup>386</sup>

**St. John Kanty Church, Buffalo, New York:** May 15, 2018

Someone broke a statue outside the church with a baseball bat and left a note that read, "This building will be destroyed" and "Catholics are a man-made religion."<sup>387</sup>

**Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Short North, Ohio:** May 26, 2018

Someone ransacked the cathedral, destroying a valuable stained glass window and seriously damaging various items, causing \$100,000 worth of damage.<sup>388</sup>

**Mission San Juan, San Antonio, Texas:** June 21, 2018

Vandals sprayed water on the walls of the mission, let it sit, and then scrapped off the first layer of plaster, causing extensive damage to the building.<sup>389</sup>

**St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania:** July 2018

The church experienced multiple incidences of vandalism in addition to drug paraphernalia and a knife being left around the church.<sup>390</sup>

**Bolling Methodist Church, Butler County, Alabama:** July 3, 2018

Someone attempted to start three fires in a historic church. A satanic star was also carved in one of the church pews.<sup>391</sup>

**Welcome Baptist Church, Union, South Carolina:** July 6, 2018

An upside-down cross was burned into a column, slashes were made in the siding, and the words "Hail Satan" were carved into a flood board.<sup>392</sup>

**St. Charles Borromeo Church, North Hollywood, California:** July 25, 2018

Someone broke into the church and attempted to start three fires, then ransacked the building.<sup>393</sup>

**Union Baptist Missionary Church, Suffolk, Virginia:** July 30, 2018

Someone broke into the church with the intention of destroying church property.<sup>394</sup>

**Mercy Tabernacle Church, Benton, Tennessee:** August 15, 2018

The church building was destroyed in an arson attack.<sup>395</sup>

**St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church, Merrillville, Indiana:** August 20, 2018

A priest was brutally assaulted and left unconscious by his attacker, who said he was acting in response to a sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church.<sup>396</sup>

**Los Molinos United Methodist Church, Los Molinos, California:** August 25, 2018

Someone attempted to commit arson by igniting a propane tank behind the church.<sup>397</sup>

**St. Mary's Church, Milford, Massachusetts:** August 31, 2018

Four people stole artifacts and ransacked the church building.<sup>398</sup>

**Walnut Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee:** September 18, 2018

Teenagers broke into the church and wrote racist slogans inside of Bibles and on the door, including "KKK."<sup>399</sup>

**Allendale United Methodist Church, St. Petersburg, Florida:** September 23, 2018

The church sign was vandalized.<sup>400</sup>

**Old Mission Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California:** October 10, 2018

A historic building was vandalized with the words "Rape" and "Genocide" (misspelled by the vandals), and the front doors were smeared in red paint.<sup>401</sup>

**Iglesia Ni Cristo, Seattle, Washington:** October 18, 2018

Someone threw Molotov cocktails at the church during an evening service. Two hundred people were in attendance, and one Molotov cocktail was thrown directly at a security guard, but he and the congregants were unharmed.<sup>402</sup>

**First Baptist Church, Jeffersontown, Kentucky:** October 24, 2018

A would-be shooter made an unsuccessful attempt to enter the church before heading to a neighboring grocery store and killing two people.<sup>403</sup>

**Joppa Church, Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky:** October 28 and November 1, 2018

In separate instances, vandals left graffiti on the floor of the historic church, and multiple windows were found broken.<sup>404</sup>

**Alfred Street Baptist Church, Alexandria, Virginia:** November 3, 2018

Someone called in a false bomb threat during a church service, which resulted in the congregation having to shelter in place while the authorities investigated the situation.<sup>405</sup>

**Church of God-Holy, Antioch, California:** November 26, 2018

Offensive words and symbols were spray-painted on the exterior of the church building.<sup>406</sup>

**Our Lady of Consolation Roman Catholic Church, New York, New York:** December 2, 2018

A vandal urinated on and then destroyed two statues outside the church.<sup>407</sup>

**Church For All Nations, Vienna, Virginia:** December 5, 2018

A vandal broke into a Korean American church, destroyed a glass altar, and caused approximately \$1,000 in damages.<sup>408</sup>

**St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, North Carolina:** December 21, 2018

Vandals ransacked a church building ahead of Christmas. Tables were overturned, instruments were damaged, and broken glass was strewn across the floor.<sup>409</sup>

