Europe: Anti-Christian Attacks Reach All-Time High in 2019

by Soeren Kern
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Translations of this item:

- Arabic
- German
- Spanish
- Danish
- Greek
- Swedish
- Dutch
- Italian
- French
- Portuguese

- The issue of anti-Christian vandalism was rarely reported by the European media until February 2019, when vandals attacked nine churches within the space of two weeks. The issue made headlines again in April 2019, when a suspicious fire gutted the iconic Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Since then, however, the European media are once again shrouding facts in silence.

- "Seeking to destroy or damage Christian buildings is a way of 'wiping the slate clean' of the past." — Annie Genevard, MP, Republicans Party, in an interview in *Le Figaro*, April 2, 2019.

- "In the past, even if one was not a Christian, the expression of the sacred was respected. We are facing a serious threat to the expression of religious freedom. Secularism must not be a rejection of the religious, but a principle of neutrality that gives everyone the freedom to express his faith." — Dominique Rey, Bishop of Fréjus-Toulon, in an interview with the Italian magazine *Il Timone*, August 5, 2019.

- "We are witnessing the convergence of laicism — conceived as secularism, which relegates the faithful only to the private sphere and where every religious denomination is banal or stigmatized — with the overwhelming emergence of Islam, which attacks the infidels and those who reject the Koran. On one hand, we are mocked by the media ... and on the other, there is the strengthening of Islamic fundamentalism. These are two joint realities." — Dominique Rey, Bishop of Fréjus-

Toulon, in an interview with the Italian magazine *Il Timone*, August 5, 2019.

Anti-Christian hostility is sweeping across Western Europe, where, during 2019, Christian churches and symbols were deliberately attacked day after day. The issue made headlines in April 2019, when a suspicious fire gutted the iconic Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris (pictured). Since then, however, the European media are once again shrouding facts in silence. (Photo by Veronique de Viguerie/Getty Images)

Anti-Christian hostility is sweeping across Western Europe, where, during 2019, Christian churches and symbols were deliberately attacked day after day.

Gatestone Institute reviewed thousands of newspaper reports, police blotters, parliamentary inquiries, social media posts and specialized blogs from Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Spain. The research shows (see appendices below) that roughly 3,000 Christian churches, schools, cemeteries and monuments were vandalized, looted or defaced in Europe during 2019 — which is on track to becoming a record year for anti-Christian sacrilege on the continent.

Violence against Christian sites is most widespread in France, where churches, schools, cemeteries and monuments are being vandalized, desecrated and burned at an average rate of three per day, according to government statistics. In Germany, attacks against Christian churches are occurring at an average rate of two per day, according to police blotters.

Attacks on Christian churches and symbols are also commonplace in Belgium, Britain, Denmark, Ireland, Italy and Spain. The attacks overwhelmingly involve Roman Catholic sites and symbols, although in Germany, Protestant churches are also being targeted.

The perpetrators of anti-Christian attacks — which include acts of arson, defecation, desecration, looting, mockery, profanation, Satanism, theft, urination and vandalism — are rarely caught. When they are, police and media often censor information about their identities and ethnic backgrounds. Many suspects are said to have mental disorders; as a result, many anti-Christian attacks are not categorized as hate crimes.

In France and Germany, the spike in anti-Christian attacks dovetails with the recent mass immigration from the Muslim world. The lack of official statistics on perpetrators and motives makes it impossible to know precisely how many attacks can be attributed to Muslim anti-Christianism or the jihadist cause.

In Spain, by contrast, attacks against churches and crosses are overwhelmingly carried out by anarchists, radical feminists and other far-left activists, who appear to be striving for Christianity to be permanently removed from the public square.

The motives behind the anti-Christian attacks, which are often met with public indifference, seem to fall into four broad categories:

- **Vandalism**. Most attacks against Christian sites in Europe consist of acts of vandalism. These often lack explicit anti-Christian intent, but cross over into profanation and desecration when they target objects and symbols sacred to Christians. From a strictly legal perspective, such crimes are difficult to prosecute as hate crimes: according to the laws of most European countries, prosecutors must prove that the vandalism was specifically motivated by an animosity toward Christians or Christianity.

- **Theft**. Many attacks have financial motives. In France, Germany and elsewhere, thieves have stolen church bells, sacred metal objects and even drain pipes, apparently with the aim of selling those items to scrap dealers. In Britain, nearly half of all churches on the National Historical List for England have been ransacked. Many of the crimes are being attributed to highly organized gangs which use drones, online maps and global positioning systems first to identify their targets through aerial footage and then plot their own escape routes. The plunder is dominated by thefts of metal, with entire roofs

being removed from historic places of worship, according to the heritage agency, Historic England.

- **Politics**. Some attacks, especially those against Roman Catholicism, which some radical feminists and radical secularists perceive to be a symbol of patriarchal power and authority, are political in nature. Such attacks include defacing churches and religious symbols with political graffiti, much of it anarchist or feminist in nature. In Geneva, Switzerland, for instance, the iconic International Monument to the Protestant Reformation, also known as the Reformation Wall, was vandalized with multi-colored paint forming a rainbow, a symbol of the LGBT groups.

- **Religion**. Many attacks that appear to be religious or spiritual in nature reflect a deep-seated hostility toward Christianity. Such attacks include smearing feces on representations of Jesus Christ or statues of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Other attacks involve the defilement or theft of Communion wafers, which Roman Catholics believe are transformed into the real presence of Christ when consecrated. Some of these attacks may be the work of Satanists, who use the consecrated host in a ritual called the Black Mass.

  Such attacks, especially on the essence of Roman Catholic beliefs, appear to be aimed at intimidating or harassing Catholics or preventing them from practicing their faith. These attacks, which do meet the definition of hate crimes, pose a direct threat to the freedom of religion in Europe, but prosecutions are rare.

Writing for the Spanish newspaper *ABC*, Juan Pedro Quiñonero, its Paris correspondent for more than 35 years, explained:

"The desecrations have an evident anti-Christian character. Drunk with fierce hatred, the vandals want to give their actions a clear anti-religious dimension. In recent months, anti-Semitic gangs have desecrated Jewish cemeteries, 'signing' their actions with swastikas. In the case of the desecration of Catholic churches, vandalism is not 'signed.' It speaks for itself: heinous mockeries of the figure of Christ on the cross and the desecration of high altars."

European media outlets, which often amplify attacks on Muslims, have tended to downplay malicious acts against Christians. The issue of anti-Christian vandalism was rarely reported by the European media until February 2019, when vandals

attacked nine churches within the space of two weeks. The issue made headlines again in April 2019, when a suspicious fire gutted the iconic Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Since then, however, the European media are once again shrouding facts in silence.

The French newspaper *Le Monde* has disputed the government's use of the term "anti-Christian acts" and warned politicians not to "instrumentalize" the issue:

> "More than a thousand acts a year, an average of three per day: the number is high, but what does it cover? Can we really speak of 'profanations' — a strong term — which implies an attack on the sacredness of a place of worship?

> "Ideological motivations are in the minority: it is mainly about thefts and vandalism. The perpetrators often are minors."

Annie Genevard, a French MP for the center-right Republicans party, has called for a parliamentary investigation in order better to understand the nature and motivations of anti-Christian attacks. In an interview with the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, she said:

> "Recently, two terribly serious acts of vandalism were committed in symbolic places and shocked me greatly. A few days ago, the fire in the Church of Saint Sulpice, a church that houses remarkable works: there is nearly a million euros of damage and works are irretrievably lost! And some time ago, vandals broke into the Basilica of Saint Denis and damaged stained-glass windows and the organ. Saint Denis it is not only a place of Christian worship, it is the necropolis of the kings of France! It is a meeting place between our national history and our Christian roots. That one dares to attack this monument is really shocking not only for Christians but for many citizens, whatever their convictions. When an anti-Christian act is committed, we turn our backs on the history of France, which has an intimate connection with the Christian religion.

