



**RELIGIOUS  
FREEDOM  
DATA CENTER**

*Peace be within thy walls and security within thy palaces | Ps. 122*

# Religious Freedom Data Center

## October - December 2025 Report

### Incidents against Christians in Israel Report compiled by Yisca Harani

**Director of the Religious Freedom Data Center (RFDC)**

The Religious Freedom Data Center (RFDC) has been operating for three years. The Center collects data and documents anti-Christian incidents through a “hotline”, operated by Israeli volunteers and activists. The Center is operated and funded by private citizens and is not affiliated with any governmental or political body.

Together with the legal department of the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC), headed by Attorney Ori Narov, we monitor complaints submitted to the police, provide legal support to victims, and act to ensure justice through the authorities. Despite the difficult times facing the region as a shared religious space, we remain committed to the goals we have set for ourselves: to diligently monitor any violation of freedom of religion and of religious dignity, and to act to curb this phenomenon

## Methods of work

**Ongoing activity:** The hotline coordinates reports of harassment through a telephone line and an online system in various languages. RFDC volunteers maintain continuous contact with Christians and church institutions, collect information and documentation about harassment incidents, and help in filing complaints with the authorities and police. In cases of vandalized signage, graffiti, or other acts of vandalism, volunteers contact the relevant authorities and follow up until repairs are completed. Complaints, testimonies, and referrals are archived by the Center and published in monthly or quarterly reports.

**Pro-actions:** Volunteers proactively go out into the field, especially during Christian and Jewish holidays and escort processions in the Old City of Jerusalem. They photograph incidents of harassment and sometimes try to engage with the attackers to explain the severity and harmful effects of their actions.

**Proactive Interfaith Engagement and Partnership:** Inviting Christian clergy to participate in joint tours and Jewish events, such as Hanukkah candle-lighting ceremonies, with the aim of fostering familiarity with the area and with the volunteers, developing friendship, trust, and partnership among religious communities, and strengthening relations of mutual respect.

**Partners and Supporters:** Together with the legal department of the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC), the Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue, and the Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI), we are expanding our activities in various ways.

**A Call by Church Leaders to Clergy and Communities to Cooperate with the RFDC:** The RFDC strives to reach all Christian communities in the Holy Land and calls on them to contact us, inform us, and make greater use of our support in efforts to curb the growing attacks against the Christian community in Israel. We make use of letters of recommendation encouraging cooperation with us, written on our behalf of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Head of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, in order to encourage Christians to report incidents to us and seek our assistance.

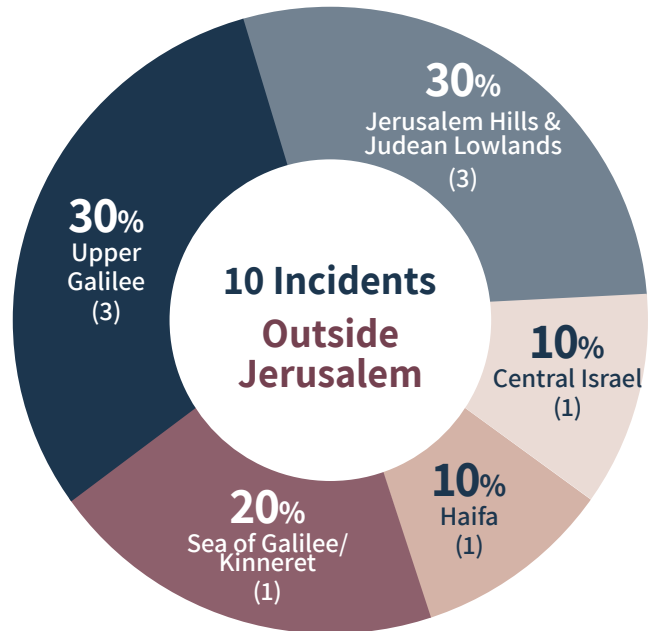
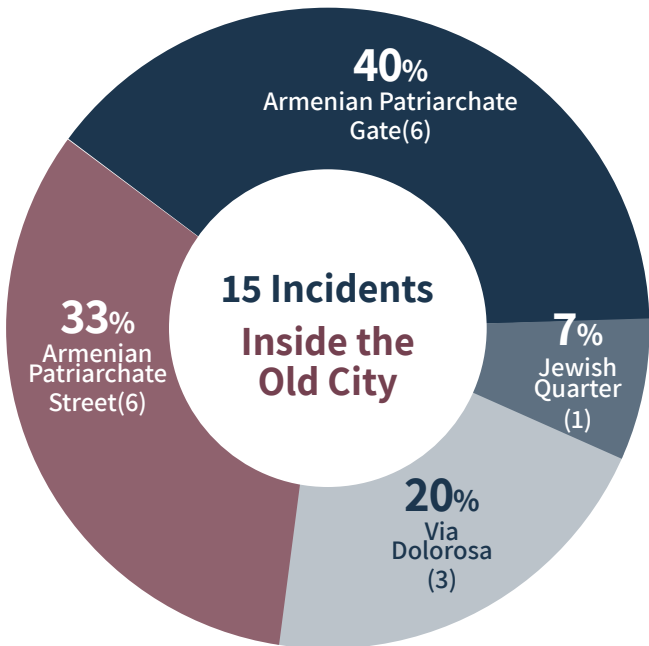
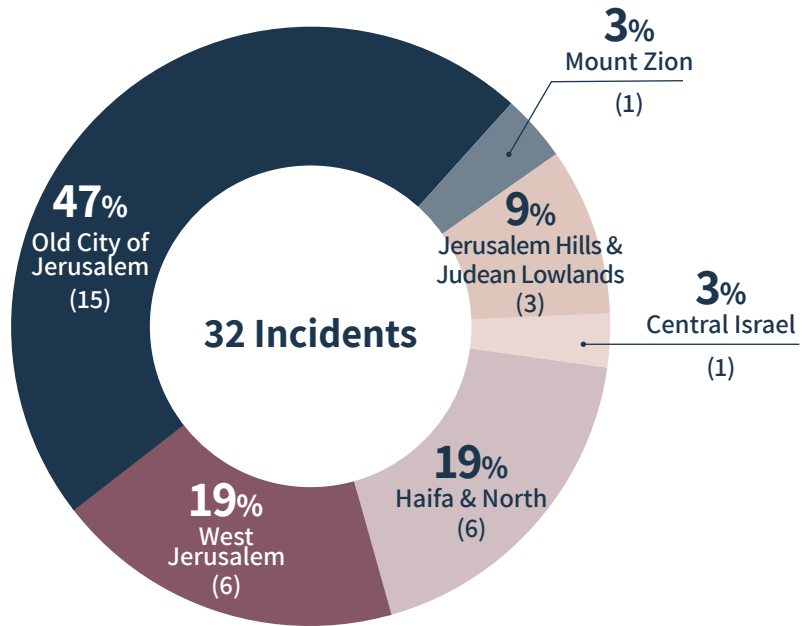
## Report summary | 32 harrasments\* between October - December 2025

The following offensive behaviors were documented:



\* A single event, may include several expressions of hostility.

## Breakdown of incident location



## Reported Incidents

	Location	Incident	Date	Response
1	Jerusalem, Old City. Via Dolorosa.	<b>Spitting</b>   three separate spitting incidents by different individuals	8 Oct 2025	
2	Jerusalem, HaChoma HaShlishit St., Polish Monastery.	<b>Vandalism</b>   glass bottle thrown at monastery window	8 Oct 2025	Police complaint filed, No. 453375/2025.
3	Jerusalem, Mamilla Promenade.	<b>Spitting</b>   water sprayed from mouth toward a nun; additional spitting toward two other nuns	8 Oct 2025	
4	Jerusalem, Old City. Via Dolorosa, 2nd Station.	<b>Spitting</b>   toward monastery entrance	9 Oct 2025	
5	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	<b>Spitting, Verbal assault</b>   toward Christians, in front of monastery gate.	9 Oct 2025	
6	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	<b>Spitting</b>   Demonstratively in front of monastery gate.	9 Oct 2025	
7	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	Gathering and prayer by a large group of Jews in front of a Christian institution.	10 Oct 2025	
8	Jerusalem, Old City. Beit HaBad St.	<b>Spitting, verbal &amp; physical assault</b>   a minor on a bicycle kicked a tourist, spat, and shouted violent anti-Christian slogans.	10 Oct 2025	A tour guide was detained after attempting to stop the minor; a case opened against the guide and a restraining order issued. Complaint No. 454463/2025
9	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	<b>Spitting</b>   two individuals spat toward an Armenian procession.	12 Oct 2025	
10	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	<b>Spitting</b>   a boy and a teenage girl spat in the presence of their father.	13 Oct 2025	
11	Banias (Caesarea Philippi), Northern Golan Heights.	<b>Vandalism</b>   crosses removed, sawn off, and thrown from church roof.	18 Oct 2025	Police arrived; unclear whether suspects were detained.
12	Jerusalem, corner of HaNevi'im St. & Ethiopia St.	<b>Vandalism of signage</b>   directional sign to Ethiopian church sprayed white.	19 Oct 2025	

