Debris surrounds a damaged home in Three Rivers, Mich., March 7, 2026, following storms ar

Debris surrounds a damaged home in Three Rivers, Mich., March 7, 2026, following storms and tornado warnings. Powerful storms tore through parts of Michigan and Oklahoma, leaving a trail of destruction that included flattened homes and scattered debris. Volunteers helped residents sift through rubble and begin cleanup as the threat of severe weather lingered across the nation's midsection. (OSV News photo/Rebecca Cook, Reuters)

Gina Christian

View Author Profile



OSV News

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

March 12, 2026
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Catholic parish and school communities in the Midwest are among those working to clean up after deadly storms and tornadoes tore through a number of states March 6 and 10 -- but, said two Catholic schools, faith, prayer and hope remain strong.

An elderly couple was killed in a March 10 tornado with several others hospitalized due to a storm lasting more than seven hours along a 200-mile path in northern Indiana and northern Illinois. Flood warnings were issued in river areas in the two states.

On March 11, millions remained on alert for tornado activity throughout the Midwest and the southern Plains states.

Bishop McNamara Catholic School -- a pre-K through grade 12 school spanning three separate campuses about an hour south of Chicago -- called for prayer in a March 11 Facebook post.

The school said that "many" families in the area, including those of students "have suffered loss of or damage to their homes and possessions."

The post also noted that the school's Kankakee location, which houses grades six through 12, had sustained damage.

The school, whose three sites will remain closed through at least March 13, posted a video showing "destruction throughout the building," with water seen entering and ponding in a number of locations, especially the gym and several classrooms.

Shattered glass littered the floor in a number of places, with at least two skylights appearing to have been damaged.

Yet the school's chapel, constructed two years ago at the center of the Kankakee building, was unscathed.

"We always keep Christ at the center of our school," said the unseen female narrator of the video. "And today, with all the damage and destruction around us, Christ continues to be at the center of our building, untouched and being the shining light of hope and faith in our McNamara community."

Advertisement

On March 6, storms had ripped through eastern Oklahoma and southern Michigan, killing at least six, including a 12-year-old boy.

Following one of the storm's tornadoes, the Diocese of Kalamazoo said in a March 6 statement posted to its website that Immaculate Conception Parish in Three Rivers, Michigan, would be closed for the weekend due to storm damage.

"We offer our prayers of support for all those in Three Rivers and (the) surrounding area impacted by this afternoon's tornado," said the diocese. "We are grateful that

all those at Immaculate Conception School of Three Rivers school and church were able to shelter in place and remain safe."

Video posted by the school on its Facebook page March 6 showed children and teachers sheltering in the dark with flashlights.

As the storm passed, they prayed and sang "This Little Light of Mine."

"No one's going to poof it out; I'm going to let it shine," they sang.