



Threat Target/Facilitation Platform
FBI Richmond
23 January 2023
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(U) Domain Perspective (DP) template approved for fiscal year 2023, as of 1 October 2022.

(U//FOUO) Interest of Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists in Radical-Traditionalist Catholic Ideology Almost Certainly Presents New Mitigation Opportunities

(U) Executive Summary

(U//FOUO) FBI Richmond assesses the increasingly observed interest of racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists (RMVEs) in radical-traditionalist Catholic (RTC)^a ideology almost certainly^b presents opportunities for threat mitigation through the exploration of new avenues for tripwire and source development. FBI Richmond makes this assessment with high confidence^c based on FBI investigations, local law enforcement agency reporting, and liaison reporting, with varying degrees of corroboration and access.

(U//FOUO) In making this assessment, FBI Richmond relied on the key assumption that RMVEs will continue to find RTC ideology attractive and will continue to attempt to connect with RTC adherents, both virtually via social media and in-person at places of worship. Indicators that would cause FBI Richmond to revise the judgments or confidence levels in its assessment include increases or decreases in RMVE subjects' attendance at RTC or traditionalist Catholic places of worship; increases or decreases in RMVE subjects' activity on social media platforms and forums maintained or frequented by RTCs; or the public distancing of prominent RTC or traditionalist Catholic personalities or institutions from RMVE ideologies. FBI Richmond assesses RMVE interest in RTCs is likely to increase over the next 12 to 24 months in the run-up

^a (U) Analyst Note: RTCs are typically characterized by the rejection of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) as a valid church council; disdain for most of the popes elected since Vatican II, particularly Pope Francis and Pope John Paul II; and frequent adherence to anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ, and white supremacist ideology. Radical-traditionalist Catholics compose a small minority of overall Roman Catholic adherents and are separate and distinct from "traditionalist Catholics" who prefer the Traditional Latin Mass and pre-Vatican II teachings and traditions, but without the more extremist ideological beliefs and violent rhetoric. Vatican II took place from 1962-1965 and essentially shaped the modern Roman Rite Catholic Church. It was intended to help the church respond to global cultural changes in the aftermath of World War II and resulted in significant reforms to the liturgy, attitudes toward non-Christian religions, roles and responsibilities of the laity, views on religious freedom, etc.

^b (U) See Appendix B: Expressions of Likelihood.

^c (U) See Appendix C: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information.

to the next general election cycle, complicating the overall RMVE threat picture while also creating new opportunities for mitigation efforts. During this same 12 to 24 month period, the overall RTC community is likely to remain relatively stable or show modest growth, providing RMVEs a persistent Catholic-oriented base with which to interact. FBI Richmond did not include an Analysis of Alternatives in this product due to the quality of the source information and the lack of significant uncertainties.

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(U) Source Summary Statement

(U//FOUO) Reporting in this Domain Perspective (DP) was primarily derived from an FBI Richmond contact with direct access who reported for the first time, an FBI Portland liaison contact with direct access, an FBI Undercover Employee (UCE) with direct access, local law enforcement agency reporting with varying degrees of corroboration and access, and open source reporting. FBI investigative case files, local law enforcement agency reporting, and liaison reporting were critical to the development of the DP’s overall assessments by providing credible examples of RMVE actors expressing interest in and/or actively adopting RTC ideology. Open source information was instrumental in providing an understanding of current trends in the far right white nationalist movement and background information on the various RTC and traditionalist Catholic factions. The information was dated between 9 July 2020 and 28 November 2022. The reporting was current as of 11 January 2023.

(U//FOUO) Increasingly Observed Interest of RMVEs in RTC Ideology Almost Certainly Presents New Opportunities for Threat Mitigation

(U//FOUO) FBI Richmond assesses the increasingly observed interest of RMVEs in RTC ideology almost certainly presents new opportunities for threat mitigation through the exploration of new avenues for tripwire and source development. This assessment is based on reporting from an FBI UCE, jail calls associated with ██████████, local law enforcement agency reporting, and liaison and contact reporting demonstrating RMVE actors have sought out and attended traditionalist Catholic houses of worship, as well as used language indicative of adherence to RTC ideology in social media postings.