13	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate St.	<b>Obscene gesture</b>   (middle finger) directed at participants in an Armenian procession.	20 Oct 2025	Policeman escorting the procession removed the harasser.
14	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate gate.	<b>Spitting</b>   a child spat twice, while holding the Four Species.	20 Oct 2025	
15	Banias (Caesarea Philippi), Northern Golan Heights.	<b>Spitting</b>   vehicle occupants stopped near church, spat toward it, and drove away.	22 Oct 2025	
16	Abu Ghosh, Route 425, turnoff to Kiryat Yearim Monastery.	<b>Vandalism of signage</b>   sign sprayed, cross symbol obscured.	25 Oct 2025	Reported to Netivei Israel by RFDC; repaired within two days.
17	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate St.	<b>Spitting</b>   by a young man.	26 Oct 2025	
18	Beit Shemesh area, turnoff to Dir Rafat Monastery	<b>Vandalism of signage</b>   two road signs sprayed white over church symbols.	27 Oct 2025	Reported to Netivei Israel by RFDC; repaired within two days.
19	Tabgha, north of the Church of the Primacy of Peter.	<b>Vandalism of signage</b>   cross symbol erased from church sign.	30 Oct 2025	Reported to Netivei Israel by RFDC;
20	Jerusalem, HaNevi'im St., near Swedish Theological Institute.	<b>Spitting</b>   a young man spat at a woman wearing a visible silver cross.	9 Nov 2025	
21	Jerusalem, exit road from Tantur.	An Orthodox priest was subjected to a demeaning search of his bag, accompanied by mocking of his clerical attire by a law-enforcement officer.	12 Nov 2025	
22	Beit Jimal Junction, Route 38, eastbound turnoff to monastery.	<b>Vandalism of signage</b>   cross symbol sprayed on church sign.	12 Nov 2025	Reported to Netivei Israel by RFDC; handled promptly.
23	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate St. & St. James St.	<b>Physical assault</b>   group surrounded a Christian family car; father beaten, knocked down, and injured.	16 Nov 2025	Family rescued by police; father detained from midnight until 06:00 without medical treatment.
24	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate St. 23, "Touma" Café.	<b>Vandalism</b>   a man violently kicked café door.	22 Nov 2025	Police detained attacker; complaint No. 532217/2025.

25	Jerusalem, Mount Zion, outside King David's Tomb.	<b>Verbal assault</b>   two children shouted at a tourist.	30 Nov 2025	Police officer removed the children.
26	Haifa, Stella Maris Monastery.	<b>Online incitement</b>   YouTube video by Ministry-approved guide incite calls to retake the site from the 'Crusader descendants who expropriated the site'.	4 Dec 2025	Following RFDC intervention, video defining the church as impure idolatry removed; replaced by inciting video.
27	Jerusalem, King George St.	<b>Verbal assault &amp;, spitting</b>   A man verbally abused children of Filipino origin accompanied by a Catholic priest and a monk, voiced anti-non-Jewish hate, threatened expulsion, spat at the monk, and hurled insults.	6 Dec 2025	Online complaint filed by RFDC No. 546295/2025; police did not contact the assaulted monk, and closed the case.
28	Kibbutz Sasa, Branco Weiss mixed School.	<b>Vandalism</b>   Students destroyed a Christmas tree displayed at the school as part of an educational program; others joined in with offensive shouting and chants.	14 Dec 2025	School administration treated incident seriously and held educational discussions.
29	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate St. 23, "Touma" Café.	<b>Vandalism and degrading behavior</b>   individual urinated on café furniture.	19 Dec 2025	RFDC filed complaint No. 567346/2025. police did not contact the Café owner.
30	Assaf Harofeh Hospital.	<b>Removal of Christmas tree</b>   from public institution following activity by Hotam - a Jewish religious-nationalist group.	25 Dec 2025	
31	Kinneret College, Kibbutz Beit Zera.	<b>Vandalism</b>   destruction of Christmas tree and decorations	25 Dec 2025	
32	Jerusalem, Old City. Via Dolorosa, 2nd Station.	<b>Spitting</b>   at least four individuals spat at the entrance to the compound.	30 Dec 2025	RFDC filed complaint; reference No. 70414224.

