

## Vandals attack a church in Chernigov region in Ukraine



In Parafiivka urban-type settlement, Chernigov region, Ukraine, vandals damaged the church building of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's parish of St. Nicholas. On 15th February 2021, unidentified individuals threw stones at the over-the-gate icon and damaged it, smashed church windows and destroyed street lighting.

"Called to the crime scene, the police carried out investigative actions and recorded testimonies of the rector and parishioners of the church. Criminal proceedings have been opened," the Nezhin diocese reports.

According to the Union of Orthodox Journalists, the religious situation in Parafiivka has been tense for several years now, due to the authorities' attempts to illegally re-register the parish in favour of the OCU schismatic structure with the assistance of a local farmer who supports the schismatics.

On 21st June 2019, the local authorities did not let the canonical Church's believers attend a religious community meeting. Later, attempts were made to re-register the parish based on a decision of a territorial community. They succeeded on 14th September 2020.

However, in October 2020 the Desnyansky district court of Chernigov invalidated and cancelled the decision of the Chernigov regional administration concerning the re-registration of the Orthodox community in Parafiivka. According to the court ruling, the re-registration of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's parish "took place against the will of the actual religious community" by the means "not provided for by the Statute and contrary to the court ruling prohibiting to carry out any registration actions."

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