News



A man helps prepare a makeshift memorial in New Orleans Jan. 2, 2025, following a terrorist attack in which people were killed by a man driving a pickup truck into a crowd during New Year's celebrations in New Orleans' famed French Quarter early Jan. 1. At least 14 people were killed and dozens more were injured, and the suspect was shot to death by police, authorities said. (OSV News/Eduardo Munoz, Reuters)

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New Orleans — January 3, 2025
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Several Catholic high schools are mourning former students among the victims of a Jan. 1 terrorist attack in New Orleans.

Fourteen people were killed and dozens wounded after a rented pickup truck driven by suspect Shamsud-Din Jabbar plowed into New Year's Eve revelers on Bourbon Street. Jabbar, a U.S. Army veteran born and raised in Texas, was also killed in a subsequent gunfire exchange with police.

The FBI is investigating the massacre as a terrorist attack, citing an Islamic State flag found in the truck and other evidence. Initially, the agency said it was searching for other individuals who may have been involved, but in a Jan. 2 news conference stated it believed Jabbar acted alone.

Authorities are also working to determine any potential links between the New Orleans attack and the Jan. 1 explosion of a Tesla Cybertruck outside of the Trump Hotel in Las Vegas, which killed the driver and injured seven.

Two of those killed in the New Orleans attack, Martin "Tiger" Bech Jr. and Hubert Gauthreaux, had attended Catholic high schools in Louisiana.

Bech — a 2021 Princeton University alumnus who had excelled on that school's football team — graduated in 2015 from St. Thomas More Catholic High School in Lafayette, Louisiana.

The high school mourned the loss of Bech in a Jan. 2 Facebook post, describing him as a "standout athlete in football, lacrosse, and track and field."

"Please keep the Bech family and all those affected by this tragic event in your prayers," the school said in its post. "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen."

The school scheduled a Jan. 1 rosary prayer service at its chapel in memory of the 28-year-old Bech, who worked in New York City as a junior bonds trader in cybersecurity for Seaport Global.

Gauthreaux was a 2021 graduate of Archbishop Shaw High School in Marrero, Louisiana. In a Jan. 1 Facebook post, the school announced the 21-year-old's death "with great sorrow." It asked "the entire Archbishop Shaw family to pray for the repose of Hubert's soul, his family and friends during this difficult time, and all those affected by this tragedy."

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The Archbishop Shaw post also included the traditional "Eternal rest" Catholic prayer for those who have died.

Among those injured in the attack was Ryan Quigley, a 2016 graduate of Lansdale Catholic High School in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, some 35 miles north of Philadelphia. Quigley had been Bech's teammate at Princeton, graduating in 2020 and working with Bech at Seaport Global.

The school said in a Jan. 1 Facebook post that Bech and Quigley were "dear friends," and that it was "praying for the full healing and complete recovery" of Quigley and for all affected.

School president Meghan Callen told local media that Quigley was "a beloved member" of his graduating class, and that the Catholic school was "incredibly proud of him."

In its Facebook post, the school said it was "inspired by the ways in which his LC classmates are coming together to support his family during this difficult time."

Two fellow classmates launched a GoFundMe page for Bech's funeral and for Quigley's medical expenses, with the effort raising more than $79,500 as of Jan. 2.

"We pray for all of the victims who lost their lives this morning in this senseless tragedy in New Orleans, including Ryan's dear friend and former Princeton teammate Tiger Bech, for all those who are recovering tonight, like Ryan, and for all of their family members and loved ones," the school said in its Jan. 1 post.