**St. Joseph’s Polish Catholic Church, Globeville, Colorado:** December 28, 2018

Vandals smashed a church nativity scene, destroying statues of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus.<sup>410</sup>

**First Baptist Church, Vigor, Texas:** December 30, 2018

An armed man was headed to a Texas church to “fulfill a prophecy.” He entered a restaurant early in the morning and asked employees for a ride to a specific church, which the employees refused. After noticing the gun in his hand as the man walked away, an employee called the police, and he was promptly detained before the situation escalated.<sup>411</sup>

**St. Patrick-St. Anthony Catholic Church, Grand Haven, Michigan:** December 30, 2018

Two masses were canceled after a man put fireworks inside the church and attacked someone who was helping prepare for mass.<sup>412</sup>

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# Appendix B



# Hostility Against Churches

## Supplemental Report – First Quarter 2023

*by Arielle Del Turco, M.A.*

On March 27, 2023, three children and three adults were killed in a shooting at The Covenant School, a private Christian school and a ministry of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Nashville, Tennessee. The assailant shot through glass side doors to access areas throughout the building, including the church office and the children’s ministry. Covenant released a statement that said, “Our community is heartbroken. We are grieving tremendous loss and are in shock coming out of the terror that shattered our school and church.”<sup>1</sup>

Research conducted by Family Research Council (FRC) indicates that criminal acts against churches have been steadily on the rise for the past several years, and the first quarter of 2023 has continued the upward trend. The first three months of 2023 saw approximately three times the number of acts of hostility perpetrated against churches in the same timeframe last year.

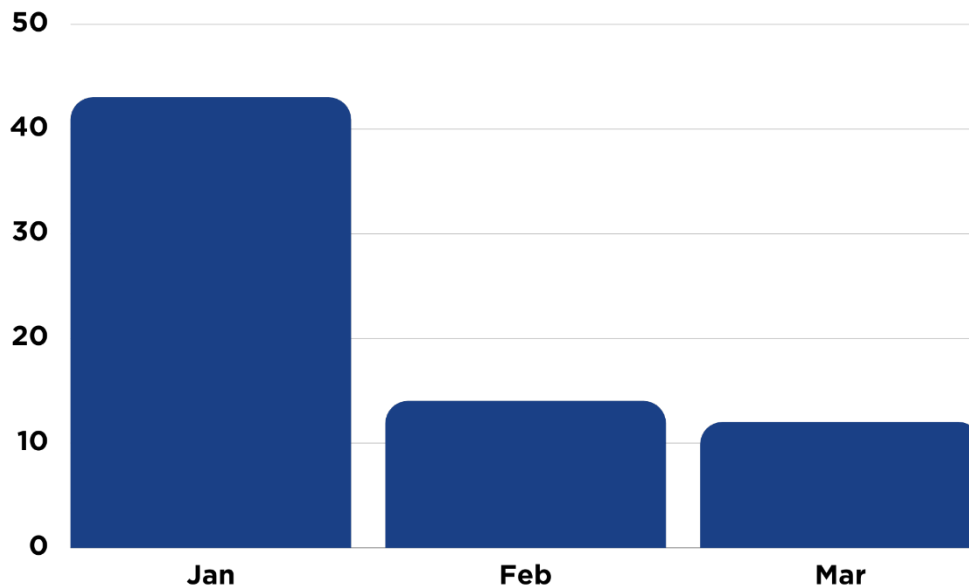
### **Acts of Hostility Continue to Be on the Rise**

In December 2022, FRC released an extensive publication documenting a sharp rise in acts of hostility against churches in the United States. Analyzing publicly available data from the past five years, FRC found a total of 420 documented acts of hostility that occurred between January 2018 and September 2022. The types of acts identified include vandalism, arson, gun-related incidents, bomb threats, and

more. There also appeared to be an increase in frequency over the course of the reporting period. FRC’s report identified 137 acts of hostility against churches between January and September 2022. By comparison, there were 96 incidents in all 12 months of 2021. FRC also identified 54 incidents against churches in 2020, 83 in 2019, and 50 in 2018.

