

## Catholic Church in Scotland wants hate crime stopped

More than half of all local hate crimes target Catholics or Catholicism. Scottish society “remains scarred by past hatreds and tumults”, a spokesman of the Scottish Church said.



*St Andrew's Cathedral, Glasgow / Finlay McWalter / Wikipedia / CC BY-SA 3.0*

Catholic Church leaders worried about religious hate crime in Scotland, is to hold talks with the Scottish government to help curb the violence. “They have urged ministers to acknowledge the frequency with which Catholics are being targeted,” reports [www.scotsman.com](http://www.scotsman.com).

Church leaders “fear there is a vague approach and a lack of a targeted strategy from ministers to address the issue,” the newspaper reported. The meeting is scheduled to be held when parliament returns after the summer recess. The reluctance of ministers to adopt a “name and shame” approach to the problem is being highlighted by the Catholic hierarchy who say it must first be “identified” before it is tackled, the Scotsman said. Religious-related crime is rising in Scotland. More than half of all hate crimes target Catholics or Catholicism, said the report, citing the official religious hate crime statistics released in June.

The figures show there were 673 charges reported in 2016-17, up 14 percent on 2015-16. Peter Kearney, director of the Scottish Catholic Media Office, told [scotsman.com](http://scotsman.com) that the figures show Scottish society “remains scarred by past hatreds and tumults”. “Before a problem can be tackled, it must first be identified and addressed,” Kearney said. “Surprisingly, this doesn’t happen when it comes to religious intolerance and the criminal behavior which goes with it,” he said. He blamed this largely on the “government’s unwillingness to adopt a name and shame approach to religious hate crime” in recent parliamentary exchanges. Catholics account for 17 percent of the population in Scotland.

Community safety minister Annabelle Ewing is expected meet Catholic Church leaders next

month. The Scottish government said it is providing more than £20 million in funding to help promote equality and address discrimination in 2017-18. You may access this article below. Thanks !

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