

CHURCH BURNINGS SUGGEST MORE THAN RACIAL PREJUDICE

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), there have been 123 church fires occurring in 27 states from coast to coast over the past five years. Of the 123, 38 of the fires have been at black churches. Now satanic markings have been found on a North Carolina sanctuary before it was burned, leading investigators to explore the role of devil-worshipping cults.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, offered the following remarks today:

“The Catholic League is delighted that the House Judiciary Committee has approved the Church Arson Prevention Act, making it easier for federal prosecutors to punish those who damage religious property or obstruct another person’s free exercise of religious beliefs. We hope the Congress approves this legislation.

“Given the fact that the latest church burnings have decimated black churches, it is understandable that the media have focused on the racial dimension of these attacks. But it should also be noted that since most of the churches that have been burned in the past five years have been in white neighborhoods, the problem is deeper than racial animus: it suggests an attack on Christianity. The specter of satanic cults being involved in some of the arson attacks raises the likelihood that an assault on Christianity is a prime motivating factor behind the church burnings.

“The recent attacks on black churches may very well be the result of both racial prejudice and an hostility directed at the vibrancy of their Christian mission. To the extent that the latter is true, the Catholic League is calling on the U.S.

Department of Justice to uncover the sources of anti-Christian prejudice, as well as the role of racial bigotry.

“The league also implores all Catholic leaders, clergy and laity alike, to do what they can to facilitate those who have been displaced as a result of the arson attacks.”

The Catholic League is the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization. It defends individual Catholics and the institutional Church from defamation and discrimination.