News 25 November 2026 | English article

Russian Drone Explodes in Front of Odesa Catholic Cathedral Shattering Half Its Windows

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"A Russian Shahed drone crashed and exploded directly in front of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Odesa on the morning of Wednesday 18 November 2026, shattering roughly half or more of its large windows"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

A Russian Shahed drone crashed and exploded directly in front of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Odesa on the morning of Wednesday 18 November 2026, shattering roughly half or more of its large windows. The blast damaged the metal entrance and vestibule doors and blew out windows on all three floors of the adjacent diocesan curia of Odesa-Simferopol. No cathedral or curia staff were hurt, parish priest Fr. Myroslav Karachyna, a Franciscan, told Vatican media.

The drone was already falling when it hit. It had been engaged by Ukrainian air defences, and it came down in front of the cathedral in the historic centre of the city and exploded. That detail matters, because no source has established that Russia deliberately targeted the cathedral. What is certain is what the blast left behind: glass across the cobblestones, doors buckled, and a house of worship open to the cold morning air.

Fr. Karachyna was the one who had to stand in the wreckage and tell the world that his people were safe. A priest does not expect to start his morning counting broken windows in his own cathederal. But that is what the war in Ukraine keeps asking of its clergy: to sweep up glass, to comfort the frightened, and to hold a service anyway.

The cathedral strike was one of three Russian strikes on Odesa that morning. Local authorities said four people were killed and about ten were wounded across all three strikes. Those casualties cover the whole morning's attacks, not the cathedral blast alone, and they should not be reported as though they happened at the cathedral itself.

The Cathedral of the Assumption stands in the historic centre of Odesa, a city whose old town is listed by UNESCO. Ukraine's Culture Ministry counts 212 damaged heritage sites in that UNESCO-listed centre alone. Each one is a piece of history that cannot be rebuilt exactly as it was, and each one is a wound in a city that has already endured so much.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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