News



An Orleans Parish coroner's van is parked at the corner of Bourbon and Canal streets after a pickup truck drove into a large crowd in the French Quarter of New Orleans Jan. 1, 2025. (OSV News/Reuters/Brian Thevenot)

by OSV News

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Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans offered prayers for victims of what he described as a "sign of utter disrespect for human life" perpetrated by a man who drove a pickup truck through crowds celebrating the New Year in New Orleans' French Quarter around 3 a.m. Jan. 1. At least 10 people were reportedly killed, with around 35 others injured.

The driver was killed by police after leaving the vehicle and exchanging gunfire with law enforcement, striking two officers. The FBI is investigating the attack as an act of terrorism.

"Our prayers go out to those killed and injured in this morning's horrific attack on Bourbon Street," said Aymond, a New Orleans native, in a Jan. 1 statement. "This violent act is a sign of utter disrespect for human life. I join with others in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans in offering prayerful support to the victims' families. I give thanks for the heroic duty of hundreds of law enforcement and medical personnel in the face of such evil."

In a press conference, New Orleans Police Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick said, "This man was trying to run over as many people as he possibly could."

"It was not a DUI situation," she said. "This was more complex and more serious based on the information we have right now."

The FBI is reportedly investigating possible explosive devices at the scene.

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The attack on the city's famed Bourbon Street took place hours after the French Quarter hosted the Allstate Sugar Bowl Parade to celebrate a much-anticipated Jan. 1 college football playoff game between the University of Notre Dame and the University of Georgia. Officials said the game will take place as scheduled with heightened security.

"We are aware of the incident this morning in New Orleans and are working with law enforcement and others to determine the full scope and impact of the tragedy," the University of Notre Dame posted on X. "We ask our fans to join us in prayer for those injured and lost in this senseless act of violence."

The university continued: "Those staying at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel are welcome to join us for the previously scheduled Mass there at 11 a.m. Otherwise, we ask that you join us in prayer from wherever you are."

University president Fr. Robert Dowd, a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross, shared a similar message on a website for Notre Dame alumni and friends, noting that Holy Cross Fr. Nate Wills, Notre Dame's football chaplain, was to celebrate the Mass in the Hilton's grand ballroom.

The Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel is less than a mile south of the site of the attack. The Mass was initially open to all to celebrate the solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, a holy day of obligation.

"We deeply regret any disappointment this change in plans causes and appreciate your understanding given these terrible events," Dowd wrote. "We ask that all members of the Notre Dame family join us in prayer for the victims of this horrific attack and their loved ones at 11 a.m. wherever you may be."

In a separate post on X, Dowd also said the university community extends "our deepest gratitude to the brave first responders who risked their lives to protect others."

"To be in solidarity with those who suffer is to exemplify the spirit of Notre Dame," he wrote. "Today, we are in solidarity with all those impacted by this tragedy."