

SPAIN: Moroccan man arrested for “Islamist” attack on Spanish church

Intolerance against Christians (08.09.2016) – <http://bit.ly/2c9WDpk> – A Moroccan man admitted setting a fire that destroyed an ancient altarpiece and beautiful images in the church of Fontellas in Navarre on September 8, the day recognized by Catholics as of the Nativity of the Virgin (the day of the birth of the Virgin Mary).

On September 9th, police arrested the alleged perpetrator, a man of Moroccan nationality. According to the police, the burning of the Virgin was “strictly for ideological reasons of a religious character.”

A court considered this an Islamist attack and issued a restraining order prohibiting the alleged arsonist from coming within 10 meters of Catholic churches or any buildings or places used for Catholic worship, as well any private or public Catholic functions. This order will remain in effect until the court case is closed.

The restraining order was issued as a precautionary measure because of the “risk” presented by this man: he himself recognized that after spending time in his home country this summer, his attitude changed radically. Now, after admitting that he had damaged other churches in recent days, he thinks “he has earned a place in heaven” does not regret any of his actions.

Police are investigating other acts committed in churches in nearby locations to which the detainee has verbally admitted that he forcibly entered and damaged various religious symbols.

The fire in the church mainly affected the image of the Virgen del Rosario, patron saint of the town and two other images of the Virgin in the church. The priest alerted firefighters of the fire at noon, when he saw the smoke coming out of the temple bell. Firefighters quickly extinguished the fire and local authorities began an investigation into the fire, as there were reasonable grounds to believe it was intentionally set.

According to local newspapers, part of the decoration of the chapel ceiling fell to the floor and the nave was black with soot.

The Archbishop of Pamplona-Tudela, Mons. Francisco Pérez González, expressed his “sadness, pain and disgust” by the attack on the church, an act that “offends all people of Fontellas and all Christians of Navarre.” In a statement he explained that an attack on the image of the Virgin “offends she whom we want as a mother” and who “deserves the respect of all.”

For more information (in Spanish):

[Article on Navarra.com](#)

[Article on Actual.com](#)