- (U//FOUO) According to an FBI Richmond contact with direct access reporting for the first time, prior to RMVE actor ██████████’s ██████████ 2022 arrest he had been attending the Society of Saint Pius X^d (SSPX)-affiliated ██████████ ██████████ Virginia, for approximately seven months and was participating in catechism

^d (U) Analyst Note: The Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) is an international priestly society that promotes the traditional Catholic priesthood and the celebration of the traditional Latin Mass and sacraments. It is named after Pope Pius X whose anti-Modernist stance serves as the organization’s inspiration. The SSPX is currently considered “canonically irregular” (i.e., not in full communion with the Vatican). The SSPX has spawned a number of offshoots. These include SSPX-Resistance, aka SSPX-Marian Corps (SSPX-MC), which rejected SSPX attempts to reconcile with the Vatican; the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter (FSSP), which holds to many of the SSPX beliefs and practices, but ultimately split from the SSPX to stay in full communion with the Vatican; and the Society of Saint Pius V (SSPV), which does not consider Vatican II valid and binding, questions the legitimacy of all of the popes since Vatican II, and has no canonical standing (i.e., is schismatic).

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classes as part of the process to become baptized.^{1,2} Prior to attending ██████████ ██████████ stated he wanted to find a church that was “anti-Zionist” and “anti-progressive” because “that’s where God lives.”³ In ██████████ extensive anti-Semitic, anti-LGBTQ, and racist postings on the social media platform ██████████ claimed ██████████ was a “radical traditional Catholic Clerical Fascist.” At the time of ██████████ arrest, eight Molotov cocktails, six smoke bombs, one smoke grenade, and firearms components consisting of a complete Glock 19 slide/upper receiver, a lower parts kit, a 3D printed Glock 19 frame, a magazine, and 9 mm ammunition were found in his possession.⁴

- (U//FOUO) According to an FBI Portland liaison contact with indirect access, as of September 2021, deceased RMVE subject Robert Reynolds had previously posted online that he first sought out a mainline Roman Catholic community that practiced the Novus Ordo liturgy^e and then gravitated to the SSPX. In a comment posted to an online discussion group Reynolds noted, “I’ve been trying to be catholic [sic] for 2 years I went to a novus ordo church at first then became radicalized by the internet after they told me to go away because of fake virusb [sic].” Reynolds posted a photograph of himself outside of a Catholic church and several pictures from inside of the church captioned, “The holy sacrifice of the mass. Join the Catholic Taliban.” Reynolds also posted graphics depicting Jesus holding an assault rifle.⁵ Prior to his death, Reynolds was under investigation by FBI Portland for his involvement in civil disturbances, vandalism, threatening communications, weapons violations, and other acts of violence furthering his white supremacist ideology.⁶
- (U//FOUO) According to an FBI UCE with direct access, as of July 2021, FBI ██████████ RMVE subject ██████████ attended the SSPX-affiliated ██████████ ██████████ Church in ██████████ California, for over a year prior to his relocation to ██████████ While at ██████████ started a ██████████ company, ██████████ ██████████ to provide ██████████ for the church. ██████████ planned to expand ██████████ to other churches and include “fraternal-based” meetings and events.⁷ FBI Los Angeles originally initiated an investigation of ██████████ based on allegations that ██████████ was a neo-Nazi with racist and sexist views known to verbally harass and physically assault those who opposed his positions. ██████████ was a member of Legio Christi^f, now known as “Imperium,” an organization that violently opposes LGBTQ individuals. ██████████ has attempted to acquire unregistered “paperless” firearms and large capacity ammunition magazines in the past.⁸

(U) Perspective

(U) As of 2021, the Southern Poverty Law Center identified nine RTC hate groups operating in the United States (*see Appendix D for a complete list of these groups and their headquarters*’

^e (U) Novus Ordo, short for Novus Ordo Missae, refers to the new order of the Catholic Mass promulgated by Pope Paul VI in the aftermath of Vatican II. The Novus Ordo Mass is delivered in the vernacular (as opposed to Latin) and is the normal form of the Mass in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church.

^f (U) Legio Christi is not associated with the mainline Roman Catholic religious order known as the Legionaries of Christ, aka the Legion of Christ.

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locations).⁹ Open source reporting and FBI investigations have noted a growing overlap between the far-right white nationalist movement and RTCs. Illustrative of this has been the increasing collaboration of the far-right Catholic media outlet Church Militant (and its activist wing, the Resistance network) with the America First/“groyper”^g movement.^{10,11} The ongoing convergence of the far-right white nationalist movement and RTCs was further demonstrated through the increase in hostility toward abortion-rights advocates on social media sites in the run-up to and aftermath of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade*.¹² Much of the interaction between far-right white nationalists and RTCs takes place online, and adherents of RTCs and other far-right white nationalist groups frequently share language and symbolism, such as crusader references or anti-Semitic discourses.