## Report Summary and Insights

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- A** | During religious holidays, an increase in harassment incidents is observed, against the backdrop of a significant rise in the number of Jewish worshippers in Jerusalem and the escalation of religious tension. This report identifies a concentration of incidents during the Sukkot holiday, continuing the pattern documented in the previous report, which recorded numerous incidents during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.
- B** | An increase was recorded in incidents in which Christmas symbols became focal points for hostility and harm. After two years during which public expressions of the holiday had diminished, Christmas decorations reappeared in towns, streets, and institutions serving Christian populations. Alongside curiosity, openness, and interest among a segment of the Jewish public, cases of opposition, vandalism, and institutional restrictions on the display of holiday symbols (including Christmas trees) were also documented. These findings reflect ongoing tensions surrounding Christian religious visibility in public space and underscore the need to protect freedom of religion, mutual respect, and coexistence.
- C** | Repeated vandalism of signs directing to churches in the Beit Shemesh and Abu Ghosh areas appears to be carried out by individuals residing nearby. At the same time, it is appropriate to commend the prompt and dedicated response of Netivei Israel employees and contractors in addressing damage to signage. In northern Israel, signage and related defects are also addressed swiftly, diligently, and professionally by the Jordan Valley Regional Council.
- D** | In both the previous and the current reports, a new phenomenon of open incitement on social media is evident. This incitement, carried out without fear of personal identification by those involved, indicates a growing sense of confidence among individuals engaged in the exclusion and defamation of Christians.
- E** | The number of reports does not reflect the actual extent of harassment, but rather stems from limited contact between Christian communities and our Center. Continuous and frequent engagement between hotline volunteers and Christian clergy and institutions remains a key factor in our ongoing efforts to document incidents and effectively counter the phenomenon of harassment.

## Summary of Harassment Incidents in 2025 and Police Handling of Complaints

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During 2025, the Religious Freedom Data Center documented **176 incidents of harassment against Christians**, including **106 spitting incidents**. Numerous complaints were filed with the police, **24 of which were accompanied by the legal department of the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC)**. Data collected through monitoring **24 complaints submitted to the authorities up to 30 December 2025** present a complex picture regarding police handling of harassment and assault cases involving Christian clergy and religious institutions. Some of the complaints remain under investigation.

However, **the majority of the complaints, 17 out of 24—were closed by the authorities.** The closure rationales repeatedly cited grounds such as “unknown offender,” difficulty identifying suspects, or insufficient evidence, even in cases where photographic documentation was provided and street cameras were present at the incident sites.

These findings point to a persistent gap between the documented scope of the phenomenon and the ability—or willingness—to bring cases to prosecution. The cumulative impression is that police handling, while taking place in some instances, does not provide a systematic or effective response to the phenomenon, underscoring the need for enhanced monitoring, sustained support for victims, and stronger institutional commitment to enforcement and prevention.

## Conclusion

As 2025 draws to a close, we note with deep concern that harassment against Christians continues, while the authorities largely fail to address the phenomenon or develop systematic plans to confront it. In this reality, it is our civic responsibility to hold up a mirror to what is taking place and to assume active civil responsibility.

We identify a connection between the national mood, the prevailing tensions, and the government’s backing, which together foster a sense of superiority among Jews — a factor contributing to the rise in attacks against non-Jews.

We are determined to continue working for the dignity and safety of the Christians of this land, pilgrims, clergy, and religious symbols across the country.

Despite all the challenges and threats in the area, we will continue to strengthen, expand, and make public our activities, while calling for decisive action by the authorities to curb and eradicate the phenomenon we seek to eliminate.

We urge the authorities in Israel to view us as a constructive and contributing partner in the effort to maintain a shared, safe, and respectful religious space.

As we approach the new year 2026, we express hope that trends of responsibility, restraint, and mutual respect will be strengthened, and we reaffirm our commitment to continue our work of documentation, accompaniment, advocacy, and trust-building—in cooperation with communities, authorities, and law-enforcement bodies—out of the conviction that sustained, transparent, and consistent action can bring about meaningful change.

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**Yisca Harani | Director**  
**Religious Freedom Data Center**

