



**RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM
DATA CENTER**

Peace be within thy walls and security within thy palaces | Qs. 122

Religious Freedom Data Center

January – March 2026 report

Incidents against Christians in Israel

Report compiled by Yisca Harani

Director of the Religious Freedom Data Center (RFDC)

Now in its fourth year, RFDC is Israel's largest volunteer network providing real-time assistance and systematic documentation of harassment against Christians. We are privately funded, independent of government bodies, and operated entirely by volunteers. RFDC systematically documents harassment against Christians, responding to a fundamental need to raise awareness, respect and protect religious freedom. Despite current security challenges, we remain committed to safeguarding religious freedom and dignity for all believers, residents of the land and visitors alike.

Methods of Operation

Our multilingual hotline coordinates the reports and assists with police complaints and vandalism repairs. Volunteers conduct Proactive Field Activity performing observations during holidays.

Interfaith partnerships - including tours with the Tower of David Museum - foster trust among the different communities. Christian religious are invited to participate in joint tours and Jewish events, with the aim of fostering familiarity with the local context and with the volunteers, as well as building relationships of friendship, trust, and partnership.

We collaborate with Israel Religious Action Center for legal aid, with The Jewish People Policy Institute for support, and the Rossing Center for data sharing, while the Latin Patriarch and Custos encourage reporting.

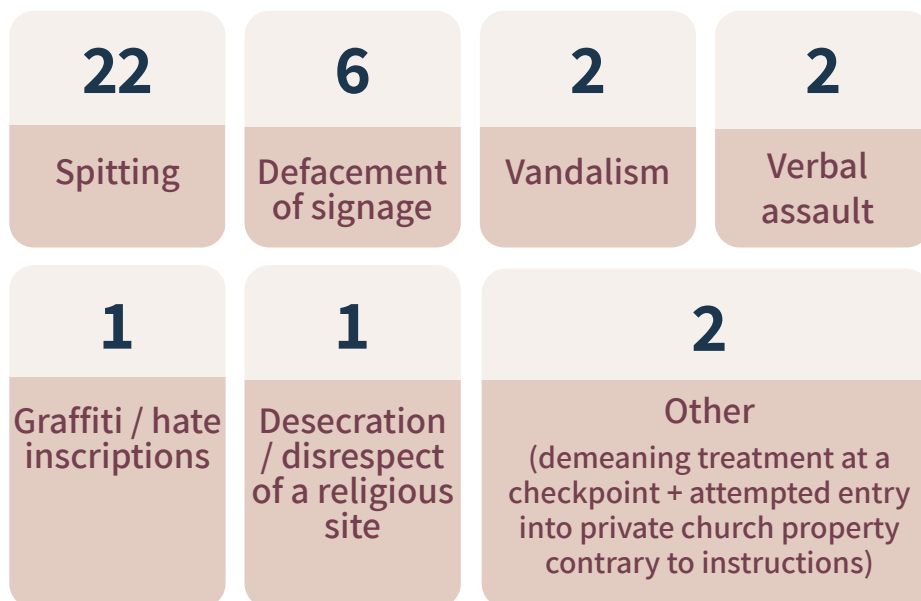
Terminology

In the interest of precision, this report utilizes the term “**harassment**” to distinguish between direct physical **attacks** and incidents involving vandalism or harm to religious feelings. We believe that such linguistic accuracy is essential for a credible analysis and for addressing these issues at their root.

Call by Church Leaders for Cooperation

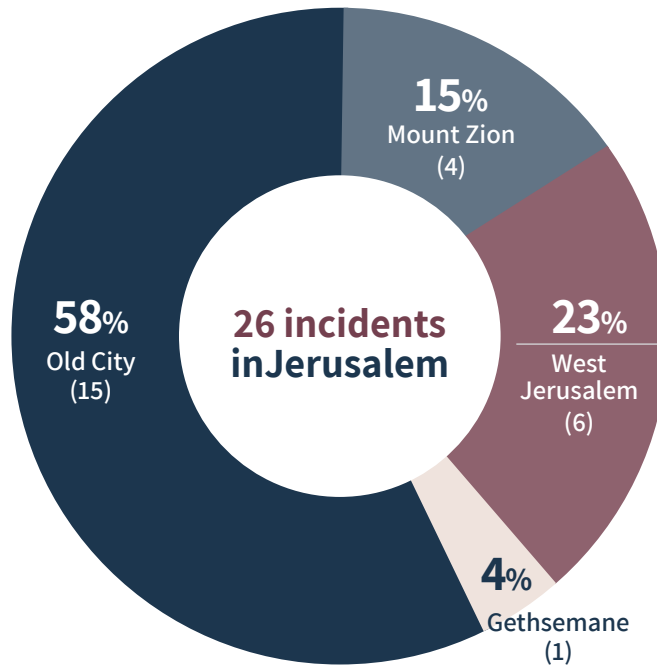
The RFDC strives to reach all Christian communities in the Holy Land and calls upon them to contact us, inform us, and make fuller use of our services. We make use of letters of support and cooperation written on our behalf by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Custos of the Holy Land, in order to encourage Christians to report incidents to us and seek our assistance.

