

March 5, 2024

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write with regard to the dramatic increase in attacks on Catholic churches across America. These religiously motivated attacks seldom result in any consequences for offenders and are part of a larger trend of fanatical activists targeting religious institutions. I demand you speak out on the growing number of attacks on Catholic churches and make investigating, and fully prosecuting, these incidents an urgent priority for your administration.

Since May 2020, there have been more than 400 attacks against Catholic churches in the United States.¹ One hundred and forty-two of the attacks occurred in 2020 and 2021. These attacks further skyrocketed following the Supreme Court's leaked decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, with 143 attacks occurring in 2022. These assaults continued into 2023 as well, with more than 100 attacks.

These attacks are not random nor are they the result of a temporary lapse in judgment by perpetrators. They are motivated by a deep and abiding animosity towards religious institutions and people of faith. Anyone who thinks or argues otherwise should consider the following examples: a woman setting fire to a statue of the Virgin Mary, an individual beheading a statue of the baby Jesus, and a perpetrator cutting the hands off of a statue of Jesus. These horrific descriptions only cover a portion of incidents in New York, a hotspot for anti-Catholic aggression. Other examples include a priest being attacked with a machete, a 249-year old church being set on fire and nearly fully destroyed, and, in Florida, a man crashed a van into a Catholic church and then set it on fire with people inside.

As president, you have a constitutional duty to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." It should be of highest priority for your administration to protect and defend any group from violence. Yet, your administration's passivity causes people of faith across America to seriously doubt whether you are willing and able to defend Catholic churches and their parishioners.

As previously revealed via a leaked memorandum in 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation targeted Catholics under the pretext of investigating racially or ethnically motivated extremists. This memorandum made sweeping generalizations about the Catholic faith

¹ [Catholic Vote, Tracker: Attacks on Catholic Churches](#)

and the millions of Americans who practice it, especially those Catholics who choose to attend the Traditional Latin Mass. Further, your administration has selectively enforced the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act to exclusively protect abortion clinics while attacks on pro-life pregnancy resource centers go ignored and unpunished. This imbalanced enforcement is despicable, and it undermines any notion that your U.S. Department of Justice enforces the law without bias or prejudice.

The First Amendment explicitly protects each individual's right to freely exercise his or her religious beliefs. Among other things, the wave of attacks against Catholics suggest that many activists would like countless Americans to abandon their genuine religious faith and submit to a godless, progressive pseudo-religion. Irrespective of any value judgment on the ends of that goal, the means have proven to be anti-First Amendment, anti-American, and violent.

You have a responsibility to protect Americans from harm. I demand you condemn the growing number of attacks on Catholic churches and make combatting these incidents an urgent priority for your administration by prosecuting each and every offender to the fullest extent of the law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator