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**Betreff:** Jerusalem Christian seminary targeted in apparent hate crime

### **Jerusalem Christian seminary targeted in apparent hate crime**

#### **Greek Orthodox center torched; graffiti reading 'Jesus is a son of a whore' found at the scene**

By [JUDAH ARI GROSS](#) February 26, 2015 TIMES OF ISRAEL

A fire broke out early Thursday morning in a Greek Orthodox seminary in Jerusalem in what police suspect may be a hate crime. No one was injured.

The fire started at approximately 4 a.m. in the bathrooms of the seminary.

The walls of the building were vandalized with ultra-nationalist and racist graffiti.

"Jesus is a son of a whore" and "Redemption of Zion," were among the slogans painted in the areas surrounding the bathrooms.

Three teams of firefighters were called to the seminary, which is located near the Jaffa Gate of the Old City, and quickly extinguished the flames, preventing it from spreading through the rest of the building.

Emergency personnel searched the area but did not find any suspects at the scene.

Jerusalem police have opened an investigation into the incident as a hate crime.

It was hardly the first case of vandalism against Christian sites.

Two months ago police arrested a 21-year-old Jewish man who had allegedly damaged a cross and sculpture in the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem.

Before Pope Francis arrived in Israel last May, vandals also spray painted a Catholic church with anti-Christian graffiti.

On Wednesday morning, a mosque in a village near Bethlehem was set alight and anti-Arab graffiti was sprayed on its walls.

Worshippers arriving for prayers at the mosque in Jab'a, which lies to the west of Bethlehem, discovered the fire and quickly put it out. The carpeting inside and the walls of the building were damaged but there were no reports of injuries.

Eyewitnesses said the offensive graffiti, written in Hebrew, called for revenge attacks against Arabs and Muslims.

Local Palestinians believe the arson attack was the work of Jewish settlers.