Since the launch of that report, FRC has continued to track acts of hostility against churches. The fourth quarter of 2022 saw an additional 54 incidents, for a total of 191 in 2022. That number is nearly double the previous year’s total of 96. In the first quarter of 2023, 69 incidents have already occurred. If this rate continues, 2023 will have the highest number of incidents of the six years FRC has tracked, continuing the upward trend. Most of the 2023 incidents occurred in January (43); 14 occurred in February, and 12 occurred in March.

**Incidents per month, January-March 2023**



Compared to the same timeframe in previous years, January through March of 2023 represents a significant increase in acts of hostility. In those same months, 2018 saw 15 acts of hostility against churches; 2019 saw 12; 2020 saw none; 2021 saw 14; and 2022 saw 24.

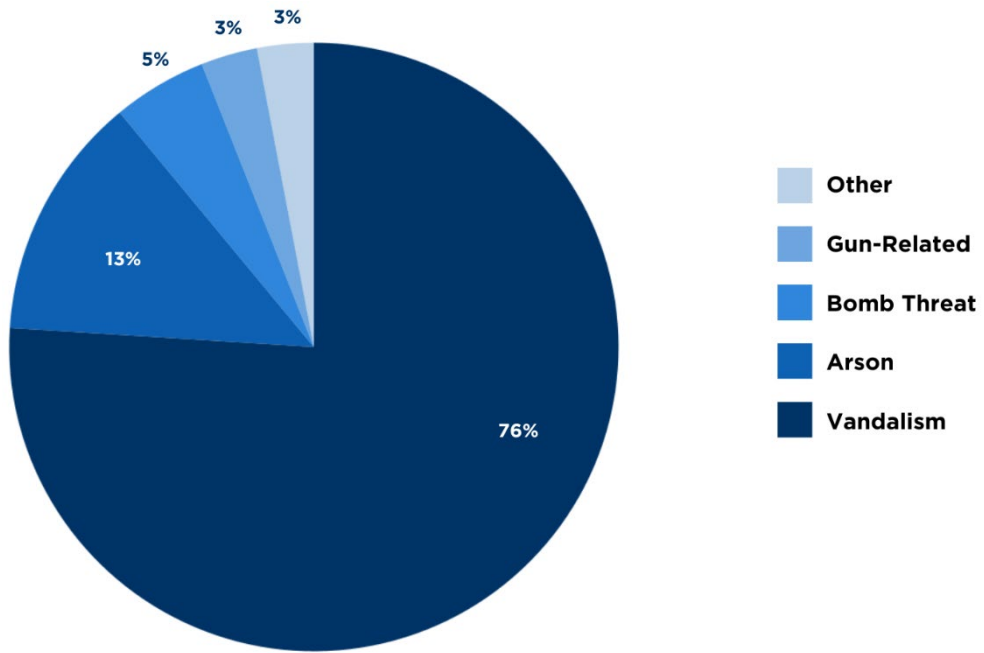
Criminal acts of vandalism and destruction of church property are symptomatic of a collapse in societal reverence and respect for houses of worship and religion—in this case, churches and Christianity. Some people appear increasingly comfortable lashing out against church buildings, pointing to a larger societal problem of marginalizing core Christian beliefs, including those that touch on hot-button political issues related to human dignity and sexuality.

The anger and division that increasingly characterize American society are endangering churches and eroding religious freedom. When congregants feel targeted by members of their communities or church buildings bear the brunt of outrage over political events, the very ability to live out one's faith safely is under attack. Violent or destructive incidents that interfere with an individual's lawful free exercise of religion at their house of worship present a significant nationwide challenge.

