News



Sophia Forchas, an Annunciation Church and School shooting victim, and her father, Tom Forchas, right, at the Hennepin County Medical Center on Oct. 23, 2025, in Minneapolis (The Catholic Spirit/Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis via AP)

by Associated Press

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Minneapolis — October 27, 2025

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A 12-year-old girl who was shot in the head during a deadly attack at a Minneapolis Catholic church in August was released from the hospital Thursday, Oct. 23, and greeted with cheers as the police chief paraded her around town in a stretch limousine, according to the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Sophia Forchas was the most seriously wounded child among those who survived the shooting at the Church of the Annunciation. A shooter opened fire with a rifle through the windows of the church on Aug. 27 and struck some of the nearly 200 children celebrating Mass during the first week of school, killing two and wounding 17 people. The children who died were 8 and 10 years old.

Forchas was rushed into surgery. Her neurosurgeon, Dr. Walt Galicich, said a bullet had lodged in her brain, causing severe damage, including to a major blood vessel. Surgeons had to remove the left half of her skull to relieve the pressure inside her head. At a Sept. 5 news conference, Galicich had described worrying that Forchas could become "the third fatality in this event."

He gave her a hug as she left the Hennepin County Medical Center, the Star Tribune reported, as many others outside held banners and waved.

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Minneapolis Police Chief Brian O'Hara, who escorted Forchas around the city, described her return home as "nothing short of a miracle."

She was again greeted with roaring applause and plenty of hugs as they pulled into her school's parking lot.

Her parents, Amy and Tom Forchas, said in a statement that they were overwhelmed with gratitude for the medical professionals who saved their daughter's life. They described her return home Thursday as "one of the most extraordinary days of our lives."

Her healing journey will continue with outpatient therapy, and she still has a long road to recovery ahead, her parents said, adding that they've been excited to witness daily improvements in her speech, her ability to walk and "her personality shining through once more."

Another child who had a traumatic brain injury from the shooting, Lydia Kaiser, 12, was similarly celebrated as she returned to school last week, according to an online fundraising page started to support her family. Kaiser also underwent surgeries to remove a bullet fragment and alleviate pressure inside her head.

This story appears in the **Minneapolis church shooting** feature series. View the full series.