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A child's bicycle, seen in a still image from video, lies on a lawn as a police officer walks down

A child's bicycle, seen in a still image from video, lies on a lawn as a police officer walks down a residential street in Baltimore July 2, after a mass shooting at a Fourth of July holiday weekend block party. (OSV News/Reuters)



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Baltimore — July 3, 2023
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Following a July 2 mass shooting in which two people were killed and another 28 injured at a block party in the South Baltimore community of Brooklyn, Baltimore Archbishop William Lori asked for prayers for the victims and the city.

"Many of us woke up this morning to the devastating news of the mass shooting in Baltimore's Brooklyn community," Lori said. "Today, I invite you to pause and to pray with me. Pray for the two people whose lives have been ended in an act of rage and violence. Pray for the 28 people who are recovering from injuries, some still fighting for their lives."

As of press time, three of the shooting victims remained in critical condition.

"Ask our Lord to bring peace and comfort to the families whose lives are forever changed and ask him to bring healing to the community," Lori said in his July 2 statement. "Lord, bring us independence and deliverance from violence's stranglehold on our culture."

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott said the investigation into those responsible for the shootings was ongoing.

"We will not rest until the people responsible are held accountable," he said in a July 2 statement issued jointly with the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement and the Baltimore Police Department.

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"My heart is with those who lost their lives, all those who are now battling injuries, and their loved ones. This community should also know that they have our wholehearted support during this unimaginably difficult time," the mayor said. "This act of violence has shaken our city to the very core, and we are all grappling with the shock, pain, and trauma that accompanies such a heinous act of destruction."

He said the mass shooting again shows why "we must continue to focus on the amount of illegal guns on our streets that make it into the hands of individuals who should not have them and continuously carry out violent acts in our city."

In a July 3 news conference, Scott said he was worried more violence would erupt during July 4 gatherings for Independence Day, adding the city would use everything at its disposal to protect its citizens over the holiday. "But I implore everyone to please be safe. Think of those around you and the lives that you could potentially impact if you make a wrong choice," he said.

Lori urged people as they pray to " consider ways that we might be called to act."

"Consider how all of us can support neighborhood and community efforts that work to end violence in our streets," he said.

He said the Baltimore Archdiocese, like the Catholic Church has done in New York, Chicago and elsewhere, recognizes "the pain caused by gun violence."

The archdiocese is working with the city of Baltimore to offer a gun buyback Aug. 5 in Baltimore's Edmondson Village neighborhood. Lori urged people to share news of the event and encourage participation in it.

"Together, with the grace of God, we can work to create a future where no one wakes up to the news of another mass shooting," he said. "It is possible."