(U//FOUO) This is the first FBI Richmond domain product to focus on the interest of RMVEs in the RTC movement. A search of FBI databases indicated this is also the first FBI finished intelligence product to specifically address this environmental variable.

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) FBI Richmond assesses RMVE interest in RTCs is likely to increase over the next 12 to 24 months in the run-up to the next general election cycle complicating the overall RMVE threat picture while also creating new opportunities for mitigation efforts. This assessment is made in light of the ongoing polarization characterizing the US political environment and the probability that policy issues of mutual interest to RMVEs and RTC adherents will remain in the public spotlight. Catalyzing events in which RMVEs and RTC adherents might have common cause include legislation or judicial decisions in areas such as abortion rights,^h immigration, affirmative action, and LGBTQ protections. During this same 12 to 24 month period, the overall RTC community is likely to remain relatively stable or show modest growth based on potential disaffection with mainline Catholic churches on social issues in the aforementioned areas, providing RMVEs a persistent Catholic-oriented base with which to interact.

(U//FOUO) Ultimately, there may be limits to the level of engagement between RTCs and other far-right white nationalists. For example, many RTCs consider other forms of Christianity to be heretical and an over-emphasis on white US nationalism may be off-putting to RTCs of different ethnicities and countries of origin. Conversely, deep-seated anti-Catholicism remains a characteristic of many far-right white nationalists. Nonetheless, the current trend of RMVE interest in RTC ideology provides new opportunities to mitigate the RMVE threat through outreach to traditionalist Catholic parishesⁱ and the development of sources with the placement

^g (U) The term “groyper” refers to followers of Nick Fuentes’s alt-right “America First” movement, which is characterized by its white Christian nationalism platform.

^h (U) Analyst Note: Currently, Virginia bans abortion after 26 weeks, 6 days, unless performed by a licensed physician in a licensed hospital with three physicians certifying that the continuation of the pregnancy will result in death of the pregnant person or impair their mental or physical health. According to open source reporting, in the aftermath of the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, Virginia Governor Youngkin has called on state legislators to enact restrictions that would ban abortions in Virginia after 15 weeks.

ⁱ (U) According to official websites for the respective organizations, there are both SSPX and FSSP houses of worship in the FBI Richmond AOR. There are no formally recognized SSPX-MC or SSPV houses of worship in the FBI Richmond AOR.

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and access to report on RMVEs seeking to use RTC social media sites or places of worship as facilitation platforms to promote violence.

(U) Intelligence Gaps

(U//FOUO) FBI Richmond established the following FY2023 Priority Collection Gap to drive collection against factors motivating RMVEs to commit violence, which may include increased religiosity and/or adherence to extreme religious teachings:

- (U//FOUO) What are the catalysts for RMVEs to commit criminal or violent acts in FBI Richmond's area of responsibility (AOR)? [RH-GAP-0023-CTD-491-23]

(U//FOUO) In addition, the following FBI Requirement Essential Element of Information focuses on RMVE actors adhering to ideologies that may be associated with aspirations to conduct criminal activity or acts of violence:

- (U//FOUO) Identify instances of RMVEs' increasing adherence to, or merging of, relatively novel ideological themes to promote and/or warrant carrying out violence or other criminal activity. [Citation: USA-TERR-CTD-SR-1185-22.I.A.8]

(U) Opportunities

- (U//FOUO) In addition to [REDACTED], engage in outreach to the leadership of other SSPX chapels in the FBI Richmond AOR to sensitize these congregations to the warning signs of radicalization and enlist their assistance to serve as suspicious activity tripwires. The following are the formally recognized SSPX chapels in the FBI Richmond AOR:
 - (U) Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel, 5267 John Marshall Highway, Linden, Virginia 22642; mailing address P.O. Box 1344, Front Royal, Virginia 22630; telephone number 603-244-6643
 - (U) Our Lady of Fatima Chapel, 5217 Futura Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23231; telephone number 804-222-3530
 - (U) St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary,^j 1208 Archbishop Lefebvre Avenue, Dillwyn, Virginia 23936; telephone number 434-505-7007, fax number 507-216-6243
- (U//FOUO) Engage in outreach with the leadership of St. Joseph Parish (828 Buford Road, Richmond, Virginia; telephone number 804-320-4932, fax number 804-451-1009), the sole FSSP parish in the FBI Richmond AOR, to sensitize the congregation to the warning signs of radicalization and enlist their assistance to serve as suspicious activity tripwires.

