

‘Despicable’: Mass Shooting Survivor Has a Message for Politicians Slamming ‘Thoughts and Prayers’

“Despicable.”

That’s how one Columbine survivor framed some of the anti-prayer rhetoric coming from politicians and public figures after the horrific shooting at Annunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis.

Evan Todd, who was shot and injured during the Columbine High School shooting in 1999, said many of those speaking ill of thoughts and prayers fail to understand the importance of invocations.

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“It’s heartbreaking,” Todd said in response to those decrying thoughts and prayers. “I think [it’s] despicable. I think it’s revealing of the people who are doing it.”

Todd said his own story is evidence of just how powerful prayer can be in the wake of tragedy. He was in the library on April 20, 1999, where most of the carnage took place. Two of his peers killed 12 students and a teacher and eventually turned the guns on themselves.

“I have my own story and my going through Columbine and

surviving,” he said. “I just know what prayers – and thoughts and prayers – did in my life. I’ve seen miracles work. I’ve seen prayers from that very day that have been answered.”

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Todd said he found immense comfort in the wake of the shooting knowing that so many people were sending thoughts and prayers.

“I could feel that in my soul,” he said. “It was ... uplifting, encouraging. ... It made me realize that, although I just saw the most evil and saw death ... I stared death in the face, I could still see the humanity and love that was in the world.”

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He continued, “And that was really a good piece of the healing process that got me to realize that ... life isn’t all bad.”

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