> "To attack a Christian tomb or a church, whatever the motivation of the author, is a way to attack one part of our collective identity, because Christianity and its monuments have shaped our culture, our history and our landscapes. Seeking to destroy or damage Christian buildings is a way of 'wiping the slate clean' of the past. In an era where the most absolute cultural relativism reigns, it is all the more serious that some of

our oldest and most valuable landmarks are endangered. A civilization that would deny and turn away from its past would be a civilization that would be lost. I think this is worrying, and there is a need for a strong political response."

In an interview with the Italian magazine *Il Timone*, the Bishop of Fréjus-Toulon, Dominique Rey, said that the attacks against churches in Europe are taking place within the context of a European society marked by secularism, nihilism, hedonism, cultural and moral relativism, consumerism, and the widespread loss of the sense of the sacred. He noted:

"In the past, even those who said they were non-Christian lived in a cultural context marked by Christianity.... roots that have been abandoned by our culture and by our societies. Once the Christian roots, which were the common denominator, were removed, people turned to communitarianism, which led to a social fragmentation that is leading to a break. To find a common base of values and points of reference, Europe must restore centrality to its Christian roots....

"There is an evolution of acts of profanation against monuments, but also against the Catholic faith itself. In the past, even if one was not a Christian, the expression of the sacred was respected. We are facing a serious threat to the expression of religious freedom. Secularism must not be a rejection of the religious, but a principle of neutrality that gives everyone the freedom to express his faith.

"We are witnessing the convergence of laicism — conceived as secularism, which relegates the faithful only to the private sphere and where every religious denomination is banal or stigmatized — with the overwhelming emergence of Islam, which attacks the infidels and those who reject the Koran. On one hand, we are mocked by the media ... and on the other, there is the strengthening of Islamic fundamentalism. These are two joint realities."

The French political analyst Jérôme Fourquet, in his book — *French Archipelago: Birth of a Multiple and Divided Nation* — shows how the de-Christianization of France is taking place within the context of mass migration from the Muslim world. He provides extensive statistical data — for instance, that less than 5% of French people regularly attend Mass on Sundays — to show that France's detachment from

Christianity is so far-reaching that the country now is effectively "post-Christian."
He writes:

> "There is a growing de-Christianization, which is leading to the 'terminal
> phase' of the Catholic religion.... For hundreds of years the Catholic
> religion profoundly structured the collective conscience of French
> society. Today this society is the shadow of what it once was. A great
> civilizational change is underway."

Appendix I: Attacks on Christian Churches and Symbols in Europe in 2019

Gatestone Institute reviewed thousands of newspaper reports, police blotters,
parliamentary inquiries, social media posts and specialized blogs from Britain,
France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Spain. The research found that approximately
3,000 Christian churches, schools, cemeteries and monuments were vandalized,
burned, looted or defaced in Europe during 2019 — at more than five a day, a
record year for anti-Christian hostility on the continent.

Suspicious Fires at Churches in Europe in 2019:

- **December 15. Saint-Just-en-Bas, France**. A suspicious fire destroyed the
  roof of the town's 15th century church. More than three dozen worshippers
  who were in the building when the fire broke out were evacuated. The church's
  roof had been renovated during the summer at a cost of €200,000 ($225,000).

- **December 5, Lyon, France**. An arsonist set fire to the doors of the Church of
  Saint-Georges.

- **November 16. Buschhoven, Germany**. Arsonists set fire to the Catholic
  Church of St. Katharina. It was the second arson attack on the church in as
  many weeks. Arsonists also set fire to a nearby Protestant church, the
  Versöhnungskirche.

- **November 13. Chios, Greece**. Arsonists set fire to three churches in the
  village of Chalkios: The attacks against the Agios Haralambos Church, the
  Church of Panagia and the Church Agios Petros and Pavlos were attributed to
  illegal migrants, who are being house at a migrant camp situated 500 meters
  from one of the churches.

- **November 12**. **Éauze, France**. Two 15-year-olds set fire to the Éauze
  Cathedral. The Gothic church, a national heritage site, sustained significant

damage.

- **November 8. Lleida, Spain**. Arsonists set two fires inside the Church of Sant Joan.

- **September 20. Olivenza, Spain**. Arsonists set fire to the front doors of the Convent of San Juan de Dios. In August, the convent's chapel was defaced with graffiti.

- **October 10. Naples, Italy**. Arsonists set fire to the historic Basilica of San Giovanni Maggiore.

- **September 10. Froncles, France**. Arsonists set fire to the Church of Saint-Joseph.

- **September 9. Witzenhausen, Germany**. Arsonists tried to burn down Christuskirche, a Lutheran church.

- **September 4. Wimbotsham, England**. St. Mary the Virgin Church, an historic church in Wimbotsham, was gutted by a fire. The church, originally built in 1175, was "100% damaged" and all furniture was lost, including an altar table dating to 1638. "The history and heritage lost in this fire is irreplaceable and the costs of repairing the physical damage will be substantial," said Peter Aiers, of the Churches Conservation Trust. An investigation into the cause of the fire is ongoing.

- **August 30. Wildeshausen, Germany**. Arsonists set fire to St. Peter Catholic Church, causing more than €100,000 ($112,000) in damage.

- **August 21. Rheine-Schotthock, Germany**. Arsonists tried to burn down St. Ludgeruskirche Catholic Church. Previously, thieves broke into the church on August 6.

- **August 24. Saint-Amand-sur-Sèvre, France**. A suspicious fire broke out at the church of Saint-Amand, which dates to the 11th century.

- **July 30. Bad Schussenried, Germany**. An arsonist set fire to a church in the Schussenried Abbey, a former monastery founded in 1183.

- **July 29. Kippenheim, Germany**. An arsonist set fire to hymnals in St. Mauritius Catholic Church.

- **July 19. Hyvinkää, Finland**. Arsonists set fire to the Old Church. The church was saved but an adjacent storage facility was completely destroyed.

- **June 30. Bourg-Achard, France**. Arsonists set fire to the organ at the Church of Saint-Lô. The organ was completely destroyed. On June 26, arsonists set fire to an altar cloth at the same church, which has now been closed.

- **June 12. Vienna, Austria**. Arsonists set fire to the Dominican Church of St. Rotunda. A tourist used holy water to put out the fire.

- **June 1. Ankum, Germany**. Arsonists set two fires simultaneously at St. Nicholas Church.

- **May 24. Londonderry, Northern Ireland**. Holy Family Church in Ballymagroarty was set on fire and completely destroyed. CCTV footage showed a group of unidentified youths starting the fire.

- **May 16. Nordhausen, Germany**. Arsonists set fire to the historic St. Blasii church, originally built in the 12th century. The ante-chamber to the church was burned.

- **April 21. Eyguières, France**. A suspicious fire damaged the confessional of the Church of Notre Dame de Grace.

- **April 15. Paris, France**. A suspicious fire gutted the iconic 12th century Notre Dame Cathedral.

- **April 19. Heek, Germany**. Vandals attempted to set fire to a church in Nienborg.

- **March 19. Senigallia, Italy**. An arsonist tried — twice on the same day — to set fire to the Cathedral of San Pietro.

- **March 17. Paris, France**. A suspicious fire destroyed the entrance to the Church of Saint Sulpice, the second-largest church in Paris. Police said that the fire was not accidental.

- **March 5. Skegness, England**. St. Matthew's Church was damaged in an arson attack.

- **February 21. Hellenthal, Germany**. An arsonist set fire to the Trinitatis Lutheran Church. The church's roof was completely destroyed.

- **January 29. Sainte-Foy-Lès-Lyon, France**. A 40-year-old man with a long criminal record was arrested for trying to burn down the Church of Saint Foy. He was placed in a psychiatric ward.

- **January 20, Almería, Spain**. Arsonists attempted to burn down the hermitage of Torregarcía; arsonists previously tried to burn down the chapel on January 11.

- **January 17. Grenoble, France**. The Church of Saint Jacques was completely destroyed by fire. Only the bell tower was left standing. Police initially had concluded that the fire was an accident, caused by in an electric short circuit in the roof of the church. On October 8, however, Grenoble Prosecutor Eric

Vaillant said that an anarchist group had deliberately started the fire, although the perpetrators had not yet been identified.

- **January 10. Rovereto, Italy**. Arsonists attempted to burn down the Church of Sant Rocco. The attack was believed to be a response to the church's opposition to abortion.

Attacks on Christian Historical Sites in Europe in 2019:

- **December 5. Valdecilla, Spain**. Vandals destroyed a 16th century stone cross at the Church of Solares-Valdecilla. A 14-year-old vandal broke his leg when part of the stone fell on him.

- **November 4. Oloron-Sainte-Marie, France**. Thieves rammed a car into the doors of the Cathedral of Oloron-Sainte-Marie, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and stole silverware, a monstrance, a chalice and liturgical garments from the 16th century. Mayor Hervé Lucbéreilh said: "It is a considerable loss. Some pieces are unique, like the monstrance of Saint Grat, and no insurance will replace them. The thieves were obviously connoisseurs...they only stole the most precious items which dated from the 16th century. Beyond the market value, the inhabitants find themselves amputated of part of their history and their heritage."

- **October 16. Bois-de-Céné, France**. Three teenagers were arrested for stealing relics from the Church of Bois-de-Céné, a national historical monument which dates to the 14th century.

- **September 9. Seville, Spain**. Vandals destroyed the historic Cross of the Inquisition at the City Hall. Mayor Juan Espadas condemned the "absolutely inexplicable vandal destruction" of a the "jewel" of Seville's heritage.

- **August 19. Brue-Auriac, France**. Thieves stole an 85-kg (187-pound) bronze church bell from a Romanesque chapel. Mayor André Rousselet said that he believed that the bell was melted, and the metal was sold, possibly yielding up to €500 ($560) for the thief.

- **July 19. Ginasservis, France**. Thieves stole two bells from two chapels in the village. The 80-kg bell of the Chapelle Saint-Damase dates from 1867; the 53-kg bell of the Chapelle des Pénitents dates from 1737. The latter chapel is classified as a national historic monument. Mayor Hervé Philibert said that the bells were carefully removed and that nothing was broken. He said that he believes that the purpose of the theft is "resale to a collector."

- **February 27. Hochheim, Germany**. Vandals ransacked the St. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, an iconic landmark built in 1730. In January 2016,

the church was set on fire by an arsonist, causing more than half-a-million-euros in damage.

- **February 26. Hanover, Germany**. A burglar smashed the windows of the Kreuzkirche, a medieval church consecrated in 1333.

- **February 23. Dublin, Ireland**. A 36-year-old Dublin man, Brian Bridgeman desecrated several mummies at St. Michan's, a church that dates to 1095. He opened crypts in the church's vaults and twisted the head of a nun who had lived 400 years ago. He also decapitated an 800-year-old crusader and removed his head from the site. The skull was later found by police and returned to the church. Bridgeman, who was identified on CCTV and admitted guilt, was sentenced to 28 months in prison. "It's a sad day for the church and a sad day for humanity that someone would do such a thing," said Archdeacon David Pierpoint.

- **February 5. Lavaur, France**. Two teenagers desecrated the Cathedral of St. Alain, which dates to the 13th century. They then set fire to a nativity scene that was still in place from the Christmas holidays. The fire caused extensive smoke damage to the cathedral, which had just undergone a five-year, multi-million-euro renovation. The teenagers were identified through CCTV footage.

- **January 18. Minden, Germany**. Vandals smashed the stained-glass windows of St. Simeon's Lutheran Church, which was consecrated in 1214. In November 2018, the church was defaced with graffiti; in March 2017, vandals smashed a 19th century stained-glass window.

- **January 10. Ripley, England**: Thieves stole the lead roof of All Saints Church, which dates to 1390. During the course of the theft the thieves caused extensive damage to the stone parapet on the roof. The damage was estimated at tens of thousands of pounds.

Desecrations of Cemeteries in Europe in 2019:

- **December 23. Villeroux, Belgium**. More than a dozen graves at a local cemetery were desecrated. Gravestones were knocked over and crosses were smashed.

- **December 14. Aron, France**. Vandals desecrated 30 graves at a local cemetery. They smashed crosses, stole marble plates as well as a statue of Jesus Christ.

- **November 30. Saint-Priest-la-Prugne, France**. A local cemetery was ransacked.

- **November 24. Buré, France**. A local cemetery was desecrated. Gravestones were knocked over and crosses were smashed.

- **October 27. Zabrze Helence, Poland**. A total of 29 tombstones and 22 crosses were destroyed at the cemetery of the Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of the Church.

- **August 30. Vals-près-le-Puy, France**. Tombstones were overturned in three different cemeteries in the town. Police said the attacks were not religiously motivated.

- **July 21. North Jutland, Denmark**. A 45-year-old man spray-painted the number '666' on 87 gravestones at Hadsund Cemetery.

- **June 20. Evesham, England**. Vandals defaced tombstones at St. Andrews Parish Church Cemetery with satanic graffiti. On June 16, vandals desecrated more than 100 graves at the same cemetery.

- **February 14, Madrid, Spain**. Gravestones were defaced at the cemetery of the Almudena Cathedral.

- **February 6. Kamień Krajeński, Poland**. Vandals ransacked a local cemetery. Tombstones were destroyed, crosses were knocked down and a statue of Jesus was destroyed.

Urination, Defecation and Exhibitionism at Christian Sites in Europe in 2019:

- **November 20. Tarbes, France**. Vandals ransacked the Church of Saint-Jean. They broke open the doors, smashed statues and burned hymn books. They also urinated and defecated on the church floors and used Bibles and hymn books as toilet paper.

- **October 27. Moncoutant-sur-Sèvre, France**. Five teenagers vandalized a local church. They urinated on confessionals and holy water fonts and set fire to alter cloths and hymn books.

- **August 28. Montefiascone, Italy**. The Church of the Madonna dell'Arco was equipped with security cameras after vandals left excrement, vomit, condoms, cigarettes and beer cans scattered throughout the building. The church, which dates to 1796, has also been spray-painted with Satanist graffiti.

- **August 25. Argenthal, Germany**. An exhibitionist exposed himself to worshippers at a Catholic Mass.

- **August 20. Giovo, Italy**. The doors of the Church of Santa Maria Assunta di Verla were smeared with excrement.

- **August 1. Crebio, Italy**. The Church of Sant Antonio was desecrated with excrement that was smeared on the doors, walls and holy water fonts.

- **July 26. Jaén, Spain**. An 18-year-old man defecated in front of the altar of the Roman Catholic Santuario de la Fuensanta de Villanueva and then smeared his feces on a statue of Jesus Christ. The act was captured on CCTV.

- **May 31. Lahntal-Caldern, Germany**. Vandals broke into the Nikolaikirche, a Lutheran church, set fire to a Bible and a hymnal and left a pile of feces at the entranceway.

- **May 17. Großholbach, Germany**. Vandals ransacked the Holy Trinity Catholic Church, burned a Jesus statue and urinated on the pews. "This hurts," said Mayor Michael Kohlhass. "These are values that have simply been trampled upon."

- **February 5. Nîmes, France**. Vandals broke into the Notre Dame des Enfants church, forced open the tabernacle which houses the Eucharist, scattered consecrated hosts and spread excrement on the walls and inside and outside the church.

Anarcho-Feminist-Satanist and Politically-Motivated Attacks on Churches in Europe in 2019:

- **December 5. Munich, Germany**. Four churches in the Munich area were defaced with political graffiti.

- **November 27. Mordelles, France**. The Church of Saint-Pierre was defaced with anarchist graffiti.

- **November 26. Rennes, France**. November 26. Vandals defaced the Church of Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Nouvelle with Satanist graffiti.

- **November 13. Segovia, Spain**. November 13. The Church of San Agustín, which dates to the 16th century, was spray-painted with anarchist graffiti. An "anti-fascist" group called Yesca claimed responsibility for the vandalism.

- **August 18. Singen**, Germany. Vandals spray-painted Herz-Jesu Catholic Church with the number, "666."

- **June 19. London, England**. Vandals lit fires outside the doors of four churches in east London. At each church, occult symbols and messages including pentagrams, spirals, the number 666 and the word "hell" were etched into the doors.

- **March 8. Madrid, Spain**. The Church of Santa Mónica in Rivas Vaciamadrid was spray-painted with anti-Catholic and radical feminist graffiti to mark

International Women's Day.

- **March 8. Logroño, Spain**. The Cathedral of Santa María de la Redonda was defaced with feminist propaganda.

- **March 8. Seville, Spain**. The Church of San Roque was defaced with anarcho-feminist graffiti.

- **March 8. Valladolid, Spain**. Radical feminists broke into the archbishopric of Valladolid.

- **March 5. Reichstett, France**. Vandals smashed the stained-glass windows of a Catholic church and painted "666" and "Satan" on the church walls.

- **March 4. Alicante, Spain**. Satanists performed an occultist ceremony in front of an evangelical church. They then defaced the entrance to the church with Satanist graffiti.

- **February 22. Katowice, Poland**. Four local chapels and churches were defaced with Satanist graffiti.

- **January 31. Vendôme, France**. Thieves broke into the Church of Madeleine and stole a wooden tabernacle containing a ciborium and consecrated hosts. "The consecrated hosts are sometimes used during black magic rituals," said Father Pierre Cabarat. "This theft is a profanation, an assault on the Christian community."

- **January 16. Córdoba, Spain**. The Santa Victoria de Córdoba Roman Catholic school was defaced with anarchist graffiti.

Attacks on Nativity Scenes in Europe in 2019:

- **December 25. Ourense, Spain**. A municipal nativity scene was damaged and a statue of the Christ Child was stolen. The same nativity scene was damaged on December 21.

- **December 19. Dijon, France**. A nativity scene at the Church of Notre-Dame was destroyed.

- **December 18. Saint-Éloy-les-Mines, France**. A municipal nativity scene was damaged. Mayor Marie-Thérèse Sikora said: "We are still a Judeo-Christian country. It is deplorable to attack a crib and decorations. We do this for the children, but this morning, they were devastated in front of the crib."

- **December 17. Torrelavega, Spain**. Vandals a municipal nativity scene was ransacked and a statue of the Christ Child was decapitated.

- **December 16, Tárrega, Spain**. Town councilors representing the far-left parties ERC and CUP dismantled the municipal nativity scene in order to

"preserve the secular character" of the municipality.

- **November 26, Vienna, Austria**. A statue of the Christ Child was stolen twice from a nativity scene at a Christmas market in the Simmering district.
- **January 1. Valencia, Spain**. An historic nativity scene in Callosa de Segura was destroyed.

Islam-related Attacks on Christians and Christian Sites in Europe in 2019:

- **December 6. Bandol, France**. Vandals defaced with spray paint a memorial to Franco-Armenian friendship. The graffiti included the word "Turk." In a statement, the city said: "The mayor and the elected officials condemn with the utmost firmness this act which stains the memory of Armenians. Armenia was the victim of an atrocious genocide which resulted in more than a million victims between 1915 and 1916. France recognized this genocide in 2001."

- **November 30. Marienthal, France**. A 23-year-old man who claimed to be wearing a suicide vest ransacked a chapel adjacent to the Convent of Carmel of the Sacred Heart. Sister Donata, prioress of Carmel, explained: "A young man came to see us. He was calm. He asked to go to the chapel to pray, and there, at one point, madness took him. He started to ransack everything. He knocked over the crucifix and the statue of the Sacred Heart, which he damaged. He knocked down the candlesticks as well as the stalls. He chipped the altar. He attacked everything. Never has such a thing happened here." The Strasbourg public prosecutor's office requested a psychiatric assessment of the man, whose identity has not been made public.

- **November 27. Trondheim, Norway**. Four Muslim men threatened to kill a Christian street preacher unless he converted to Islam.

- **September 6. Marseille, France**. A teenager armed with a knife entered the La Pauline elementary school, stabbed the canteen manager, and shouted, "I am a Muslim. Today I am going to kill all Christians. 'Allahu Akbar!'" (Allah is greater [than your God!]).

- **June 19. Graz, Austria**. A 45-year-old Iraqi man set fire to four churches in the city.

- **May 5. Toulouse, France**. The Notre Dame du Taur church was defaced with the words, "Allahu Akbar!" ("Allah is greater [than your God]!")

- **April 21. Rome, Italy**. A Moroccan man stabbed a Georgian man for wearing a crucifix. "Italian Catholic Sh*t," the Moroccan shouted as he tried to cut the

man's throat. The incident took place near Termini Station, the main railway station in Rome.

- **April 17. Seville, Spain**. A 23-year-old Moroccan jihadi plotted to attack Holy Week processions.

- **April 1. Hendaye, France**. Three Lebanese teenagers vandalized St. Vincent's nursery school. They ransacked eight classrooms, destroyed computers and covered the walls and floors with paint.

Appendix 2: Country-by-Country Attacks on Christian Churches and Symbols in Europe in 2019

1. France

The French government recorded 1,063 anti-Christian attacks in 2018, compared to 1,038 such attacks in 2017 and 949 in 2016. Overall, the number of attacks surged by 245% between 2008 and 2016, according to the Interior Ministry, which noted that attacks on Christian sites account for approximately 90% of all attacks on places of worship in France.

The trend shows no signs of abating. There were more than 1,000 anti-Christian attacks in France during 2019, according to data compiled by Daniel Hamiche, Editor-in-Chief of the blog, Observatory of Christianophobia. Hamiche has been an indefatigable chronicler of the destruction of Christian heritage in France. Gatestone Institute also consulted hundreds of national and local newspapers, as well as dozens of blogs, specialized websites and police blotters. Following are a few examples of anti-Christian attacks in 2019:

- **Billy-sous-Mangiennes**, December 20. Vandals destroyed the stained-glass windows at the Church of Saint-Loup.

- **Aire-sur-l'Adour**, December 19. A man set fire to an altar at the Cathedral of Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Aire.

- **Amiens**, December 16. Vandals destroyed a statue of Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes at the Amiens Cathedral.

- **La Douze**, December 11. Thieves stole copper pipes from the Church of Saint-Pierre-ès-Liens, a Gothic church dating to the 14th century.

- **Châtillon-sur-Seine**, December 4. Thieves broke into the Church of Saint-Nicolas.

- **Rennes**, November 24. Thieves broke into two churches on the same night: offering boxes were stolen at the Church of Notre-Dame-en-Saint-Melaine and the Basilica of Saint-Sauveur.

- **Avolsheim**, November 23. Vandals defaced the grotto of the Church of Dompeter, one of the oldest churches in Alsace.

- **Porto-Vecchio**, November 21. Vandals desecrated an open-air oratory at the Church of San Ciprianu.

- **Tournissan**, November 16. Thieves ransacked the Church of Saint-Adrien. They then covered the site with bleach, apparently in an effort to erase traces of DNA.

- **Marseille**, November 9. Vandals defaced the Red Cross Mission Cross adjacent to the Church of Saint-Patrice. The cross was defaced a total of six times in 2019.