^j (U) According to the official SSPX website, St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary is the only SSPX seminary currently operating in the United States.

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- (U//FOUO) Based on historical instances of RTC/RMVE actors initially seeking out or attending mainline Catholic parishes, consider outreach to the Diocese of Richmond Pastoral Center (7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23294; telephone number 804-359-5661, fax number 804-358-9159) to provide background information on the increasing intersection of RMVE actors and RTC, and enlist the diocesan leadership's assistance in sensitizing parishes to the warning signs of radicalization.
- (U//FOUO) Use Requests for Collection to leverage existing sources and/or initiate Type 5 Assessments to develop new sources with the placement and access to report on RMVEs frequenting RTC social media platforms/forums/websites, RMVEs currently attending RTC places of worship, or RMVEs expressing an interest in attending RTC places of worship.

(U) Approval: SIA/IPC RH-10 (CSCC)
SIA RH-15 (Criminal/DT)

(U) Reviewed by: OGC/CDC [REDACTED]

(U) Coordinated with: SA [REDACTED] (FBI Portland)
IA [REDACTED] (FBI [REDACTED])

(U) Warning and Caveats

(U) Potential criminality exhibited by certain members of a group referenced herein does not negate nor is it a comment on the constitutional rights of the group itself or its members to exercise their rights under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The FBI does not investigate, collect, or maintain information on U.S. persons solely for the purpose of monitoring activities protected by the First Amendment.

(U) FBI Richmond prepared this Domain Perspective. Please direct comments and queries to the FBI Richmond Intelligence Program at 1-804-261-1044.

(U) Appendix A: Intelligence Metadata

(U) Environmental Variable(s)

- (U) Social/Cultural Conditions

(U) Threat Issue and Threat Variable(s)

(U) Addresses the impact of EV(s) on threats cross-programmatically: Yes No

- (U//FOUO) Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism (RMVE), HQ-CTD-491-23, FBI Richmond Band II Threat
 - (U//FOUO) Threat Variables
 - (U//FOUO) Threat Actors: RMVEs
 - (U//FOUO) Threat Activities: Use of force or violence in support of ideological objectives
 - (U//FOUO) Facilitation Platform: Social media platforms, RMVE places of worship
 - (U//FOUO) Threat Targets/Victims: Racial or religious minorities, immigrants, members of the LGBTQ community, members of the pro-choice community

(U) Key Intelligence Question(s)

- (U) How do ideological, personal, sociopolitical, community, economic, behavioral or other factors contribute to the radicalization and mobilization of violent extremists? (FBI-CTD-2-06-23)

(U) Appendix B: Expressions of Likelihood

(U) Phrases such as “the FBI judges” and “the FBI assesses,” and terms such as “likely” and “probably” convey analytical judgments and assessments. The chart below approximates how expressions of likelihood and probability correlate with percentages of chance. Only terms of likelihood should appear in FBI products; the chart includes terms of probability strictly for comparison, as they sometimes appear in reporting of other government agencies. Furthermore, the FBI does not arrive at judgments through statistical analysis; and will not use terms of probability to convey uncertainty in external FBI intelligence products.

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Terms of Likelihood	Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain(ly)
Terms of Probability	Remote	Highly Improbable	Improbable (Improbably)	Roughly Even Odds	Probable (Probably)	Highly Probable	Nearly Certain
Percentages of Chance	1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%

(U) Table showing terms of likelihood aligned with terms of probability and percentages of chance.

(U) Appendix C: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information

(U) Confidence levels reflect the quality and quantity of the source information supporting a judgment. Consequently, the FBI ascribes high, medium, or low levels of confidence to assessments, as follows:

(U) **High confidence** generally indicates the FBI's judgments are based on high quality information from multiple sources. High confidence in a judgment does not imply the assessment is a fact or a certainty; such judgments might be wrong. While additional reporting and information sources may change analytical judgments, such changes are most likely to be refinements and not substantial in nature.

(U) **Medium confidence** generally means the information is credibly sourced and plausible but not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence. Additional reporting or information sources have the potential to increase the FBI's confidence levels or substantively change analytical judgments.

(U) **Low confidence** generally means the information's credibility or plausibility is uncertain, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or the reliability of the sources is questionable. Absent additional reporting or information sources, analytical judgments should be considered preliminary in nature.