Report summary | 44 harrasments in 31 incidents* between January and March 2025

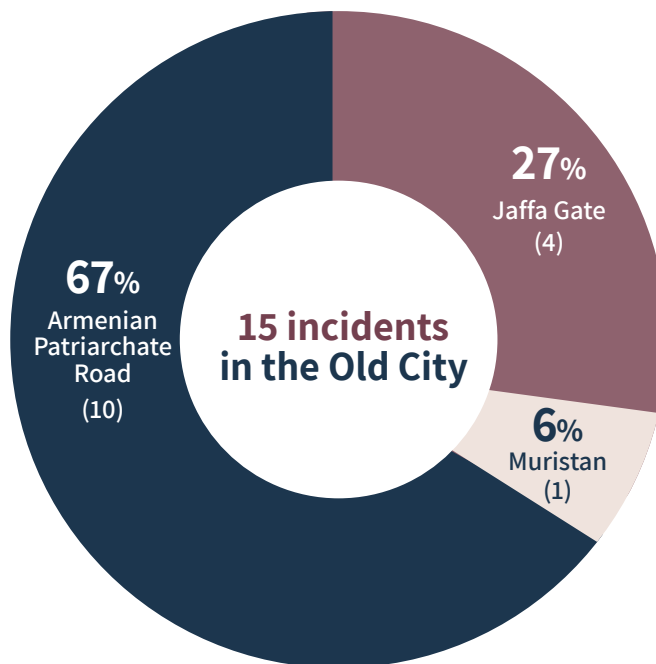


* A single event, may include several expressions of hostility.

Distribution of Incidents



- HaNevi'im St., HaHoma HaShlishit St., Shivtei Israel St. – 3
- Ein Kerem – 3



5 incidents outside Jerusalem



Reported Incidents

	Location	Incident	Date	Documentation	Response
1	Jerusalem, HaChoma HaShlishit St., Polish Monastery.	Vandalism: garbage and stones thrown into the monastery courtyard and at a window.	4.1.26	Photographs	Police complaint filed, No. 11537/2026.
2	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate Street.	Spitting and verbal abuse: A child cursed a shop owner and spat at him.	5.1.26	Oral testimony	
3	Jerusalem, Shivtei Israel Street.	Spitting: an individual spat near a worshipper as he exited a Protestant church.	8.1.26	Written testimony	
4	Qalandiya Checkpoint.	A nun was denied entry and subjected to degrading treatment. A soldier tore the visa she was holding.	12.1.26	Photograph of the torn document and written testimony.	
5	Banias (Caesarea Philippi), Northern Golan Heights.	Spitting and vandalism: Individuals entered the church grounds, spat, and attempted to remove a cross.	14.1.26	Partial photograph	A policeman arrived at the scene. Police Complaint No. 22128/2026.
6	Jerusalem, Mount Zion.	Spitting: A student on a school trip spat toward a church	20.1.26	Oral testimony of the tour guide	
7	Tel Aviv, "Oz Ve'Emunah" Synagogue, Yesod HaMa'ala Street.	Spitting: A hesder yeshiva student spat behind a group of nuns volunteering in the area.	24.1.26	Video recording	A meeting was held with the head of the yeshiva, who pledged to prohibit spitting. A letter was sent to the Mayor of Tel Aviv.
8	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate	Spitting: An individual spat toward an Armenian priest.	24.1.26	Video recording	

9	Jerusalem, Mount Zion, Dormition Abbey compound.	Attempted entry into private church property in violation of instructions.	25.1.26	Oral testimony	
10	Jerusalem, Gethsemane, Church of All Nations (Church of the Agony).	Spitting: Two school students spat into and toward the church compound.	28.1.26	Video recording	A complaint was filed by the RFDC No. 44764/2026.
11	Jerusalem, Jaffa Gate.	Spitting: Two individuals spat toward a monk wearing a cross pendant.	29.1.26	Photographs	A complaint was filed by the RFDC No. 48719/2026.
12	Jerusalem, Mount Zion, The Room of the Last Supper.	Spitting: A soldier spat toward the site.	29.1.26	Video recording and Oral testimony	A policeman detained the perpetrator and released him on the spot. A hearing was conducted within the unit.
13	Jerusalem, Muristan area.	Vandalism: Directional signage was defaced wherever the word “church” appeared.	29.1.26	Photograph	Report submitted via the municipal 106 hotline.
14	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate Street.	Teenagers spat on the ground in front of an abbot	1.2.26	Oral testimony	
15	Jerusalem, Zion Gate.	Spitting: A Jewish man, accompanied by his children, spat on a monk’s robe.	2.2.26	Oral testimony	
16	Jerusalem, Jaffa Gate.	Spitting: A teenager spat on an abbot.	4.2.26	Oral testimony	
17	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate Street.	Spitting: Two individuals spat on the wall of the Armenian monastery.	7.2.26	Video recording	A complaint was filed by the RFDC No. 60430/2026.
18	Jerusalem, outside Jaffa Gate.	Spitting: An individual spat and shouted at a missionary. A policeman arrived at the scene and dispersed the crowd.	18.2.26	Video recording	

