



Los Angeles Police Department

Los Angeles, California

News Release

July 30, 2018

NR1820ml

House of Worship Arsonist Arrested

North Hollywood: Members of the Inter-Agency House of Worship Task Force have made an arrest in a series of intentionally set fires and acts of vandalism targeting Saint Charles Borromeo Catholic Church located at 10800 Moorpark Street in the City of North Hollywood, along with a trash dumpster fire at a nearby Chase Bank and the vandalization of five vehicles.

On Monday, July 30, 2018, Russel Congleton, 58, was arrested for commercial burglary, arson and vandalism, by personnel from LAPD Major Crimes Division and Criminal Conspiracy Section, North Hollywood Division as well as LAFD Arson/Counter-Terrorism Section Investigators.

The recent incidents occurred on Wednesday, July 25, 2018, at approximately 4:45 am, when an unknown suspect, later identified as Russel Congleton entered Saint Charles Borromeo by forcing entry through a double door that leads into the church.

Once inside the church he attempted to set three separate fires and then proceeded to vandalize numerous areas throughout the church, which included smashing stained glass windows, damaging religious statues, books, Paschal/Easter candles/holders and spreading holy oils throughout the church.

Upon exiting the building, he set a forth fire on the outer door. During his crime spree, he set a fire to a trash dumpster at nearby Chase Bank and vandalized five vehicles by smashing the windows.

The House of Worship Task Force consists of personnel from the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles Fire Department, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office.

The case will be presented to the Los Angeles County District Attorney on Wednesday, August 1, 2018, for prosecution.

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