News 26 November 2026 | English article

Attacks on Christians in Europe Rise 44% in New OIDAC Report

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

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Behind these figures are people who have been threatened or attacked because of their faith,"

(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

Attacks on individual Christians across Europe jumped 44% in a single year, a new report says. The Vienna-based Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians in Europe, known as OIDAC Europe, counted at least 395 attacks on people in 2025, including threats, harassment, physical violence and at least two killings motivated by religious discrimination. That is up from 274 such attacks in 2024. In total, the report records an estimated 2,465 anti-Christian hate crimes and incidents in 2025, up from 2,211 the year before.

Behind the numbers is a man in Lyon, France. Ashur Sarnaya was livestreaming Christian messages in Arabic outside his apartment when he was stabbed to death. His killing is among the gravest cases in the report, and it is the reason the watchdog's director sounds an alarm rather than simply publishing a table. "Behind these figures are people who have been threatened or attacked because of their faith," OIDAC Europe executive director Anja Tang said in a statement. "Our primary concern with the new data is that anti-Christian attacks that target persons, individuals themselves, have risen."

The OIDAC Europe Report 2026 was published on November 16, 2026. It draws on national government reports and European OSCE/ODIHR data, using the highest available figure for each country rather than adding potentially overlapping government and civil-society counts. Most figures cover calendar year 2025, though the England and Wales police data cover April 2025 to March 2026. OIDAC Europe also recorded 528 cases itself. The report warns of significant under-reporting of attacks on individuals, which means the true figure is likely higher than 395.

Most of the 2,465 incidents still involved buildings rather than people: arson, vandalism, and church and cemetery desecrations. But the report's warning is about direction of travel. Attacks on people, rather than property, are growing fastest. Those attacks include threats, harassment, physical violence, criminal insults and defamation, coercion, sexual offenses and homicide. Tang singled out clergy and people responsible for places of worship as particularly exposed.

France recorded the highest government total, with 843 anti-Christian incidents in 2025, up 9% on the year before. England and Wales followed with 624, then Germany with 337 and Austria with 134. France also offers the clearest picture of how the violence is changing. Its Interior Ministry recorded 23 physical-violence incidents against Christians in 2025, up from 11 the year before, a rise of more than 100%. Disruptions of services and threats against worshippers rose from 29 to 54, an increase of 86%. Violence involving people responsible for places of worship quadrupled, the ministry said, though it gave no exact previous-year count.

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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