19	Jerusalem, Ein Kerem, near the Church of the Visitation.	Hate inscriptions: Reading “Revenge” and “Christians out” were sprayed on cars and on walls.	19.2.26	Photographs	
20	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate Street.	Spitting: A woman, accompanied by 6–7 children, repeatedly spat in a demonstrative manner near a monk.	19.2.26	Video recording	A complaint was filed by the RFDC No. 2026/83661.
21	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate Street.	Spitting: An individual spat toward the monastery and then again at an Armenian who reprimanded him.	22.2.26	Oral testimony	
22	Jerusalem, HaNevi'im Street.	Spitting: An ultra-Orthodox man spat several times toward a nun as she exited her monastery.	23.2.26	Video recording	A complaint was filed by the RFDC No. 86719/2026.
23	Tel Aviv, “Oz Ve'Emunah” Synagogue, Yesod HaMa'ala Street.	Spitting: A man spat behind the backs of nuns volunteering in the area.	28.2.26	Oral testimony	
24	Haifa, Armenian Genocide Street.	Vandalism: A street sign bearing the name of the street was knocked down. .	2.3.26	Photograph	The municipality repaired it immediately.
25	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	Spitting: A teenager spat after a monk passed by.	4.3.26 Shushan Purim.	Oral testimony	
26	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	Spitting: A scooter rider spat toward the Patriarchate while riding	4.3.26 Shushan Purim.	Oral testimony	A complaint was filed by Armenians No. 105843/2026.
27		An individual spat near the entrance to the Patriarchate.	4.3.26 Shushan Purim.	Oral testimony	

28	Jerusalem, Old City. Armenian Patriarchate.	Spitting: A young man spat in a demonstrative manner and then urinated beside the entrance to the monastery.	7.3.26	Video recording	
29	Jerusalem, Ein Kerem. Gorny Monastery, Hadassah area.	Vandalism: Defacement of directional signs leading to the monastery.	18.3.26	Photographs	A report was opened via 106 municipal hotline.
30	Jerusalem, Ein Kerem, Mary's Spring.	Vandalism: Defacement of the sign near the spring.	18.3.26	Photograph	A report was submitted to the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites.
31	Jerusalem, Old City.	Spitting: Children spat on a Coptic monk.	25.3.26	Written testimony	

Insights & Actions Taken

- This quarter's data includes 11 real-time videos and 12 testimonies; victim privacy is strictly maintained.
- Severe incidents involved a uniformed soldier and parents spitting in front of children.
- We facilitated 8 police complaints and issued appeals to municipalities, the Ministry of Education, and local rabbis regarding specific harassment incidents.

Challenges & Recommendations

- Significant underreporting continues, particularly within Orthodox communities.
- We urge the police to establish a professional advisory forum to balance security with freedom of worship.
- The **RFDC** addresses authorities through several channels:

A | Police complaints: We encourage victims to contact Israeli Police directly. If they prefer not to, with permission, we file a complaint on their behalf. During this quarter, 8 complaints were filed: 6 by the RFDC and 2 by Christians themselves.

B | Letters and phone calls to relevant authorities: This quarter we contacted the Jerusalem Municipality (via the 106 hotline), the Tel Aviv Municipality, and educational institutions connected to a tour in which a student spat. Letters were sent to the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, the Ministry of Education, and the school responsible for the tour, as well as to the Council for Conservation of Heritage Sites regarding vandalized signage under its purview. We commend Architect Tzafi Shelef, Director of the Jerusalem District at the Council, for her prompt and effective responses.

C | Direct outreach to rabbis: Regarding spitting incidents by attendees of the “Oz Ve’Emunah” synagogue in Tel Aviv, a personal meeting was held between a rabbi serving as a hotline volunteer and the head of the local hesder yeshiva.

• Unfortunately, the incidents reported here likely undercount actual harassment, partly due to limited outreach to Orthodox churches, and partly because some partners do not report what they consider minor.

A monastery in Mea Shearim, for instance, wrote: *“no significant incidents in the past month. The truth is that we hardly left the house. At times, when we did go out, children spat and cursed the name of the Lord Jesus. I cannot tell you how many times this occurred.”*

• We excluded one incident from our report: the blocking of the Latin Patriarch from entering the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for Palm Sunday Mass. We consider it an error in judgment, not deliberate harassment. The RFDC issued a statement of sorrow and embarrassment to the Patriarch and the Custos, which included the following call, reiterated here:

“We appeal to the Israel Police and urge it to consult with RFDC personnel and other experts who are thoroughly familiar with the sensitivities of the Christian world. We call for the establishment of an advisory ‘forum’ or a real-time communication channel that would enable decision-makers on the ground to understand the critical gap between addressing security needs and the harm caused by such actions. Such professional cooperation will ensure public safety without undermining freedom of worship and the status quo of the Holy City.”

**We wish to express our sincere hope that the remainder of Holy Week and the celebration of Easter will take place in a spirit of dignity, trust, and hope, even under the present circumstances.
May the prayers of all believers be answered in peace.**

Yisca Harani | Religious Freedom Data Center

