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**ALLEGED VANDAL CHARGED WITH FELONY HATE CRIME AFTER
TARGETED ATTACK ON RELIGIOUS STATUE IN FRONT OF CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*Attack Resulted in Thousands of Dollars of Damage, Decapitation of a Child Jesus Statue
Defendant Faces Up to Five to 15 Years In Prison If Convicted Of The Top Count*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Jamshaid Choudhry has been charged with criminal mischief as a hate crime and other related crimes for allegedly smashing a Holy Family statue outside of the Holy Family Roman Catholic Church in Fresh Meadows on June 30. The attack caused the head of one of the statues, the depiction of a child Jesus, to break off.

District Attorney Katz said: “We will not tolerate unprovoked attacks, especially those driven by hate. Queens stands as a beacon of diversity and inclusivity, where freedom of religion and expression are celebrated as fundamental pillars of our democracy. Thanks to my Hate Crimes Bureau and the NYPD’s Hate Crime Task Force, this individual has been apprehended.”

Choudhry, 44, of 186th Street in Hollis, was arraigned today in Queens Criminal Court and charged with criminal mischief in the second degree as a hate crime, criminal mischief in the third degree as a hate crime, criminal mischief in the fourth degree as a hate crime, criminal mischief in the second degree, criminal mischief in the third degree, criminal mischief in the fourth degree and aggravated harassment in the first degree.

If convicted of the top count, Choudhry faces a potential maximum sentence of five to 15 years in prison. Judge Srividya Pappachan ordered him to return to court on August 1.

According to the charges:

- On June 30, at approximately 5:30 a.m., Choudhry was seen on video surveillance parking a yellow cab across the street from the church and running up to the statue depicting Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.
- Once next to the statue, Choudhry can be seen taking off his shoe and then spitting on and hitting the statue repeatedly with the shoe.
- The attack caused the head of the Jesus statue to break off completely.
- The amount of damage caused by the attack is estimated at \$3,000.

- Choudhry was arrested yesterday evening.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Brian Lukowsky of the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Brovner, Chief of the District Attorney’s Hate Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for the Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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