

Police patrolling for vandals

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As well, a break-in was reported at the Liquor Store in the Stouffville Plaza. A window was smashed and two bottles of liquor were taken.

A report on the latest round of vandalism will be included on the local council agenda on April 30, said Emmerson. "I'm not keen on the idea of a curfew. I don't want to be a babysitter. Maybe we should offer a reward or host a public town hall meeting. Perhaps I should go to the high school and ask the students what they want. We have to do something. It's getting worse. Look at the church message. The Catholic church never did anything to hurt these kids. This type of defacing is sad," said Emmerson.

Immediately after the rash of damage was assessed, York Regional Police officials assigned additional police officers to patrol downtown Stouffville and area during the evening hours.

"This includes plain-clothes officers," said police Supt. Don Kirk. "We're trying to resolve the situation. We have something more in progress."

While no suspects have been arrested, the police have a pretty good idea of who the culprits are, Supt. Kirk suggested. "We've identified some. I would think it's the same people doing it and it (the damage) seems to be concentrated in the downtown area," he said.

Property damage was reported on the following streets: Glad Park, Thicketwood, William, Burkholder, Jacob Way and Bernick.

There's a link between the message left on the church and the fact that it was Easter weekend, said Father Leslie Tamas, the priest at St. Mark's. "I think this was vindictive," Father Tamas said.

The priest pointed out that not all youth is involved in criminal acts. "The kids in Stouffville are generally good. At least 80 per cent are decent but we do have a

10 to 20 per cent that aren't," said Father Tamas.

Anti-vandalism programs are taught at the elementary level, York Regional Police Cons. Steve Morrell pointed out. "By the time they hit high school they should know (vandalism) is a criminal offense. By this time, they should have some respect for private property," said Morrell.

Both Const. Morrell and Supt. Kirk stress that the majority of Whitchurch-Stouffville teens are fine. "We're dealing with a couple of bad apples," said Morrell.

Major damage was done to the glass panels on the soon-to-open \$7.5 pool complex. The contractor has now hired a security firm to guard the Memorial Park South project, said Kelly Batt, Whitchurch-Stouffville's manager of facilities and parks.

"We've had thousands of dollars worth of breakage," said Batt. "It's very discouraging. We're all hurt by this. The workers are affected by this. They take pride in their work and to see it destroyed is difficult."

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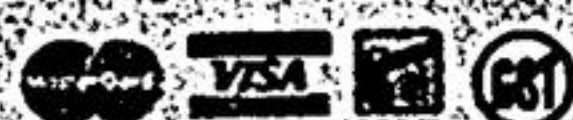


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