

Congregants Stop Gunman During Children's Service

Another potential church shooting was diverted thanks to the boldness and bravery of a church's congregants.

During a first communion service for children at St. Mary Magdalen's Catholic Church in Abbeville, Louisiana, the church's parishioners stepped boldly up to the plate to stop a teenager who came into the church armed with a rifle.

As the Christian Post reported, the service was being livestreamed. Into the 48-minute mark, someone came up to the associate pastor, Fr. Nicholas DuPre, providing him with information about the active situation. Once this happened, the attendees all sat down as DuPre asked, and they prayed the Hail Mary prayer.

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"I'd like everybody to be seated for just a moment," a video on X by the Catholic Arena from the livestream shows. "I would like everyone to join me in prayer."

For a couple of minutes, the entire church joined in together in the Hail Mary prayer. Soon, a ruckus broke out and the priests crouched down behind the altar in front of them. Police went toward the situation, and others can be seen scrambling. Finally, a parishioner spoke up.

"So, guys, just get a hold of your child, go slowly," the man says. "We did apprehend a young man. He is in custody. He is in the police custody. Calm down and just get next to your child and go slowly."

According to the Catholic News Agency, families had gathered for this special mass as 60 children were about to take their first communion when a “suspicious person opened the back door.”

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In a statement, the parish gave an update to all of its members, stating:

This morning, our First Communion ceremony was interrupted when a suspicious person opened the back door. The individual was immediately confronted by parishioners, escorted outside and the police were called. The individual was quickly apprehended by Abbeville Police Department and is in their custody. Once apprehended, law enforcement entered the church to make sure there was no additional danger.

The statement further explained an understanding that its members may have experienced panic and fear. To be cautious, St. Mary Magdalen’s will have “uniformed law enforcement at all upcoming Masses.”

OSV News shared a statement by Bishop J. Douglas which commended the parishioners and local law enforcement for working quickly on the scene to avert tragedy.

“The quick response of the Abbeville PD and alert parishioners is a great example of caring for the most vulnerable in our community. Let us pray for an end to all threats of violence to innocent human life,” Douglas says.

This incident comes just a week after Pastor Glenn Germany was miraculously saved when a shooter’s gun jammed as he attempted to take the pastor’s life during a sermon. This gave enough time for a brave congregant to tackle the gunman to help save Germany.

With chaos and violence continuing to break out, it is critical for Christians to stay on alert using wisdom and guidance from the Holy Spirit everywhere we go and in everything we do. As more churches create security teams and work with local law enforcement, we must pray for the brave men and women who willingly put their lives on the line for those around them.

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