

# Bomb Threat Adds Alarm to Grief at Connecticut Church

What began as a peaceful and solemn remembrance for victims of the **Connecticut shooting massacre** was shattered on Sunday by a telephoned bomb threat that forced the evacuation of a Roman Catholic church, deepening the distress of a town in mourning.

The Saint Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church has been a sanctuary for people disturbed by the tragedy in the heavily Catholic town of Newtown, a wealthy suburb surrounded by wooded hills some 80 miles from New York City.

Eight of the funerals for the shooting victims have been scheduled at Saint Rose.

On the direction of police, Monsignor Robert Weiss asked people at the noon Mass service to quickly evacuate on Sunday, two days after the shooting.

The woman sitting next to Gary Zigman collapsed into sobs.

"It was a weirdo add-on to an already horrific weekend," said Zigman, a parishioner whose three grown children attended **Sandy Hook**, the elementary school where the shooting occurred. "It was too much."

Outside, parishioners stood in the cold, surrounded by journalists and police vehicles. Seven men from a SWAT team emerged from an armored vehicle in fatigues and body armor, carrying rifles and shields.

They searched the church and rectory, finding it was safe to re-enter, though the building would remain closed for the rest of the day, an officer at the scene said.

Police on Sunday also warned of threats and false representations on social media sites, and said they were

investigating for possible criminal violations.

The church is about a mile from the Sandy Hook Elementary School, where 20 children and six adults were massacred, after which the shooter then took his own life.

From 7 a.m. on, the Masses were all standing room only. The pews were packed tight and the aisles were so thick with mourners they were nearly impassable.

Parishioners occasionally broke into sobs.

Weiss said he has been meeting with families since the day of the shooting, fielding many questions. "And," he said, "I don't have any answers."

---

*Reporting by Michelle Conlin; Editing by Daniel Trotta*

© 2012 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.