Vatican
Vatican News
A person with long blond hair leans on a person with a blond braid, who wraps her arm aroun

Young women embrace as Bishop J. Mark Spalding of Nashville, Tenn., celebrates a Mass March 27, 2023, at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in in Nashville, Tenn., for the victims of the Covenant Christian School shooting on the grounds of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Nashville. Earlier that day, three adults and three children, all age 9, were fatally shot. (OSV News photo/Katie Peterson, Tennessee Register)

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Vatican City — March 29, 2023
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Pope Francis called the deadly shooting at a school in Nashville a "senseless act of violence" and prayed that the grieving families hold strong to their faith and "bring good out of unspeakable evil."

In a telegram sent to Bishop Joseph M. Spalding of Nashville and signed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, the pope said he was "deeply saddened to learn of the recent shooting at The Covenant School."

"Pope Francis asks you to convey his heartfelt condolences and the assurance of his prayers to all affected by this senseless act of violence," said the telegram, released

by the Vatican March 29.

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"He joins the entire community in mourning the children and adults who died and commends them to the loving embrace of the Lord Jesus," it said.

"He likewise invokes the consolation and strength of the Holy Spirit upon the grieving families and prays that they will be confirmed in their faith in the power of the risen Lord to heal every hurt and to bring good out of unspeakable evil," the papal telegram said.

Six individuals were killed, including three 9-year-old children, at the private Christian school mid-morning March 27. The shooter, who was armed with two assault-type rifles, was shot dead by law enforcement officers at the scene.