- **Tonnay-Charente**, November 9. Vandals desecrated the Church of Saint-Etienne. Crosses were overturned, the tabernacle was broken, the hosts were scattered on the ground and the lunette containing a host for worship was stolen.

- **Carentan-les-Marais**, November 5. Vandals broke into the Church of Notre-Dame de Carentan. The same church was vandalized in July 2019.

- **Clermont-Ferrand**, October 21. Three teenagers ransacked the Church of Notre-Dame de Prospérité de Montferrand.

- **Renazé**, October 14. Thieves broke into the Church of Renazé and stole the tabernacle, which stores the consecrated hosts.

- **Veynes**, September 13. Vandals desecrated the Church of Saint-Sauveur and stole the ciborium, a chalice used to hold consecrated communion wafers.

- **Saint-Christol-de-Rodières**, September 7. Vandals desecrated the Church of Saint Christophe and stole the ciborium.

- **Les Houches**, August 24. Vandals broke into the Saint-Jean-Baptiste church and overturned pews, broke windows, destroyed a confessional booth and spray-painted anti-religious insults on the walls.

- **Clermont**, August 14. Vandals desecrated the Church of Saint-Samson. Hosts were scattered and stolen, and the ciborium which contained them was also stolen.

- **Compiègne**, August 10. Vandals desecrated the Church of Saint Éloi and stole the ciborium and other liturgical items.

- **Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie**, July 17. A 44-year-old man was arrested for vandalizing several churches in the area. He decapitated religious statues, including one of Jesus, smashed stained-glass windows and destroyed paintings. Police discarded an "anti-Christian motif" because the man "operated alone, on impulse and without any real organization."

- **Bois de Cené**, April 4. Vandals ransacked the Church of Saint-Etienne.

- **Uffholtz**, March 30. Vandals destroyed a crucifix.

- **Péronne**, March 27. A 40-year-old man was arrested for stealing at least 30 objects from the Church of Saint Jean Baptiste.

- **Strasbourg**, March 11. Vandals ransacked the Catholic Church of St. Louis de la Robertsau.

- **Angoulême**, March 9. Vandals ransacked the Hope & Life Evangelical Church and caused more than €10,000 ($11,000) in damage. The vandalism was aimed at "defiling, destroying and preventing worship services from taking place," according to Pastor Joseph Miall.

- **Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie**, February 25. Vandals ransacked two churches: The Church of Saint-Gilles and the Church of Saint-Croix. They overturned statues and smashed stained-glass windows.

- **Maisons-Laffitte**, February 10. Vandals ransacked the Saint Nicolas church.

- **Dijon**, February 9. Vandals desecrated the Notre Dame church and stole the consecrated hosts.

- **Houilles**, February 4. Vandals ransacked the Church of Saint Nicolas and destroyed a statue dating to the 19th century. It was the third attack at the church in ten days.

- **Lusignan**, February 3. Thieves broke into the Chapel of St. Anne, forced open the tabernacle and stole the ciborium. The consecrated hosts were strewn across the floor.

2. Germany

- **Aue-Bad Schlema**, December 25. A parish worker was stabbed to death when he tried to stop a fight between a Syrian and an Iranian migrant.

- **Mettlach**, December 23. Vandals ransacked the Church of Sankt Martin.

- **Schwenningen**, September 23. Vandals ransacked the St. Franziskus-Mariä Himmelfahrt Kirche, a Catholic church.

- **Herxheim**, September 13. Vandals damaged the front door of St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church.

- **Goch**, September 12. Thieves forcibly ripped out and stole the copper water pipes from inside the walls of Maria Magdalena-Kirche, a Catholic church.

- **Iserlohn**, September 11. Thieves dismantled and stole the copper drainpipes of St. Gertrudis Kirche, a Catholic church.

- **Coesfeld**, September 11. Vandals broke into St. Lamberti Catholic Church and poured a strong-smelling liquid into the holy water font.

- **Sulingen**, September 9. Thieves broke into St. Nicolai-Kirche, a Lutheran church.

- **Koblenz**, September 9. Thieves broke into New Apostolic Church.

- **Weilburg**, September 8. Thieves broke into a church on Limburger Straße.

- **Neustadt/Orla**, September 8. Thieves broke into a church and stole property worth €1,000 ($1,120).

- **Lahr**, September 6. Thieves broke into Peter und Paul Kirche, a Roman Catholic church.

- **Kusel**, September 5. Vandals smashed the windows of a Protestant church.

- **Kirchhatten**, September 4. Vandals damaged property at St. Ansgari Church.

- **Runkel**, September 3. Vandals ransacked the Heilig Geist church.

- **Eisenach**, September 3. Vandals spray-painted a statue at St. Elisabeth Catholic Church.

- **Gosheim**, September 3. Vandals broke into Längenberg Chapel.

- **Apolda**, September 2. Thieves dismantled and stole the lightning rods and cables of St. Bonifatius Catholic Church.

- **Velen-Ramsdorf**, September 1. Vandals spray-painted the façade of St. Walburga Catholic Church.

- **Pirmasens**, August 31. Vandals ransacked Luther Church. The total damage is estimated at €5,000 ($5,600).

- **Clingen**, August 30. Thieves stole an outdoor pavilion from St. Gumbert Lutheran Church.

- **Kevelaer-Winnekendonk**, August 29. Thieves dismantled and stole copper pipes from St. Antonius Catholic Church.

- **Mettmann**, August 29. Thieves broke into St. Johannes Catholic Church.

- **Stuttgart-Möhringen**, August 25. Thieves broke into a church and kindergarten.

- **Bochum**, August 24. Thieves broke into St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church.

- **Altenhagen**, August 21. Thieves broke into a Lutheran Church and tried to steal the organ pipes, apparently to sell them as scrap metal for cash.

- **Ganderkesee**, August 19. Thieves broke into St. Hedwig Catholic Church.

- **Ostbevern**, August 19. Vandals desecrated St. Ambrosius Catholic Church; vandals attacked the same church a day earlier.

- **Bad Waldsee**, August 18. Vandals spray-painted St. Peter Catholic Church with the words, "God is Dead."

- **Herne**, August 18. Thieves broke into Cranger Kirche, a Lutheran church.

- **Kirchhundem**, August 17. Vandals broke into the St. Peter and St. Paul Catholic Church.

- **Greven-Reckenfeld**, August 16. Vandals smashed the windows of St. Franziskus Catholic Church.

- **Brakel**, August 16. Vandals broke into St. Michael's Catholic Church.

- **Bösensell**, August 16. Thieves broke into a church and stole intercession letters from a mailbox.

- **Rheine-Schotthock, August 6**. Thieves broke into St. Ludgeruskirche Catholic Church.

- **Lahn**, August 13. A man broke into St. Martinus Catholic Church and tried to steal money.

- **Gevelsberg**, August 12. Thieves entered St. Engelbert Catholic Church and stole the tabernacle, a box holding consecrated hosts.

- **Karlsruhe**, August 12. A thief tried to steal money from donation boxes at St. Stephen's Catholic Church.

- **Greiz**, August 11. Vandals broke into the Gottesackerkirche.

- **Zell im Wiesental**, August 10. Thieves looted the Evangelical Church.

- **Lauenbrück**, July 31. Thieves broke into Martin-Luther-Kirchengemeinde, a Protestant church; they damaged windows and doors and stole donation money.

- **Heiden**, July 23. Vandals attacked St. Paulus Kirche, an evangelical church. They broke windows, spray-painted the walls and destroyed furniture.

- **Lübbecke**, July 5. Vandals broke into St. Nikolaus Lutheran Church. The church has been the target of repeated attacks and there are fears that the vandalism will escalate to the point that arsonists try to burn it down.

- **Albstadt-Ebingen**, June 9. Vandals ransacked a shrine at St. Joseph's Church.

- **Esslingen**, May 31. Thieves broke into the Osterfeldkirche, a Lutheran church in Berkheim, and stole property valued at €1,000 ($1,120).

