



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on April 15, 2019

Notre Dame Cathedral Being Destroyed by Fire

On Monday, fire and police in Paris reported that Notre Dame Cathedral was on fire. Early pictures and videos posted online show what appears to be a major conflagration engulfing a portion of the 800-year-old building.

Emmanuel Gregoire, deputy mayor of Paris, confirmed the inferno in a tweet, warning people to stay away from the area. And the Paris fire department reports that a major operation to fight the fire is underway. In pictures and videos posted online, the bell towers and spire are seen engulfed in flames and smoke.



Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo described the fire as “terrible” and said firefighters are working to control it. “A terrible fire is underway at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. The fire brigade are trying to control the fire. We are mobilized locally in close connection with church authorities. I ask everyone to respect the security perimeter,” she tweeted.

French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner tweeted, “Support and solidarity with @PompiersParis (fire brigade) mobilized to save our common heritage, in the heart of Paris. An exceptional force was deployed by the @prefpolice (Paris police) to neutralize this violent fire. I share the immense emotion of the Parisians.”

But, firefighters are having difficulty reaching the fire, due to the heat and size of the fire.

As of this writing the fire is continuing to grow and the roof and spire have collapsed. The damage at this point is already irreparable. If the fire continues at this rate, there may be nothing left of the cathedral within hours. No injuries have yet been reported.

In the United States, Vice President Mike Pence tweeted, “Notre Dame is an iconic symbol of faith to people all over the world — and it is heartbreaking to see a house of God in flames. Our thoughts and prayers are with the firefighters on the scene and all the people of Paris.”

The cause of the fire is not known, but it is possibly related to a major restoration project that was ongoing when the fire broke out. Sixteen copper statues — including those of the Apostles — were removed from Notre Dame Cathedral on Thursday as part of that restoration project.

In preparation of Holy Week, Paris is heavily populated by tourists this week. The cathedral — which was mostly built between 1160 and 1260 — is a favorite for many tourists visiting the city. As the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Paris, and considered to be one of the best examples of French Gothic architecture, Notre Dame (French for “Our Lady”) has been the most visited monument in Paris — drawing between 12 and 13 million tourists a year.

After today, it may be no more.

This is a developing story, and The New American will keep our readers posted as it continues to



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develop.

Photo of Notre Dame Cathedral burning: AP Images



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