News



Luigi Mangione, 26, a suspect in the New York City killing of UnitedHealth executive Brian Thompson, poses for a booking photograph at the State Correctional Institution in Huntingdon, Pa., Dec. 9. (OSV News/Pennsylvania Department of Corrections handout via Reuters)



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December 10, 2024
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Twenty-six-year-old Luigi Mangione, the alleged gunman charged in connection to the Dec. 4 murder of UnitedHealthcare's chief executive in New York City, has deep roots in Baltimore's Italian Catholic community.

Mangione, who was arrested Dec. 9 in Altoona, Pennsylvania, hails from a well-to-do family that has been interwoven into Baltimore's economic, political and civic life, and that has contributed handsomely to local Catholic organizations.

Born and raised in Maryland, Mangione is a high school valedictorian who graduated from the Gilman School, an elite boys private school in North Baltimore. He attended the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied engineering.

Mangione started a student club that developed video games, according to a university news blog article. As a high school senior, he noticed several universities had such student-run game-making clubs, but Penn did not. Two years later, the Penn club had 60 members. "I just really wanted to make games," he said. "It wasn't planned at all."

Mangione's digital footprint across various social media platforms bears few clues as to a Catholic background or his religious views, except for an April 18 post on X where he shared an article bemoaning Christianity's decline in the West. "horror vacui (nature abhors a vacuum)," Mangione's X post said. "relevant read, 'Christianity's decline has unleashed terrible new gods.' "

New York City Police issued an arrest warrant for Mangione in the assassination of Brian Thompson, the chief executive of UnitedHealthcare, on a Midtown Manhattan street. According to court records and published reports, police found Mangione with fake identification, a loaded 3D-printed pistol with a black silencer similar to the one used in Thompson's murder, and a handwritten document decrying the health care industry.

On Dec. 9, Nino Mangione, a Republican member of the Maryland House of Delegates who is a cousin of Luigi Mangione, posted a statement on X on behalf of the Mangione family. He said the family was "devastated."

The statement reads: "Unfortunately, we cannot comment on news reports regarding Luigi Mangione. We only know what we have read in the media. Our family is shocked and devastated by Luigi's arrest. We offer our prayers to the family of Brian Thompson and we ask people to pray for all involved."*

Mangione's paternal grandparents, Nicholas Bernard Mangione Sr., and his wife, Mary, served on the board of trustees at Loyola University Maryland. They funded the acquisition of the St. John's Bible that is on permanent display at the Jesuit university's library, and the university's fitness and aquatic center is named after the Mangione family.

"Loyola is a stronger institution thanks to the transformational ways Mary and her family have contributed to our Jesuit, Catholic university," Brian Oakes, Loyola's vice president for advancement, said when Mary Mangione died in March 2023.

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Terrence Sawyer, president of Loyola College, also said in 2023 that Mary Mangione "believed passionately in the value of Catholic Jesuit education." Several of her children and grandchildren earned Loyola degrees, the university said.

"Over the years, she and her husband have given generously to strengthen the education and experience we offer to our students," Sawyer said.

Mary Mangione served on the steering committee of Loyola's Bright Minds, Bold Hearts Campaign, which raised $100 million.

Nicholas Bernard Mangione Sr., the patriarch of the family who died in 2008, was a self-made real estate developer whose holdings included a nursing home, country club and radio station. According to his obituary, Mangione Sr.'s father was an illiterate immigrant from Italy who worked for Baltimore's water department until dying at age 42 from pneumonia.

Growing up in Baltimore's Little Italy neighborhood without his father, Mangione Sr.'s 2008 obituary said he told The Baltimore Sun in 1995 that he and his family had little help from outsiders.

"Once a week, my brother and I would get a bag of flour from the church," Mangione Sr. told the Sun.

Mangione Sr. learned shorthand and typing from St. James the Less Commercial School in Baltimore, and served in World War II with the U.S. Navy. He and his wife supported several charities, including the Baltimore Opera Company, and participated in Italian American civic organizations.

According to a Washington Examiner article in 2008, more than 700 people attended Mangione Sr.'s funeral Mass at St. Isaac Jogues Church in Baltimore. "It was a beautiful tribute to his life. There was sadness, but there was a lot of joy," Mangione Sr.'s son, Sam Mangione, said.

Luigi Mangione's maternal grandparents, Joseph and Maria Santo Zannino, had deep roots in Baltimore's Italian American community. Joseph Zannino owned a funeral home business in Baltimore and attended Our Lady of Pompei Elementary church and school in Baltimore, according to his 2017 obituary. He was a member of Catholic War Veterans and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He was a member of the Order Sons of Italy in America, serving as its president from 1965 to 1976.

Joseph Zannino portrayed Christopher Columbus on the float in the Columbus Parade, a more than century-old tradition beloved in the Italian American community in Baltimore.

**This story has been updated to include a statement from the Mangione family.*

A version of this story appeared in the **Dec. 20, 2024-Jan. 16, 2025** print issue under the headline: Family of suspect in CEO slaying has Italian Catholic roots in Baltimore.