(U) Appendix D: Southern Poverty Law Center-Defined RTC Hate Groups in the United States

(U) Following are the nine RTC hate groups operating in the United States in 2021 as defined by the Southern Policy Law Center, followed by the location of their organizational headquarters.

- (U) Catholic Apologetics International (Greencastle, Pennsylvania)
- (U) Catholic Family News/Catholic Family Ministries, Inc. (Niagara Falls, New York)
- (U) Christ or Chaos (Corsicana, Texas)
- (U) Culture Wars/Fidelity Press (South Bend, Indiana)
- (U) The Fatima Crusader/International Fatima Rosary Crusade (Buffalo, New York)
- (U) In the Spirit of Chartres Committee (Glenelg, Maryland)
- (U) The Remnant/The Remnant Press (Forest Lake, Minnesota)
- (U) Slaves of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Town of Richmond, New Hampshire)
- (U) Tradition in Action (Los Angeles, California)

Source: (U) Website | Southern Poverty Law Center | "Radical Traditional Catholicism" | <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/radical-traditional-catholicism> | Accessed on 12 December 2022.

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(U) Endnotes

¹ (U) FBI | FD-302 | 266N-RH-██████████, Serial 363 | 25 November 2022 | 8 December 2022 | “(U) Interview of ██████████ | UNCLASSIFIED | UNCLASSIFIED | Source was a ██████████ who had no prior reporting history with FBI Richmond.

² (U) FBI | FD-302 | 266N-RH-██████████, Serial 361 | 28 November 2022 | 5 December 2022 | “(U) Interview of ██████████ | UNCLASSIFIED | UNCLASSIFIED | Source was ██████████ who had no prior reporting history with FBI Richmond.

³ (U//FOUO) FBI | FD-1057 | 266N-RH-██████████, serial 165 | 12 July 2021 | 27 June 2021 | “(U//FOUO) ██████████ Jail Calls from ██████████ 2021” | UNCLASSIFIED | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | Jail Calls.

⁴ (U) FBI | FD-302 | 266N-RH-██████████, Serial 351 | 13 November 2022 | 17 November 2022 | “(U) ██████████ - Scanned Documents from Search Warrant” | UNCLASSIFIED | UNCLASSIFIED | Source was a law enforcement officer.

⁵ (U//FOUO) FBI | Email | 266N-PD-3289811, Serial 168 | 15 September 2021 | 16 September 2021 | “(U//FOUO) Email and Product from ██████████” | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | Source was a liaison contact.

⁶ (U//FOUO) FBI | FD-1057 | 266N-PD-3289811, Serial 1 | 9 July 2020 | 9 July 2020 | “(U//FOUO) ROBERT MICHAEL LINDSAY REYNOLDS; AKA SIEGE BUS; SELIGMAN, ARIZONA; DT - RACIALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMIST - WHITE; TIER 6 - OTHER” | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | Source was an FBI agent.

⁷ (U//FOUO) FBI | FD-302 | 266N-██████████, Serial 86 | 20 July 2021 | 22 July 2021 | “(U//FOUO Consensually Recorded Meeting with ██████████ | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | Source was an Undercover Employee.

⁸ (U//FOUO) FBI | FDR | 266N-██████████, Serial 107 | 25 October 2021 | 25 October 2021 | “(U//FOUO To request Swiss authorities assistance with obtaining information from Proton Technologies AG” | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY | Source was an FBI employee.

⁹ (U) Website | Southern Poverty Law Center | “Radical Traditional Catholicism” | <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/radical-traditional-catholicism> | Accessed on 12 December 2022.

¹⁰ (U) Website | Salon | “White Nationalists Get Religion: On the Far-Right Fringe, a Catholics and Rascists Forge a Movement” | 12 May 2022 | <https://www.salon.com/2022/05/12/nationalists-get-religion-on-the-far-right-fringe-catholics-and-forge-a-movement/> | Accessed on 5 December 2022.

¹¹ (U) Website | Salon | “Traditional” Catholics and White Nationalist “Groypers” Forge a New Far-Right Youth Movement” | 13 May 2022 | <https://www.salon.com/2022/05/13/trad-catholics-and-nationalist-groypers-forge-a-new-far-right-youth-movement/> | Accessed on 5 December 2022.

¹² (U) Website | The Atlantic | “How Extremist Gun Culture is Trying to Co-opt the Rosary” | 14 August 2022 | <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/08/radical-traditionalist-catholic-christian-rosary-weapon/671122/> | Accessed on 5 December 2022.