

Maine Shooting Victims Honored in Faith-Filled Vigil

A heart-wrenching tragedy unfolded last Wednesday when Robert Card, a troubled individual, went on a shooting spree that claimed the lives of 18 people in Lewiston, Maine. The devastating incident sent shockwaves through the community.

In a solemn and emotional vigil held Oct. 29, inside the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, over 1,000 people gathered to remember the victims and support one another during this difficult time.

As CBS News reported, the Rev. Todd Little from the First United Pentecostal Church of Lewiston spoke at the vigil of a small community that now has something new in common after the tragedy: "shared brokenness, worry, fear and loss."

He also vowed that the community is bigger than the tragedy and will emerge not just "Lewiston Strong" but "Lewiston Stronger.'

"We will not be defined by the tragedies that happened," he said. "Fear, anxiety and trepidation will not dictate our present or our future."

Authorities in Maine had launched an intense manhunt to locate the 40-year-old suspect responsible for the murders. After nearly 48 hours of searching, the lifeless body of Robert Card was discovered in Lisbon, near a recycling center where he had previously worked, still wearing the same clothes he had on during the tragic shooting spree.

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News outlets NBC News and ABC News quickly confirmed the suspect's demise. It was determined that Card had taken his own life with a firearm, and authorities had previously uncovered what appeared to be a suicide note at his residence.

Initially referred to as a "person of interest" by police, Card was later officially named the suspect during a press conference Oct, 26. Police then launched a manhunt for Card, warning the public that he was "armed and dangerous."

Maine's Democratic Governor, Janet Mills, revealed that at least 18 people lost their lives during the shooting. Card allegedly opened fire on groups of people at two different locations. The horrifying incident began with reports of a shooting at Schemengees Bar and Grille and continued at Sparetime Recreation, a nearby bowling alley. Tragically, eight victims were found dead at the bar and grille, while another seven lost their lives at the bowling alley. Three additional victims succumbed to their injuries at local hospitals.

Amid the sorrow and shock, Christy Wallace, who attended the vigil with her young children, expressed gratitude that the rampage had come to an end, "I told my kids that someone came and hurt a bunch of people, and we're just here for the people that he hurt."

The event's organizers aimed to convey a message of hope and determination, emphasizing the resilience of the city in the face of adversity. They wanted to show that Lewiston would remain vigilant, no matter the challenges it faces.

The Reverend Sarah Gillespie of Androscoggin Home Healthcare and Hospice beautifully encapsulated the sentiments of the community, saying, "We take the time to lift up all of the people affected by these horrific events and those of us who will now be affected forever. We lift up those who were the wives, the children, the husbands, the partners, the parents,

the grandchildren, the grandparents, brothers and sisters, and all types of family members of our beloved departed.”

The community, united in grief, stands strong in their support for the victims and their families during this difficult time.
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