- **Löffingen**, May 24. Vandals ransacked St. Michael's Catholic Church. They damaged or destroyed paintings, statues, the altar and the organ.

- **Kronach**, May 22. Vandals spray-painted graffiti on the doors of the Cristuskirche, a Lutheran church.

- **Rudolstadt**, May 7. Vandals spray-painted the walls of the Lutheran Stadtkirche.

- **Winnweiler**, May 6. Vandals broke into the Herz-Jesu-Kirche, a Roman Catholic church, built a campfire and defaced the walls.

- **Hoxel**, May 5. Vandals smashed a stained-glass window at a Roman Catholic chapel in Morbach-Hoxel.

- **Bad Oldesloe**, May 4. A thief broke into the Peter-Paul Lutheran Church stole an intricately-carved wooden cross valued at €5,000 ($5,600).

- **Mannheim**, April 29. Vandals ransacked the Liebfrauenkirche, a Roman Catholic church.

- **Kirchberg**, April 25. Vandals spray-painted graffiti on the doors of St. Margaret Lutheran Church.

- **Wilhelmshaven**, April 24. Vandals smashed nine windows in a downtown church.

- **Ennepetal**, April 20. Vandals smashed the windows of Herz-Jesu Roman Catholic Church.

- **Dillenburg**, April 14. Vandals ransacked the Herz-Jesu Roman Catholic Church.

- **Ratingen-Hösel**, April 11. Burglars broke into the Adolf-Clarenbach-Kirche, a Lutheran church, and physically removed the safe.

- **Bremerhaven**, April 8. A burglar broke into St. Mary's Catholic Church and stole several weeks' worth of donations.

- **Oberschopfheim**, April 7. Vandals destroyed the restrooms of the St. Leodegar Catholic Church.

- **Münster**, April 6. Vandals spray-painted the front door of a Roman Catholic church.

- **Bösensell**, April 5. Vandals ransacked the St.-Johannes-Kirche, a Roman Catholic church. The church has been the target of repeated attacks. "We do not want just to accept this anymore," a church member said.

- **Hamburg**, March 14. A swastika was spray-painted on the front door of the Kreuzkirche, a Lutheran church in the Wandsbeck district. State prosecutors launched a criminal investigation.

- **Wenden**, March 11. Vandals ransacked the St. Elisabeth of Schönau Roman Catholic Church.

- **Schloß Holte-Stukenbrock**, February 24. Vandals damaged the St. Ursula Roman Catholic Church.

- **Kaiserslautern**, February 2. The Christuskirche Lutheran Church was defaced with graffiti.

3. Ireland

- **Dublin**, November 11. Vandals desecrated the Star of the Sea Carmelite Nuns monastery in Malahide. They broke into the monastery in broad daylight, spray-painted a chapel with graffiti and shouted offensive slurs against the nuns.

- **Longford**, August 1. Vandals smashed the stained-glass windows of St. Michael's, the oldest serving Catholic church building in the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. This was the second attack on the church in two years.

- **Clonmel**, July 30. The Holy Year Cross, a Catholic holy site in Tipperary, was spray-painted with swastikas days before an annual pilgrimage. This is not the first time the site was attacked in the days running up to the annual pilgrimage; in 2011 someone vandalized the altar and burned statues.

- **Dundalk**, July 21. Several people were injured when a man drove a car at high speed into a crowd of people at St. Patrick's Cemetery. The man was charged with reckless driving.

- **Thurles**, June 27. Vandals decapitated a marble statue of Archbishop Patrick Leahy outside the Cathedral of the Assumption, where the archbishop was buried in 1875. Thurles Police Superintendent Pat Murphy said that the statue is "a piece of the fabric of Thurles" and appealed to the public for information related to the attack.

4. Italy

- **Scorrano**, November 18. A thief broke into the Church of the Transfiguration and stole a collection box as well as a gold necklace from a statue of Mary. He then urinated on the altar. The crime was captured on CCTV.

- **Comacchio**, September 9. Vandals destroyed donation boxes at the Church of the Blessed Virgin of Sorrows. No money was taken.

- **Ceriano Laghetto**, August 25. Vandals broke into the shrine of the Madonna del Santo Rosario and spray-painted a painting depicting Jesus and Mary.

- **Naples**, August 23. Vandals damaged a statue of San Gennaro at the Church of Santa Croce.

- **Lecco**, June 29. Vandals destroyed the outdoor lights of the Monumental Cemetery.

- **Lecco**, June 3. Vandals uprooted crosses at Monte Magnodeno.

- **Montebelluna**, May 25. The Church of Santa Maria in Colle was defaced with graffiti. The church was previously defaced with graffiti in April.

- **Santorso**, May 17. Vandals spray-painted the front of the Church of Sant Orso. They were filmed by CCTV and two individuals, aged 27 and 17, were subsequently arrested after they boasted about the crime on social media.

- **Orvieto**, May 12. The Church of San Giovenale, which dates to the year 1004, was defaced with blasphemous graffiti.

- **Narni**, May 5. The Church of San Girolamo was ransacked by vandals who threw down a large statue of Jesus and damaged sacred books.

- **Cesena**, April 28. The church of the Istituto Lugaresi was ransacked during a scuffle between two Romanians who were drunk. "Two immigrants entered the church 'Dei Lugaresi,' reducing it to this state," said Massimo Bitonci, representative of the Lega party. "There are no words to describe so much barbarism."

- **Sasso della Vecchia**, April 23. Vandals destroyed an iconic statue of Mary and Jesus.

- **Trieste**, April 21. A man entered the Church of San Giovanni on Easter Sunday, took a communion wafer and began cursing Roman Catholicism.

- **Naples**, April 8. An arsonist tried to set fire to an evangelical church. The attack was captured on CCTV.

- **San Fior**, April 5. Vandals ransacked the sacristy of the church of San Fior. Three Romanians were arrested in connection with the crime.

- **Calolziocorte**, March 27. Vandals damaged the walls of an old church in Sala.

- **Montevaccino**, February 20. The Church of San Leonardo was damaged by vandals who broke crosses, statues and windows.

- **San Fior**, February 19. Vandals defaced the walls of the Church of Castello Roganzuolo.

- **Rome**, February 12. Vandals destroyed a marble plaque of the Martin Luther square. The square was named in 2015 in recognition of the role that the Protestant reformer played both in the church and in European culture. "We lament this act of vandalism, which shows the lack of values we breath and the climate of deterioration in which we live," said Leonardo de Chirico of the Italian Evangelical Alliance.

- **Farra di Soligo**, February 6. The Chapel of San Michele was ransacked by vandals who broke open the iron gate and smashed statues.

5. United Kingdom

In Northern Ireland, churches and cemeteries are attacked, on average, every other day, according to police statistics obtained in August 2019 under the Freedom of Information Act. A total of 445 crimes were recorded as criminal damage to religious buildings, churchyards or cemeteries across Northern Ireland's 11 policing districts during the last three years, according to data obtained by Christian Action Research and Education (Care NI) from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Incidents in 2019 include:

- **Abertridwr**, September 16. Vandals damaged the Church of St. Ilan Eglwysilan, which dates to the year 1188.

- **Hamble**, September 4. Vandals destroyed a fence at St. Andrew's, a 900-year-old church.

- **Ebbw Vale**, August 30. Vandals broke into Christ Church.

- **Ballyclare**, August 23. Unidentified vandals destroyed a large section of the wooden walls of Ballyclare Free Presbyterian Church. Several of the church's windows were smashed in a separate incident in late December. The church has been attacked four times during the past year.

- **Glasgow**, August 21. Vandals ransacked Carnwadric Church of Scotland.

- **Kimberley**, August 11. Vandals smashed windows of Holy Trinity Church.

