

Dear Diocese of Joliet Catholic School Families and Staff,

We are deeply saddened by this morning's shooting during school Mass at Annunciation Catholic Church and School in Minneapolis. Our condolences go out to the families of the students killed and their school and parish community.

This hits close to home not only because this was a shooting at a Catholic school's first school Mass of the school year, but because students were confirmed among the victims. It is unusual for something like this to take place at a Catholic church and school. Catholic schools are usually smaller, tight-knit communities where faculty, staff, students and parents know one another and support each other.

Our school safety protocols in the Diocese of Joliet are designed to minimize risk and we continuously look for opportunities to strengthen them. We train and prepare principals, students and staff for these types of situations because we are not immune to violence.

As our school principals gather tomorrow for our first principal meeting of the new school year, we will be reviewing updated safety and emergency preparedness protocols with them. Ongoing training at the Diocesan and county level helps strengthen crisis management and emergency response in our Diocesan schools, enhancing our efforts to remain safe, faith-filled learning spaces. Preparedness and prevention help keep everyone safe.

Below are two resources you may find helpful from the American Psychological Association:

- [**Managing your distress in the aftermath of a shooting \(apa.org\)**](https://www.apa.org/psychology-and-life/mental-health-topics/trauma-and-disaster/aftermath-shooting)
- [**Helping your children manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting \(apa.org\)**](https://www.apa.org/psychology-and-life/mental-health-topics/trauma-and-disaster/aftermath-shooting)

Please join the Catholic Schools Office in thanking God for the first responders and remembering the victims and their families in our prayers.

Thank you for entrusting your children to our care. The safety of everyone in our school communities is a top priority.

In Peace,

James Quaid, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools