News




Fire damage is visible on the exterior of St. William Catholic Church in Cashion, Ariz., which was destroyed in an overnight fire May 1. The fire broke out just before 1 a.m. The roof of the church ultimately collapsed as firefighters fought the flames. (OSV News/courtesy St. William Catholic Church)

by OSV News

View Author Profile

## Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Cashion, Arizona — May 2, 2024

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

St. William Catholic Church in Cashion, Arizona, was destroyed in an overnight fire May 1. The fire broke out just before 1 a.m. Local station Fox 10 Phoenix reported that firefighters arrived and found flames coming from the attic of the church. The roof of the church ultimately collapsed as firefighters fought the flames.

"This is a devastating loss to this community," Avondale Fire Battalion Chief Steve Mayhew said. "This church is a pillar of this community, so definitely a lot of heartbreak this morning."

"I also run the pantry here at St. Williams — that's gone," Gonzalo Ortiz, a parishioner, told Fox 10. "So now we're going to have to get some food, somehow, to all these people. We're going to need a lot of prayers. We also are going to need a lot of help."

Father Andres Arango, pastor of St. William, wrote on the parish's website, "as many of you know, we had a major fire on campus very early this morning and it appears the church has been totally destroyed. Thankfully no one was injured and everyone is safe."

Advertisement

"An official investigation on the cause of the fire is being handled by local officials," he added. "The campus is closed off during this investigation."

He wrote that "plans for a location for future Masses are currently being developed."

Brett Meister, director of communications for the Diocese of Phoenix, told The Arizona Republic that insurance would determine the extent of the damage. "It's pretty evident. The church, the classrooms and the parish hall are virtually irreparable," he said, adding that foul play did not appear to be the cause of the fire.

According to the parish's website, St. William was founded 50 years ago and has "relocated several times over the past 50 years." Currently located in Cashion, Arizona, a suburb of Phoenix, "St. William is the parent parish to Santa

Maria de Guadalupe Mission," the website says.