- **Scarborough**, August 13. Thieves broke into the Church of the Holy Nativity, stole items from inside the building and spray-painted the steps.

- **Liverpool**, August 3. Vandals defaced St. Oswald King & Martyr Catholic Church with graffiti and smashed windows.

- **Tamworth**, June 14. Vandals defaced St. Editha's Church, one of the oldest churches in the West Midlands, with anti-Christian graffiti. Among the messages scrawled were, "God has failed," "Deliver us to evil," and "Lucifer runs this capitalist ruin." Church warden Dawn Perry said: "We are totally shocked, saddened and angered by this."

- **South Cerney**, June 12. Vandals smashed a stained-glass window at All Hallows Church.

- **Sussex**, May 9. Vandals destroyed an historic lychgate at St. John the Evangelist Church in Copthorne.

- **Glasgow**, April 29. A bus stop in front of Holy Family Parish Church in Mossend in North Lanarkshire was defaced with anti-Catholic graffiti. On 26 March, vandals smashed the windows of Holy Family Primary School, which is next door to the church.

- **Glasgow**, April 28. St. Simon's Catholic Church was ransacked by vandals in a daytime attack. Police said that there was significant damage to the inside of the church, including damage to the altar area of the church as well as to a shrine which has been in the church since the 1940 and caters to the Polish parishioners who attend mass in their native language.

- **Bacup**, April 26. Vandals ransacked St. Saviour's Church. The historic building was defaced with graffiti, the stained-glass windows were smashed, and its organ was stripped bare.

- **Willesden**, April 21. Vandals destroyed the windows of Elim Pentecostal Church on Easter Sunday.

- **Belfast**, April 21. Sacred Heart Church in Ballyclare was vandalized with paint on Easter Sunday. Police, who described the incident as a hate crime, arrested a 26-year-old man who was later released on bail.

- **Bath**, February 16. Vandals toppled a one-ton stone sculpture of loaves and fishes at St. Philip and St. James' Church.

- **West Midlands**, January 16. More than a dozen churches received anonymous letters threatening attacks. "Stop all your services straight away," warned one letter sent to a church in Sheffield. "If you don't your church will be petrol bombed while in service. Continue behind closed doors and your congregation members will be stabbed one by one. Blood on your hands. You have been warned."

- **Cirencester**, January 13. Burglars smashed stained-glass windows and stole the collection box at Cirencester Parish Church.

6. Spain

- **Granada**, December 12. The Church of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores was spray-painted with anti-Catholic graffiti.

- **Barcelona**, November 27. A Roman Catholic seminary was spray-painted with anti-Catholic graffiti.

- **Zaragoza**, November 16. Vandals ransacked the Chapel of the Santo Sepulcro de Tauste and set fire to a statue of Jesus.

- **Madrid**, November 11. The Church of Santa Catalina de Alejandría was spray-painted with Satanist graffiti.

- **Zamora**, October 28. The Church of San Esteban, which dates to the 11th century, was defaced with graffiti.

- **Seville**, October 28. The Basilica de la Macarena was defaced with graffiti.

- **Valencia**, October 24. The Church of San Nicolás was defaced with graffiti.

- **Madrid**, October 21. The Cathedral de la Almudena and several other churches in the capital were defaced with graffiti.

- **Barcelona**, October 18. The Church of Nuestra Señora del Rosario was defaced with political graffiti.

- **Barcelona**, October 14. The Church of San Juan Bautista de Gracia was defaced with Satanist graffiti.

- **Córdoba**, October 5. Vandals desecrated the Chapel of Rosa de Montilla.

- **Cuenca**, October 1. Thieves broke into the Church of La Concepción de Casas de Fernando Alonso and stole the tabernacle.

- **Madrid**, September 27. The Church of San Miguel de Fuencarral was spray-painted with anti-Catholic graffiti.

- **Carbonero**, September 6. Vandals overturned large granite bollards in front of the Church of San Juan Bautista.

- **Almería**, August 31. The Church of Santiago Apóstol was defaced with graffiti.

- **Cambrils**, July 25. A man repeatedly defaced the Church of Sant Pere with graffiti. He was arrested when police observed him carrying paint and walking toward the church.

- **Guadalajara**, July 20. Vandals broke into the Church of Santiago Apostle and stole the consecrated host.

- **Castellón**, July 18. The Cross of the Fallen was defaced with graffiti.

- **Buelna**, July 17. The Cross of the Fallen, a monument in the town center, was defaced with anti-religious and pro-Communist graffiti.

- **Salamanca**, July 16. The historic Church of San Marcos was defaced with paint.

- **San Cristóbal de La Laguna**, June 21. Vandals defaced several churches with graffiti.

- **Soria**, June 23. Vandals damaged the Chapel of San Bartolomé, a 12th Century Romanesque church that is currently undergoing renovations.

- **Córdoba**, May 31. Thieves broke into a Roman Catholic fraternity and stole gold crowns from several statues.

- **Málaga**, May 24. Vandals broke into a Roman Catholic fraternity and defaced a statue of Jesus with spray paint.

- **Almería**, April 21. A Roman Catholic fraternity was defaced with anarchist graffiti.

- **Segovia**, April 18. Vandals threw eggs on a Holy Week procession.

- **Andújar**, April 16. Vandals broke off the legs of a historic stone statue known as Cristo del Altozano de Santiago.

- **Orense**, April 14. On Palm Sunday, a Catholic church in Meside was defaced with far-left anti-religious graffiti.

- **Tavernes de la Valldigna**, April 1. Vandals defaced the Church of St Pere with anarchist graffiti.

- **Madrid**, March 29. Madrid Mayor Manuela Carmena removed all references to Christianity from the city's Holy Week celebrations. "We seek to transcend the immediate significance of Holy Week to delve into the timeless feeling and universal emotions that this period of recollection arouses," according to the City Hall.

- **Seville**, March 19. Two women broke into the sacristy of the Church of San Julián and then left the building wearing vestments used by priests to officiate the mass. The incident was captured on CCTV.

- **Málaga**, March 13. Vandals broke into the Sagrada Familia chapel in El Copo.

- **Santiago de Compostela**, March 12. The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, a World Heritage Site, was defaced with anti-religious graffiti. The cathedral was previously defaced in August 2018; the cost of removing the graffiti exceeded €10,000 ($11,200).

- **Málaga**, March 11. Thieves broke into the Holy Trinity of Antequera church and stole the consecrated host, the sacred bread used in the Roman Catholic

Mass.

- **Madrid**, March 10. Vandals caused significant damage to the Parish of San Rafael Arnáiz in Sanchinarro. They also stole the consecrated host.

- **Ávila**, March 10. Vandals defaced the Chapel of the Risen One.

- **Barcelona**, March 8. The entrance to a Christian radio station was spray-painted with anti-religious graffiti.

- **Córdoba**, March 6. Arsonists threw a Molotov cocktail against the Parish of San Miguel. The wick was burned but the device did not explode.

- **Camargo**, March 5. A cross was defaced with anarchist and Communist graffiti.

- **Gijón**, March 2. Vandals destroyed a marble railing in the Church of San José.

- **Jaén**, February 18. Vandals broke into the Parish of Santa Isabel and stole the consecrated host.

- **Seville**, February 11. Vandals spray-painted the Church of San Martin with the words, "The only church that illuminates is the one that burns."

- **Ávila**, February 10. Vandals spray-painted two Roman Catholic churches with anti-religious, pro-anarchist graffiti.

- **Cimadevilla**, February 7. Vandals defaced the Church of San Juan Bautista with graffiti.

- **Córdoba**, January 30. The Trinidad Roman Catholic school in Vistalegre was defaced with anti-religious graffiti.

- **Vigo**, January 22. Two youths broke into a chapel at Álvaro Cunqueiro Hospital and stole the consecrated host.

- **Pasaia**, January 22. Vandals threw a Jesus statue into the town's harbor.

- **Almería**, January 20. Arsonists attempted to burn down the hermitage of Torregarcía; arsonists previously tried to burn down the chapel on January 11.

- **Ondarroa**, January 14. Basque separatists destroyed a large cross raised by the Franco regime in 1958 to honor "the children of Ondarroa who heroically gave their lives for God and Spain."

- **Soria**, January 4. The Church of Santa María la Mayor was spray-painted with graffiti.

- **Córdoba**, January 2. Vandals destroyed a cross commemorating the Spanish Civil War at a cemetery in Puente Genil.

Appendix 3: Select Commentary and Reflections on Church Attacks in Europe in 2019

- **December 18**, Saint-Éloy-les-Mines, France: "We are still a Judeo-Christian country. It is deplorable to attack a nativity scene and decorations. We do this for the children, but this morning, they were devastated in front of the crib." — Marie-Thérèse Sikora, Mayor of Saint-Éloy-les-Mines.

- **November 21**, Porto-Vecchio, Italy: "This attack reflects a deep lack of respect in a sacred place. It is not normal to degrade a statue of piety in this way. This should not happen in Corsica, a Christian land." — Frédéric Constant, Priest, Church of San Ciprianu, Porto-Vecchio.

- **November 21**, Tarbes, France: "The desecration of the Church of Saint Jean in Tarbes takes place in a continuum of a devastating number of abominations of chapels and churches. There is hardly a day when we do not learn of such facts, illustrating an unprecedented increase since the French Revolution of anti-Catholic hatred in France." — The general alliance against racism and for the respect of French and Christian identity (AGRIF).

- **November 16**, Zaragoza, Spain: "This has been an attack on a religious and cultural symbol of our people. It is not a simple act of vandalism. It is a place where our ancestors, family and friends have met for centuries." — Miguel Angel Francés Carbonel, Mayor of Tauste.

- **November 16**, Zaragoza, Spain: "This time it was not a robbery, it was evil. On other occasions they came to steal but today it was to destroy." — Javier Francés, Custodian, Chapel of the Santo Sepulcro de Tauste.

- **November 9**, Tonnay-Charente, France: "This attack is an expression of hatred against Christ and his Church, a manifestation of violence, cowardice and stupidity." — Monsignor Georges Colomb, Bishop of La Rochelle and Saintes.

- **November 4**, Oloron-Sainte-Marie, France: "These serious incivilities and this total lack of respect for a sacred heritage are increasing in France. This raises deep concerns about the civilizational values that characterize our society." — Monsignor Marc Aillet, Bishop of Bayonne.

- **August 20**, Giovo, Italy. "It is clear that anyone who has performed such an act does not know our values. Such contempt for this place, a religious symbol of yesterday and today that embodies the sensitivity of our people, discredits those who have done this by acting in the shadows, in the illusion that darkness can hide from its own cowardice." — Michael Moser, local resident.

- **August 14**, Clermont, France: "As Catholic Christians, this new event saddens us more, insofar as it suggests that people make churches a target to satisfy their addiction or to appease their greed." — Monsignor Jacques Raymond Germain Benoit-Gonnin, Bishop of Beauvais, Senlis and Noyon.

- **August 10**, Compiègne, France: "The most essential issue for us is that the tabernacle was forced open, and that the Blessed Sacrament, the presence of Christ was touched and stolen. This is a profanation for us." — Julien Serey, Communications Director, Diocese of Oise.

- **August 1**, Longford, Ireland: "Let there be no ambiguity, this is not a victimless crime. Vandalism of this kind is profoundly disrespectful to people of faith and to places of worship. It is threatening and distressing. In a truly pluralist society these examples of vandalism are of concern to our whole community." — Bishop Francis Duffy.

- **May 21**, Madrid, Spain: "It is very worrying that, year after year, attacks against churches increase. This can cause fear in believers when they go to pray or practice their faith. Religious freedom is the acid test of human rights. A democracy like ours cannot allow such a high number of attacks on religious freedom to occur. Religious freedom is a person's most intimate right because it involves the conscience." — María García, President, Observatory for Religious Freedom (*Observatorio para la Libertad Religiosa y de Conciencia, OLRC)*.

- **May 24**, Belfast, Northern Ireland: "All attacks on property are to be condemned, but the deliberate targeting of a church is particularly heinous. Apart from the obvious danger to life, attacks on churches cause a special revulsion because of their historical role in providing sanctuary and a normally safe place for worship.... This was not only an attack on a church, but as a peace-hungry society, this was an attack on all of us." — *The Belfast Telegraph*.

- **May 17**, Großholbach, Germany: "This hurts. These are values that have simply been trampled upon." — Michael Kohlhass, Mayor of Großholbach .

- **April 4**, Bois de Cené, France: "I condemn with the utmost firmness the degradations committed in the church of Bois-de-Céné. They are absolutely unbearable. Whether malicious or anti-Christian, such acts deeply hurt believers who have the right to be able to freely live their faith. Places of worship are places of meditation. Those who profane them at the same time attack secularism which allows 'those who believe in heaven and those who do

not believe' to live together with respect for freedom of conscience." — Yves Auvinet, President of the Departmental Council of Bois de Cené.

- **April 2**, Paris, France: "The Church has occupied a very important place in French society for so long that some people do not want to pay attention to the attacks of which it is the victim." — Jérôme Fourquet, Director of Opinion, Ifop polling agency.

- **April 2**, Paris, France: "Christians, hostages of the war of civilizations in the Middle East, are part of that which rages quietly in our regions." — Elisabeth Lévy, Editor-in-Chief, *Causeur* magazine.

- **March 23**, Leoben, Austria: "This was no simple act of vandalism. It was spiritual anarchism. It is evil. They urinated at the altar and poured out the holy water. This was a manifestation of their attitude toward the church." — Markus Plöbst, Parish Priest, Stadtpfarrkirche Leoben.

- **March 11**, Strasbourg, France: "This lack of respect for the sacred in our society is very disturbing." —Alain Fontanel, Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg.

- **March 5**, Reichstett, France: "It's a question of respect for religious buildings. On Halloween the Protestant church was targeted, and now it's the Catholic church. It's an attack on the freedom of worship." — Georges Schuler, Mayor of Reichstett.

- **February 25**, Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie, France: "It is the moral prejudice that is important, that is to say that it was an attack on the place of worship, an attack on religion, in a somewhat complicated context in France. Therefore, effectively, the moral prejudice is much more important than financial harm." — François Blanchet, Mayor of Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie.

- **February 11**, Ávila, Spain: "These acts of vandalism threaten first of all the heritage of our city," said in a statement. Above all, however, they threaten respect and religious freedom, recognized and protected in the Constitution, and that must be the guarantor of a healthy and free peaceful coexistence in Spanish society." — Bishopric of Ávila.

- **February 10**, Maisons-Laffitte, France: "This vandalism is an attack on the freedom of worship because it is attacking what is at the heart of belief." — Jean-Jacques Brot, Prefect, Yvelines department.

- **February 5**, Lavaur, France: "God will forgive, I will not. I expect justice, an exemplary sanction for these acts of Christianophobia that have upset and outraged the people of Lavaur and, well beyond this, the French who are proud of their religious and cultural heritage." — Bernard Carayon, Mayor of Lavaur.

- **January 17**, Grenoble, France: "This criminal action is an attack on freedom of conscience, freedom of worship, and the value of coexistence," — Bishop of Grenoble-Vienne, Guy de Kerimel.

- **January 10**, Rovereto, Italy: "Expressing one's thoughts with violence and arrogance by damaging the symbols and property of others is always wrong. In a democracy there are other ways to express one's ideas. Whoever set fire to the entrance of the church of San Rocco is the enemy of dialogue and peaceful debate." — Maurizio Fugatti, President of the Autonomous Province of Trento.

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