



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on January 14, 2020

## Christian Symbols Under Attack in Europe

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When the historic Notre Dame cathedral in Paris became engulfed in flames last year, there were suspicions that the fire was deliberately set, either by Islamic terrorists or militant atheists — or even someone else. Although Paris investigators immediately assured the public that it was not an intentional act of arson, but rather was likely owing to negligence, it is quite understandable that there were suspicions that an anti-Christian actor was the culprit.



After all, waves of attacks on Christian symbols have swept across Europe, even in small towns in Italy. This past Christmas season, for example, hundreds of cribs in Nativity Scenes were smashed, burned, and vandalized across Italy. Statues of the Baby Jesus, along with Mary and Joseph, have been either beheaded or otherwise vandalized. One was impaled on an iron pole, and left in a public square.

In the Italian town of Ivrea (near Turin) a 46-year-old woman set fire to a crib near the altar of the Church of San Maurizio, causing damage to paintings and frescoes, along with the covering of the baptismal font. A similar incident took place at San Salvatore, where the altar linen was destroyed.

The rising wave of attacks upon Christian symbols in Europe is unprecedented. Even during the militantly anti-Christian French Revolution (when the Cathedral at Notre Dame was turned into an atheistic “Temple of Reason” by French radicals), there were not attacks upon Christian symbols across Europe to this extent.

Fingers have been pointed at the flood of Muslim immigrants from the Middle East as a source of the hostility toward the Christian faith. In San Benedetto Po, four Muslim teenagers — born in Italy of Muslim immigrants — were arrested after destroying a Nativity crib. A former deputy mayor of Milan, Riccardo De Corato, was not surprised. “It is not difficult to imagine from which worldview such hostility towards a Christian symbol can come.”

Vandals in Mogliano Veneto even hanged a figurine of the Infant Jesus off the ground, using an electric cable wrapped around its neck.

*Church Militant* investigation has uncovered dozens of similar incidents in Italian towns this past Christmas.

Author and publisher Leo Zagami told *Church Militant* that such activity is not restricted to Italy. “In some ways, this is a repeat of what has been happening in France for some time now with the constant vandalization of churches by Muslim immigrants.” Zagami said the reason more has not been reported about these incidents is “the predominantly left-wing Italian media downplays the attacks as stupid



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pranks by teenagers.”

In France, in excess of 3,000 churches, schools, cemeteries, and monuments were vandalized last year, with 2019 thought to have set a record for anti-Christian desecration of Christian symbols. Three Christian buildings are vandalized or burned *every day* in France. In Germany, such attacks are not as frequent, but are still happening at a rate of about two per day.

The hostility toward the Christian faith that has swept across Europe in recent years may be contributing to the recent spike in violent attacks upon symbols of the Christian faith. This also provides a partial explanation to the question of why the left-wing media in Europe, just like the left-wing media in the United States, reports so little about the increase in anti-Christian violence on the continent once so dominated by the Christian religion that it was known collectively as “Christendom.”

It has been a commonly held tenet of the Left to consider Christianity an impediment to their agenda. So, why do they seem to favor Islam over Christianity? After all, many more followers of Islam favor laws curbing individual practices considered sinful than one would ever encounter in Western Christianity.

The answer seems to be that the Left does not consider Islam as great a threat as biblical Christianity, and therefore ignores or attempts to explain away Muslim violence. For instance, if one pastor of a tiny church in Florida, composed of maybe 30 members, burns a Koran, that is somehow big news for left-wing media (and presented as typical of Christians), but if a Muslim perpetrates an actual serious crime, we are assured that “the person does not represent the vast majority of Muslims.” Perhaps it does not, yet such grace is not afforded any Christian similarly accused of the same crime.

As Europe (and the United States) imports more immigrants from the Middle East, and becomes more secularized, it can be expected that attacks upon Christian symbols will only increase.

*Image: Jorisvo via iStock / Getty Images Plus*

*Steve Byas is a university instructor of history and government and the author of History's Greatest Libels, a defense of historical personalities — such as Christopher Columbus and Marie Antoinette — as victims of falsehoods in most conventional histories and in the popular culture. He can be contacted at [byassteve@yahoo.com](mailto:byassteve@yahoo.com)*



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