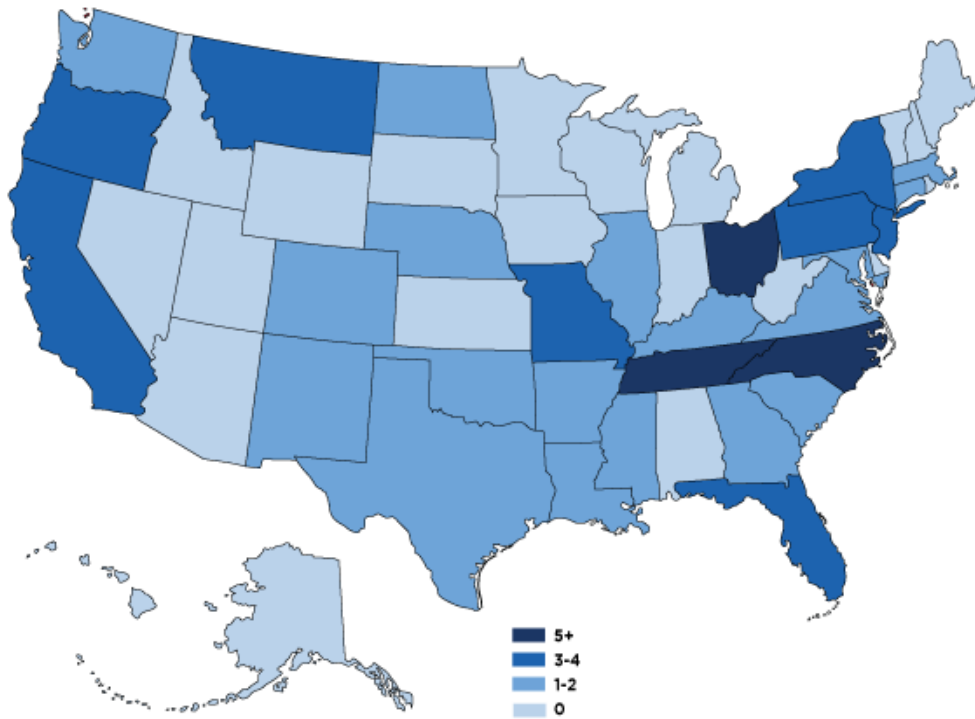
## **Analyzing Incidents from January to March of 2023**

Most of the incidents covered in this supplemental report are acts of vandalism; FRC identified 53 occurrences of vandalism in the first quarter of 2023; 10 arson attacks, arson attempts, or fires with unknown causes; three gun-related incidents; three bomb threats; and two other incidences (assault, etc.). Three incidents fell into more than one category. Twenty-nine states experienced acts of hostility against churches. North Carolina had the most incidents, with seven. Ohio and Tennessee each had five. Florida, Missouri, and Pennsylvania each had four. No incidents were found in 21 states or the District of Columbia.

### Types of incidents, January-March 2023



### Incidents per state, January-March 2023



## **Vandalism**

Acts of vandalism comprised the majority of reported acts of hostility against churches in the first three months of 2023. Some incidents appeared to have been committed by youth or persons struggling with mental illness. Some acts of vandalism against churches appeared to have been motivated by anger toward the church that was targeted. Several instances of vandalism also involved theft. Many acts of vandalism against churches were under criminal investigation; some were under investigation as hate crimes.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the acts of vandalism represented unexplained acts of destruction, such as an outdoor nativity scene being destroyed<sup>3</sup> or rocks being thrown through a window.<sup>4</sup> In Memphis, Tennessee, vandals broke into Holy Nation Church, smashed the stained-glass windows in the sanctuary, and stole equipment the church uses to broadcast its services online. The pastor explained the situation by pointing to larger problems facing youth struggling to grapple with their own emotional distress. “I hold no ill will,” Pastor Andrew Perpener Jr. stated. “These things are just a manifestation of a greater hurt.”<sup>5</sup>

Some of the incidents conveyed profound anger and aggression being directed toward churches. In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, vandals broke into the Dellabrook Presbyterian Church on Valentine’s Day and sprayed a fire extinguisher all over the church. The ventilation and air-conditioning system picked up the powder residue from the fire extinguisher and spread it throughout the building, causing around \$40,000 in damage. Luellen Curry, who works at the church, told a local news station, “I just don’t understand. I keep wondering why. It shows a great deal of anger. And were they angry at us? Were they angry at churches? Were they angry at God? I just don’t understand why someone would do this.”<sup>6</sup>



In February, vandals entered Jesus Is Alive World Center in Reading, Pennsylvania, and destroyed sound equipment, a podium, and 100-year-old stained-glass windows. They also damaged a piano and television, threw chairs around the building, and discharged a fire extinguisher, ruining the carpet. Still, Pastor Isaiah Adio told reporters, “We are not going to be frustrated, we will continue doing what we are doing for the body of Christ and our community.”<sup>7</sup>

