

Hero in Christian University Shooting Subdued Gunman 'Through God's Grace'

The building monitor who disarmed a gunman at a Christian university last week is giving God all the credit for saving lives.

Jon Meis, 22, quickly disarmed Aaron Ybarra, 26, after Ybarra walked into the Otto Miller Building at Seattle Pacific University and began shooting at students.

The gunman killed one student and injured several others before Meis pepper-sprayed and tackled the attacker as he was reloading his gun. Meis and other students held Ybarra until police arrived.

According to the police report, "The suspect fired several rounds from a shotgun and began reloading his weapon when a student building monitor heroically intervened. The monitor, a man in his 20s, pepper sprayed the suspect before tackling him to the ground. Several bystanders also seized upon the suspect—who was also carrying a knife and additional ammunition—and took his gun."

Police say the young man saved many students' lives with his quick actions, as Ybarra had a significant amount of ammunition on him.

"He was hellbent on killing a lot of people today," an unidentified officer told the *Seattle Times*.

"I know that I am being hailed as a hero, and as many people have suggested, I find this hard to accept," Meis wrote in a statement on Thursday. "I am indeed a quiet and private individual; while I have imagined what it would be like to

save a life, I never believed I would be put in such a situation. ... It has been deeply touching to read the comments online and realize that my actions have had such a strikingly widespread effect.

"I was thrown into a life-and-death situation, and through God's grace I was able to stop the attacker and walk away unharmed," he added. "As I try to return to a normal life in the aftermath of this horrible event, I pray above all things for strength for the victims and their families. While my experience left me in physical shock, I know that many people are dealing with much greater grief than I have experienced, and in honesty I probably would not be able to handle myself right now if I had personally known the victims."

He said he has struggled with forgiving Ybarra, but asked others not to retaliate with more evil.

"I would encourage that hate be met with love," he said. "When I came face to face with the attacker, God gave me the eyes to see that he was not a faceless monster, but a very sad and troubled young man. While I cannot at this time find it within me to forgive his crime, I truly desire that he will find the grace of God and the forgiveness of our community."