

# SPIKE IN VANDALISM

The year 2021 will be remembered as the year when church vandals and hate crimes against people of faith exploded, not just in the United States but in Europe as well.

We have been keeping tabs on instances of church vandalism and related crimes for decades, but this year we recorded many more cases than usual. It's actually been in the past two years that the number has spiked.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tallied well over 100 incidents of vandalism at Catholic churches and other institutions. Arson, graffiti and defaced statues were the most common acts.

While all such behavior is reprehensible, we always make a distinction between vandals who are drunken teenagers and those who are motivated by hatred of Catholicism.

In our research, we found that certain key words were associated with the vandalism, words that makes us think these were politically motivated acts. Abortion was frequently cited by the vandals. Black Lives Matter rioters were also responsible for many of the crimes.

The Vienna-based Observatory on Intolerance against Christians in Europe recorded a 70% increase in hate crimes for the last year it collected data. The authors of the study found that "secular intolerance is the driving dynamic in most of the cases and areas of life we observed." They concluded that the criminals are trying "to relegate religion to the private sphere."

Radical left-wing secularists are the real threat.