In some acts of vandalism, hateful messages were left behind. At least one church was vandalized with Satanic symbols.<sup>8</sup> A pro-life sign outside of a church was vandalized with the message “Womens body womens choice.”<sup>9</sup> On March 3, vandals wrote “TRANS PWR” in black spray paint on the front of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Louisville, Kentucky. This incident occurred the day after the Kentucky House of Representatives passed a bill that would protect children from harmful gender-transition procedures.<sup>10</sup>

## **Arson, Arson Attempts, or Fires with Unknown Causes**

From January to March of 2023, there were 10 instances of arson, attempted arson, or fires with unknown causes. Many of these acts were deeply disturbing. On January 3, Portland Korean Church, a vacant 117-year-old building in Portland, Oregon, was set on fire. The 27-year-old suspect, whose legal name is Cameron Storer but who identifies as female, claimed voices in Storer’s head threatened to “mutilate” Storer if Storer refused to burn the church down.<sup>11</sup> Goodwill Baptist Church, a historically black church in Austin, Texas, was set on fire on March 6 in what police believed to be arson, causing \$200,000 in damages.<sup>12</sup> In other instances, individuals attempted to set fire to crosses or statues that were outside church buildings.

## **Gun-Related Incidents**

Three gun-related incidents occurred on church property in the first three months of 2023, including the shooting at The Covenant School. In one incident, two adults and two juveniles shot 50 rounds from 9mm pistols at a Mennonite church building in Versailles, Missouri; the property damage was charged as a hate crime.<sup>13</sup> In another incident, a late-night shooting took place in the parking lot of the Praise Temple Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, sending four individuals to the hospital.<sup>14</sup>

## **Bomb Threat**

FRC found three incidents of bomb threats against churches in the first three months of 2023. On February 19, a passerby noticed a pipe bomb outside St. Dominic Catholic Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Philadelphia Police Department's bomb squad removed the 18-inch device but did not tell reporters whether they believed the church had been targeted.<sup>15</sup> On January 30, a suspect was charged with a felony after she threatened to blow up Gracelife Chapel near Pevely, Ohio. The suspect had reportedly issued multiple threats to a church employee, one time texting, "I will make your church go bye bye."<sup>16</sup> Another incident involved a teenager calling in a false bomb threat to a church in Nashville.<sup>17</sup>

## **Other**

Two incidents in the first three months of 2023 fell into the "other" category; one was a violent attack. On March 12, a man was arrested for stabbing someone at Crossfire Church in Springfield, Oregon. Church staff said the assailant had been attending the ministry and had never shown signs of violence before the assault. Staff chalked up the assailant's actions to drug use and expressed frustrations with

Oregon’s increasingly liberal drug laws, which they saw as contributing to substance abuse. The victim sustained non-life-threatening injuries to his head and neck. Pastor Aaron Taylor stated, “We are affected on a regular basis by the fentanyl crisis that is in our community and is hurting so many.” Yet, he insisted that he would not let the attack negatively impact the church’s ministry. “We’ll never screen people who come to church. Instead what we’ll do is have a very robust security and staff.”<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

January of 2023 was a particularly intense month for acts of hostility against churches. Although the number of actions dropped in February and March. The first quarter of 2023 overall saw an unusually high number of acts of hostility, with 69 such incidents being documented. Our research indicates that number is more than the entirety of 2018, in which we identified only 50 incidents, or 2020, in which we identified 54. This steep increase is a cause for concern.

**To learn more about FRC’s findings on acts of hostility against churches, check out our full publication released in December 2022 at [FRC.org/HostilityAgainstChurches](https://www.frc.org/HostilityAgainstChurches)**

*Arielle Del Turco, M.A., is Assistant Director of the Center for Religious Liberty at Family Research Council. A special thank you to Abigail Ferrara, Laura Grossberndt, and Chris Gacek for contributing to this report.*

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<sup>18</sup> Ryan Bonham and Noah Chavez, “Springfield man arrested in stabbing at church, police say,” KEZI ABC 9, March 13, 2023, [https://www.kezi.com/news/springfield-man-arrested-in-stabbing-at-church-police-say/article\\_11f11cea-c1d1-11ed-b188-73ec3258cba4.html](https://www.kezi.com/news/springfield-man-arrested-in-stabbing-at-church-police-say/article_11f11cea-c1d1-11ed-b188-73ec3258cba4.html).